THE LOST PEACE

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A PERSONAL IMPRESSION

by Harold Butler

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY FELIX MORLEY

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INTRODUCTION

FROM the establishment of the League of Nations until his resignation as Director of the International Labor Office, in 1938, Harold Butler played a vital part in the first great effort to build a framework of international government. His examination of the "lost peace" is therefore rather more than a "personal impression," as he modestly describes it. In this volume are to be found the matured reflections on the necessary conditions of international order of a man who was not merely on the inside but who also held a post of great responsibility in the operation of the "Geneva experiment"—a noble experiment if ever there was one.

Mr. Butler's qualifications for the task he has set himself are official as well as personal. During the last World War he was an important executive in the British Ministry of Labor and carried thence to Geneva those high professional standards on which the League sought to build, and to a very considerable extent did build, the new career of International Civil Servant.

There was a new viewpoint, which must be regained and more firmly established, in the work of the permanent officials of the League and International Labor Office Secretariats. Owing allegiance to an international authority, they took pride in handling their duties with scrupulous objectivity on all matters of national interest. Harold Butler was always one of those who insisted most firmly on the need for this

detachment from so-called "patriotic" influences. As he mentions too briefly, in the second chapter of this book, his resignation was due to his refusal to make a political appointment "which would have set a fatal precedent for all future international administration." Yet there could never be any question of Mr. Butler's unswerving loyalty to his native land. This is demonstrated by the important work he is now doing for the British Government, as well as by the intense love of England which permeates the pages that follow.

Aside from his personal ability and rectitude, the nature of Mr. Butler's duties at Geneva gave him peculiar competence to analyze the factors working both for and against the establishment of a settled world order. First as Deputy Director and then, after the death of Albert Thomas in 1932, as Director of the International Labor Office, the author of *The Lost Peace* held a position which automatically gave unusual insight both as to the difficult problems and the more promising procedures of international organization.

The International Labor Office, as a closely related but wholly autonomous technical agency of the League of Nations, was never beset by the political difficulties which finally overwhelmed the more ambitious organ. As Mr. Butler points out in this volume, everyone could see, "in principle at any rate," that modern industrial and social problems can never be more than temporarily appeased through a narrow nationalistic approach. In consequence the Geneva labor conferences, with their joint representation of governments, employers, and workers, served to establish a more permanently impressive contribution than all the more showy international political conferences handled by the League Secretariat. For the time being, at any rate, the political work of the League

is dead. But its technical activities, of which the work presided over by Mr. Butler for many years is an outstanding example, are only held in abeyance and may again swing into full operation as soon as political conditions permit. This continuing vitality of the I.L.O. was well illustrated by its important conference on "Wartime Developments in Government-Employer-Worker Collaboration," held in New York at the end of October, 1941.

In *The Lost Peace* Mr. Butler has drawn only for background purposes on his unique experience as a top-ranking executive in the world's first international civil service. "No unpublished official documents or other confidential information have been utilized in its composition." Nevertheless it is this official experience which gives both substance and intellectual flavor to a book which might at first glance, because of its vivid reporting of places, men and contemporary events, seem to fall in the category of first-class journalism.

The desire to contribute to permanent elimination of the prevailing anarchy is the motive force behind *The Lost Peace.* And the strength of that desire is indicated by the two moving quotations which Mr. Butler has chosen to summarize his last two chapters. The first, from Thucydides, asks: "Why should we dwell reproachfully upon the past except in the interest of the present?" And the second, from Oliver Cromwell, suggests that "God has not brought us hither where we are but to consider the work we may do in the world as well as at home."

"Isolationism," Mr. Butler concludes, "is dead," as an inevitable result of the increasing integration of the modern world. But it is none the less true that the "national ideal is still the source from which the vitality, the culture, and the

rich diversity of our civilization will be drawn." To compose these divergent tendencies, to reconcile a pooling of national sovereignties with a preservation of national cultural contributions, is the baffling problem in political science to which the closing pages of *The Lost Peace* are devoted. Like many others, Mr. Butler believes that the problem will have to be resolved slowly, for one reason because social conditions in Europe after the war will be so desperate as to make construction of the foundations of economic recovery the first and all-important task. There will be no repetition of the "attempt to settle all the problems of Europe in six months."

During the protracted Armistice which is expected after the present war the preservation of international order and the conditions of national recuperation "will depend on the existence of groups of nations strong enough and united enough to crush any breaker of the peace by superior force." Mr. Butler is sceptical of the Streit plan—"as yet no union between the United States and the British peoples is within the range of practical politics"—but he believes that in the event of German defeat and disarmament an Anglo-American combine, closely co-operating with Russia, will be the basis of whatever world system eventually evolves. The entry of the United States into the war, which was by no means certain when this book was written, establishes a first step in this enduring collaboration.

Whether or not one is inclined to approve Mr. Butler's tentative blueprint, to which laymen as well as political architects should give close and critical study, its basic characteristic of realism will seem admirable to all. With deep regret, but none the less resolutely, the author of *The Lost Peace* has scrapped the doctrines of self-determination, rights of

small nations, protection of minorities, world safe for democracy, and all the other sounding ideals with which the Covenant of the League of Nations was embroidered, and by which its effectiveness was impeded. The absolute necessity at the close of this war, says Mr. Butler, will be arrangements whereby overwhelming force is available to protect the convalescence of a shattered civilization against any recurrence of hostilities. The formal Constitution for a new society of nations can come later. This time the foundations of international stability must be cemented before the refinements of international organization are built upon them.

It is likely that this viewpoint will became more generally accepted as the war drags on, and as the complete insecurity of the individual in a world of anarchy becomes more apparent to everyone. In contradistinction to 1918, the popular demand after the next Armistice will be for a peace system that will work. That means much more emphasis on the maintenance of peace—for a long time inevitably an armed peace—and much less concern with the immediate elaboration of complicated systems of dubious practicality.

This conclusion, moreover, is one in which the people of every nation will concur—the Germans, Italians, and Japanese no less than the British, Russians, and Americans. The "have not" group is undoubtedly immediately culpable, but to all the great powers a share of blame attaches, for it is their age-old, insensate rivalries, not merely the culminating barbarities of Hitlerism, which have made a Hell upon earth. As the great powers have now conspired against each other to make universal war, so they must eventually combine with each other to enforce universal peace. And if the rights of small nations, from Iceland, to Norway, to Greece, to Egypt, to Iran, to

Thailand, are to be disregarded in any case, these weaker peoples will prefer to sacrifice their nominal independence in an atmosphere of peace.

For eighteen years Mr. Butler worked for peace as a high official of the League of Nations. He watched the gradual sabotage of that endeavor by the great powers, including the United States. And he concludes that: "More than for any other reason the peace was lost because the policies of nations were empty of charity for each other."

FELIX MORLEY

AUTHOR'S NOTE

A BOOK dealing with international affairs written in the midst of the present turmoil is like a stick thrown into a swirling flood. The swift torrent of events is relentlessly sweeping away old landmarks and familiar guides to thought. In a few months the judgments of today may seem incredibly wrong in the light of the facts of tomorrow. The historical limitations of this sketch will be seen from the date of its completion. It should be added that no unpublished official documents or other confidential information have been utilized in its composition.

August 9, 1941

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THE LOST PEACE

CHAPTER ONE: TRAVEL AND POLITICS

All places that the eye of heaven visits
Are to the wise man ports and happy havens.
Teach thy necessity to reason thus.

SHAKESPEARE

IT SEEMS odd nowadays to write of travel. Here we are tied up in our tight little island, living sparely and strenuously in the dimness of a blacked-out world. Europe has become the dark continent brooding in the depths of the Nazi night. As for Asia and the Americas and South Africa, they belong to a distant sunlit planet as far away as Mars. When the mark of the blond beast is besmirching many fair cities, it is good to remember them as they were before the nightmare of Germanity descended upon them. For the time being, the German's dream of domination, which has lurked in his mind since Fichte, has been realized. More than a century ago, Hegel, the philosopher of the Prussian system, foretold what we had to expect if Germandom ever achieved its perennial ambition. "World history is not the soil of happiness. The periods of happiness are its blank pages." For the German does not believe in happiness. As one of his poets said, he is "spoiled right through to the marrow for the happiness that is bestowed by the holy Graces."[1] Since 1848 he has hardly even hoped for it. Life has been just a preparation for one war after another, to which men sacrificed their short

[1] Friedrich Hölderlin, *Hyperion.*

span of worldly existence and women their natural longing for a peaceful family hearth. The German race is now writing the inkiest page of its somber ill-fated history, a series of unrelieved tragedies, from the fratricidal massacres of the Thirty Years' War, the stark struggle for power under Frederick, the collapse of Jena, to the debacle of William's Empire followed by the inflation, unemployment, and ruin of the early twenties and early thirties. And now Hitler, whom they fondly believed their savior, is driving them madly towards some yet deeper abyss, offering them the grim consolation that if they plunge into it they will drag all Europe with them. Last summer they marched fanatically forward to the Siegfried and Walküre motifs. It looks as if the first shades of Götterdämmerung were now beginning to fall.

Now is the time then, while we are still under the spell of the baleful star of Teutonism, to recall what the real world was like and what it may be again. It was a good world for all its folly, misery, and evil, and will be so again—perhaps an even better world cleansed of some of its uglier vices and meannesses.

As one traveled about it one could not help realizing how much was being done to better it and how strong was the general desire for peace and orderly progress. And yet all the endeavors to organize it for peace and against war failed. All the hopes that civilization would now go steadily forward without another relapse into barbarism were frustrated. After a brief interlude of twenty years these hopes and endeavors turned out to be nothing but the prelude to war on a vaster and more violent scale than had yet been seen. During this uneasy truce, however much one thrust it into the background of one's thoughts, the idea that the European settle-

ment might again break down and another world conflagration ensue would crop up occasionally in the press or in conversation. The more one saw of Europe and of those who ruled it, the more one became aware of this latent anxiety. The hatreds, jealousies, and ambitions which had torn the Continent for centuries were only damped down; they had not been extinguished. The prides of national egotism were stronger than the desire for security bought at the price of some sacrifice of national *amour-propre*. Political aims nearly always took precedence of economic well-being, and countries which pursued an enlightened social policy did so at the risk of being outdistanced in the race for power. These things were always intruding themselves on the traveler, as he journeyed about the world. Indeed, during those twenty years more even than in the past, travel was the beginning of political education.

During that time I was lucky enough to see a good deal of four out of the five continents, not just as an ordinary globetrotter, but as a traveler with a purpose. My work in Geneva was an attempt to make life a little happier and easier for the common man and woman everywhere. In twenty years the International Labor Office became something of a talisman. It was a beacon to which millions looked in the hope that, if not for them, at least for their children, the struggle for existence might be less harsh, the daily toil lighter, and the reward in the shape of comfort and happiness less niggardly than Providence had so far vouchsafed to the majority of mankind.

In its short life the I.L.O. was anything but a failure. It may not have done much, though it did something, to improve the lot of the workers of Western Europe and the

United States, who were able to fight for themselves. Its slow conquest was beginning to move eastwards rather than westwards. To understand its mission and its power one had to witness the dawn of social progress in the Balkans, the first signs of reform in Egypt, the pathetic enthusiasm for the new message in India. There one was aware of a world in travail. After the torpor of centuries Asia and Africa were stirring. The example of Turkish emancipation from the deadening traditions of the past was spreading throughout the Mohammedan world. The growth of nationalism in India was not merely the growth of national consciousness, a fragile plant in that vast medley of races and languages, but also the expression of a dim desire for a better and freer life, an uprising against the old fatalism, a craving for some new and milder dispensation. That was a creed which united Bengali and Tamil, Maratha and Punjabi, in a common though obscure impulse. The same spirit was moving in the dusty ginning mills and dingy workshops of the Nile Delta. It was moving in the tin mines and factories of Malaya among the quick-witted Chinese, so different from the popular idea of the long-suffering, apathetic Oriental, as they have shown in their valiant, stubborn struggle against Japan. And nearer home one had seen in fifteen years the first fruits of modern social ideas gathered in Eastern Europe, better health, better food, a little better housing. There was a touch both of romance and of pathos in the gradual coming of light into dark places, which made travel on the business of the I.L.O. passionately interesting, however strenuous or wearisome it might be at times. One felt that progress was not an illusion when one saw it actually happening. To visit Bucharest or Belgrade or Warsaw after an interval of four or five years

and to find that the seedling was already budding before one's eyes was a thrilling experience. And now the flowers have been ruthlessly destroyed and trampled in the dust under the German jackboot. With the aid of his Quislings and his Iron Guards Hitler is making the effort of a madman to throw back the masses of Europe into a serfdom more brutal and hopeless than they knew in the Middle Ages. When the time comes to overthrow this new tyranny, however, the roots of freedom and democracy, which had begun to blossom in strange places, will still be there. To revive them is the purpose and justification of the crusade which we are waging against the black ensign of the swastika.

To travel with a political and social purpose in the prewar world was then an education in the trends of the present and the promise of the future. But it was more than that. Contact with the political leaders of country after country was a unique education in human nature and methods of government. It was not always an exhilarating experience. The frailties and futilities, the egotism and the falsity, of man as a political animal were usually more prominent than the virtues which Plato prescribes for his philosophic rulers. The latter are unhappily still rare in the twentieth century. The crooks and the self-seekers are at least as likely to get to the top as the straightforward and the single-minded. As Thucydides dryly remarked a long time ago, "the dishonest more easily gain credit for cleverness than the simple for goodness." [2] This is still more or less true of all political systems, but one can at least say that the stronger the democratic check, the harder the rise to power of the dishonest becomes. The fundamental vice of dictatorship is its irresponsibility. Unscrupu-

[2] III. 82.

lous yes men attain high positions in which they are free to prey upon their victims, because no one dares criticize or expose them. Bribery, peculation, and political blackmail flourish luxuriantly in every country where press and public opinion are stifled by authority. Not that these vile things are unknown in democracies. Far from it, but they lead a much more furtive, underground existence. To realize the true value of freedom, one must, as a sad Italian once said to me, have breathed the fetid air of dictatorship. By moving in political circles of all shades, from the tense, brooding atmosphere of Nazi Berlin to the lively, turbulent hurly-burly of Washington through every intermediate gradation—semidictatorship, veiled dictatorship, sham democracy, rotten tottering democracy, new tentative democracy, old solid democracy—one quickly smells which way the wind is blowing. Politicians and political systems fall readily into easily recognized classes, and their outward symptoms become as quickly identifiable as the signs of measles or typhoid to a general practitioner.

But as a rule the most interesting and characteristic products of a country are not its politicians. Those who imagine that they can know a people, its foibles and passions, strengths and weaknesses, by mingling only with its "ruling classes" make a profound mistake—the sort of mistake that Herr von Ribbentrop apparently made in London and that many better diplomats have made before him. In the old days when the masses did not count, a diplomat may have been able to discover all that he needed to know by mixing with the aristocracy, with an occasional condescending nod to the wealthy bankers and merchants. I doubt even that, for when it comes to matters of peace and war it is the temper and fiber of the common people that has always counted in the end. There

has always stuck in my memory a shrewd remark of Monsieur Titulescu, then Rumanian Minister in London, a man who concealed considerable political acumen under extravagant outward appearances. He said half jestingly that what impressed him most in England was the fact that if you drove through the country at night, most of the lights were out by ten o'clock. He detected in that the sign of a sound and strong people. And he was right. However that may be, no modern diplomat is much use who sticks to political dinner tables and diplomatic bridge parties. To think that one can know anything about the United States by revolving in the Washington merry-go-round or that the Parisian is the representative Frenchman are of course elementary errors. But I have been astonished in my wanderings to find how many diplomats of all nationalities, including our own, were quite content to gather their information and form their personal judgment from contact with a small, political coterie in the capital. Many of them rarely traveled in the provinces and made no attempt to learn the language, if they did not know it already. As an eminent British minister in a Balkan state once said to me, "We get other people to talk the language for us." No doubt some of them were lazy, for to acquire a new language in middle life is something of a grind, but inertia always seemed to me a far more respectable excuse than incomprehension. So many intelligent men did not realize that the world had changed since their youth, that the streams of national feeling had broadened and deepened, and that to know anything about a country one had to rub shoulders with all sorts and conditions of people. And they also did not realize that a wide and motley acquaintance with men and women of every kind is what makes life really fascinating. When the

Hapsburg Empire had been reduced to a feeble but very democratic fragment, it was pathetic to find diplomats in Vienna clinging desperately to the decayed remnants of the Austrian aristocracy and only meeting the plebeian holders of political power in their offices or on formal occasions which could not decently be avoided. In Czechoslovakia it was smarter and more amusing to spend the week end in the castles of a Schwarzenberg or a Hohenlohe, who were hankering in their hearts to restore the old feudal overlordship of the Germans over the Czechs, than to hobnob with the sober, middle-class statesmen who were building up the most democratic state in Central Europe. And in other places where wealth without birth is a power in the land, its views count far more heavily than they deserve with diplomats who hold aloof from the real sources of public opinion. I spent a holiday motoring and fishing in New England a few months before the presidential election of 1936, which Mr. Roosevelt won by the largest majority in American history. After talking to the ordinary men and women that one met in drugstores and filling-stations, in hotels and the backwoods, I had little doubt which way the most conservative part of the United States was going to vote—as it did. But when I got back to Washington I found diplomatic circles wagging their heads sagely and cheerfully and saying that Mr. Landon was going to win. They had talked to the bankers and industrialists, who hated the President, and had read the newspapers which they controlled, but they had not been out among the people who really mattered. No doubt they misled their governments at home in consequence.

This comfortable and outworn technique of diplomacy will die hard, but it will go the way of many of the practices and

prejudices of the Edwardian era. The diplomat of the future will have a much more difficult and interesting job. In these days of popular education and propaganda the people rule the leaders as much the leaders rule the people. Even dictatorship is not proof against the surge of popular passion, as Hitler very well knows. Sprung from the people himself, he is intimate with all the strength as well as all the weakness of mass psychology. The passages in *Mein Kampf* which deal with the gentle art of deluding the people have become a classic. The immense importance which he attaches to propaganda shows clearly enough that so far from a dictator's being able to ignore the currents of popular opinion, the control of their direction is vital to him. His task is made vastly easier by the absence of any possible opposition in press, platform, or pulpit; but even so the untiring and multifarious efforts of the Ministry of Propaganda and Enlightenment to keep the thoughts of the German people in the right channels, coupled with the all-pervading vigilance of the Gestapo to prevent their contamination by foreign influences, are a measure of the fear of popular sentiment which besets the rulers of the most dumb and docile public in Europe. Even Hitler does not flatter himself that he can fool all the people all the time without a great deal of hard work.

The importance of public opinion varies in proportion to its means of expression. In all the democracies the arts of popular appeal and persuasion are sedulously cultivated by every political party. No politician dreams that he has a chance of success unless he can get his case over to the electorate. In the end the people decide every major domestic issue, and nowadays they also have a great deal to say on every major foreign issue. The golden age is past when chan-

ceries could carry on the gentlemanly game of foreign affairs in dignified seclusion. The people are always wanting to look over the diplomats' shoulders to see what cards they hold in their hands, and on occasion even demand a voice in the playing. The overthrow of the Hoare-Laval agreement was a notorious instance of such popular interference. In his difficult game of poker with Hitler, Marshal Pétain has been both strengthened and weakened by the knowledge of what a muzzled French public would and would not swallow.

Now this is all very embarrassing for the diplomatic players. The people do not know what diplomatists know of the political, economic, military, and psychological factors which go to make up every international situation. If diplomatists are not always right, public opinion is often wrong, though the political instinct of an educated democracy is apt at times to throw unessentials aside and to reach surprisingly correct judgments on broad issues. But whether right or wrong, the popular sentiment can no longer be neglected as irrelevant. For this reason the conditions of diplomacy have radically altered. It is not just a matter of knowing a small circle of dominant personalities, but of estimating the obscure reactions of millions of obscure individuals. It is an affair which not only nourishes the gossip of political salons, but which resounds through the press and the public houses and the cinemas and every home that possesses a radio. England, like other countries, is beginning to act on this new conception. The British Broadcasting Corporation, broadcasting daily in thirty-nine languages, is a diplomatic instrument of vast potentialities. So are the films which depict to foreign audiences the life and power and thought of Britain. The Foreign Office has its press service and has now broken the tradition of the

old diplomacy by appointing press attachés to the principal embassies and legations abroad. It is their business to present the British case, but this does not mean that ambassadors and ministers can safely confine themselves to the narrow political and diplomatic set. Their personal influence through direct contact with leaders of all shades of opinion can be very considerable, as Lord Lothian demonstrated, though the position of an envoy in a foreign country is bound at all times to be exceedingly delicate. An ill-judged phrase or an untimely meeting may do almost irreparable damage, but those are risks which are unavoidable. It is better to run them than to remain isolated from the vital springs of popular thought and action, by which the foreign policy of a nation is finally determined. As Oswald Spengler put it and as Herr Goebbels has understood, diplomacy is now "an orchestra of brass instruments instead of the old chamber music."

I was fortunate, then, in being compelled by the nature of my business not only to move in political circles, but to make contact with the leaders of industry and of labor in the fifty or more countries which belonged to the International Labor Organization. Of course they came to Geneva for the annual conferences, but one only really got to know them and their problems when one visited them at home. Days spent going over mines and factories, inspecting health insurance clinics and employment exchanges, or speaking at trade-union headquarters, gave me a far better insight into the life and character of a country than if all my time had been spent in government offices or eating official meals, which were many and copious and indigestible. A lot, too, could be learned at public meetings. The presence or absence of the police was always a useful indication of the political complexion of a country. A

few years ago I was lecturing to a most respectable audience in Vienna presided over by a charming old gentleman, the famous Doctor Dumba, the Austrian Minister at Washington in the Great War, who was removed at the request of the United States Government for instigating sabotage in American factories working for the Allies. The room was full, and as the "academic quarter of an hour," which is the Continental excuse for unpunctuality, had already elapsed, I mildly suggested that we might begin. "My dear sir," said the chairman, "don't you see that there are people still standing at the back?" "Yes," I said, "but if there aren't enough chairs, they will have to remain standing." "Strange as it may appear to you," he replied with gentle irony, "that is utterly impossible. In this happy land a paternal police does not permit anyone to stand in a public meeting." Enough had been said. The strength and weakness of the Schuschnigg regime had been revealed by that trivial incident.

Another symptom was the extent to which trade unions were tolerated. Until 1930 the I.L.O. was little troubled on this score. Its constitution required that, in addition to the representatives of governments, there should be employer and labor delegates from each country to the Conference, freely elected from the "most representative organizations of the employers and workers," and it allowed an appeal in case of dispute as to their credentials. In the early days such appeals were comparatively rare, except against the Italian worker on the ground that the Fascist syndicates were not independent bodies but were under the control of the state. Even Japan had accepted the principle of freedom of association, which is an essential feature of any liberal constitution, and had recognized the Japanese Federation of Labor as the electing

body. As the shadow of authoritarianism spread over Europe, however, the scene slowly changed. Protests at the Conference became more frequent, and in 1933 there was a stormy scene when the credentials of Dr. Ley, the leader of the Nazi Labor Front, were challenged. The position was not sweetened by an interview which he gave in an exhilarated postprandial mood to the German-speaking press, in which he described the Latin American delegates as "niggers out of the primeval forest." Not a word of this diplomatic pronouncement was allowed to appear in the press of the Reich, but the cat was let triumphantly out of the bag by a labor paper in Danzig, which was not under Nazi control. Then the trouble began. After an angry meeting the Latin American Governments threatened to leave the Conference unless the German delegation apologized. Hectic telephoning to Berlin ensued, and the Germans issued a total denial of Dr. Ley's utterance. But the Latin Americans knew too much and refused to accept the *démenti.* A deadlock was reached, and many confabulations followed. The Germans accused everyone else of a breach of diplomatic etiquette on the characteristic ground that whatever their government said must be true. In the end, however, they retired hurriedly to Berlin, after the first open clash between the doctrines of freedom and totalitarianism. The Germans never appeared again, but the struggle gradually developed. Open or covert interference with trade-union activities became a common complaint, and in many capitals of Europe, one became conscious of an uneasy sense of oppression among the labor ranks when one visited them. It was not difficult to foresee what might happen in Austria or Spain or Rumania, but one hardly expected it to happen in France.

Awareness of the coming storm came mainly through the experiences of travel. The rising wind only wafted a few straws as far as Geneva, but it did not take long to discover which way it was blowing when one reached the spot. And even then no one wanted to believe it. Everyone tried to shut his eyes and hope for the best. In the face of vast German rearmament, the murder of Dollfuss, the Abyssinian adventure, the totalitarians' intervention in Spain, and innumerable smaller signs of the dictators' intentions, the peoples of the West continued to think as little and as wishfully as possible about the course which Europe was taking. But any traveler who kept his eyes and ears open east of the Rhine could not fail to perceive the menace of Germany and the deadly fear that was creeping over all Germany's neighbors.

Even travel without any political purpose is in itself a political education. Just to pass through foreign countries by car or by train is better than reading many books about them. The swarming throng at an Indian railway station, a hot, mosquito-ridden night in a small Mexican town, the sight of the meticulous little rice fields of Java, a stroll at nightfall through the Chinese bazaar at Singapore, a lonely drive across the endless American prairies, things like these can teach you more about the character and social outlook of a people than volumes of statistics or treatises on sociology. Most travelers must have found, as I have, that their ideas of other countries derived from books were never right. There is no short cut which provides any substitute for personal experience, but once acquired it puts all one's reading in a new and richer light. A whole panorama of pictures rises at will before one's mind, each full of its own suggestion. A day during the great

slump among the palm trees and minarets of Damietta, where there was not a single bank or a single European, made one reflect on the advantages of a primitive economy, for everyone was working and no one was starving. An evening meal on the Bay of Salamis made one realize why the Greeks had always been seamen and fishermen. A drink in a bar at Edmonton with a dozen Canadians sprung from as many nationalities or an encounter with a coal-black Customs officer in Jamaica talking the King's English and proudly wearing the King's uniform or a trip through the native territory of the Transkei reveals more about the real meaning of the British Empire than any schoolbook can impart. To fly northwards from Chile to the Panama Canal, stopping each night in some new and utterly different place—Arequipa nestling at the foot of the Andes, Trujillo or Guayaquil stewing on the Equator, Cristobal replete with all the adjuncts of American civilization from the ice water and the fly netting to the Bible beside your bed—these and all such travel experiences impress upon the mind the astonishing versatility of nature and the inexhaustible adaptability of man.

To come home with these varied foreign scenes in the mind's eye was to discover afresh the beauties of our own island. The quiet meadows of Oxfordshire with their spreading elms and their tall hedges spangled with wild roses, their cows swishing at the flies under the willows by the gentle waters of the Windrush or the Evenlode, the trim stone cottages of the Cotswolds or the beechwoods of the Chilterns, the soft slopes of the Berkshire and Wiltshire downs, the sands and cliffs of Dorset, Hampshire, and Sussex, the summer green of the Welsh hills or the autumn brown of the heather

and bracken of Scotland, all these familiar charms took on a new grace and loveliness against the background of foreign experience. It was good too to see that change was not all for the bad. Though the fields of boyhood were being eaten up by sprawling suburbs, their neat little villas and bungalows were better and more sightly homes than the hideous rows of cramped uniform houses which had filled the stunted imagination of the Victorian builder. England seemed terribly overcrowded in comparison with the open countrysides of France or Eastern Europe, still more with the endless vistas of Canada, South Africa, and the United States. But if England was overurbanized, it was at least evolving a higher standard of city life than could be found in most other countries. Despite the lack of elbowroom, it was still fighting gallantly against the gaunt blocks of tenements which infested so many Continental and American cities like shapeless ant heaps. The Englishman still prized his right to privacy at home and refused to become one of a crowd. By doing so he made the housing problem much more complicated, but his instinct was right. Though his cities might not be beautiful, they were making great strides in improving the decencies and amenities of urban existence. Though there was still far too much dirt and poverty, the effects of social progress could be seen on every hand. The younger generation was better fed, better housed, more healthy, and more intelligent than their parents had been. Though much remained to do, as the war evacuation of the great towns too plainly revealed, the mounting progress of the last twenty years could not but strike the occasional visitor more forcibly than those who lived with it year in and year out and who had no standards of foreign comparison.

The best method of discovering one's own country is to return to it after long intervals of sojourn in strange lands.

The past century has seen a tremendous revolution in travel. In 1840 the voyage from Liverpool to New York took anything from a fortnight to three weeks. By 1939 it had been reduced to four days and a half by sea and to twenty-four hours by air. In the old days the traveler from Paris to Bordeaux needed sixty hours for the journey. Before the war one could travel from Paris to Moscow in forty-five hours by rail and in less than half that time by air. The conquest of distance has been so rapid that the Europe of today is no larger than the Switzerland of yesterday. In the eighteenth century the Grand Tour of Europe was an essential part of every English gentleman's education. Nowadays a world tour is just as easy and even more essential. For this shrinkage of the world is a fact of immense political import. Whether we like it or not, the planet is becoming a single community in spite of all its varieties of climate, race, and culture. In the economic sphere this fact was made plain by the great slump of 1929-32. There was no country in the five continents which did not feel its impact more or less rudely, whatever its economic structure or political constitution. And if economics are world-wide, so are politics. The two are inseparable. The political implications of the present struggle are being gradually brought home to every country in Asia and the Americas as well as Europe. Its outcome will affect all their futures profoundly for better or for worse. This means that their problems of the future are to some extent our problems, and our problems are their problems. When the time comes, the task of political and economic reconstruction will not be a national but an interna-

tional affair. Its problems will be world problems, and unless they are tackled as such, the last state will not be much better than the first, which gave birth to the present upheaval. It is now a small world in which we live. To understand that is the key to the future.

CHAPTER TWO: GENEVA

There is only one thing worse than Injustice and that is Justice without her sword in her hand.

OSCAR WILDE

MANY roads lead to Geneva, and all are beautiful. Run along the edge of the lake from Lausanne and the east with the pine-clad ridge of the Jura on the right and the whole gorgeous panorama of the Mont Blanc chain on the left. Or come from the south down the valley of the gray, rushing Avre from Chamonix, or from the west through the narrow gap of Bellegarde, through which the Rhone sweeps its majestic torrent. Or better still take Napoleon's route from the north over the Sickle Pass, which winds its way down in generous curves to the broad vale of Lac Léman.

All these approaches to Geneva are a worthy introduction to it, but none of them quite equals the approach by air. As you fly southwards above the Burgundian plain, you suddenly see the broad, white throne of Mont Blanc towering against an azure sky. The old man of the mountain reposes up there in lordly eternity, dwarfing the lesser feats of nature and the puny activities of man. And as the plane glides on over the forests of the Jura, intersected with steep, green valleys and dotted with tiny chalets, the whole assembly of peaks rises slowly up in support of the giant, from Mont Cenis to the Dent d'Oche and the distant Monte Rosa. Once over the Jura crest, the great lake with its blue and silver mirror stretching

away in a graceful half moon lies spread under one's eyes, and at the end the pleasant white houses of the city with its water-spout rising into the air like a blossoming white flower and the tall poplars of Rousseau's island marking the escape of the Rhone towards the sea.

The world affords many glorious spectacles, but none more glorious than the Geneva scene. Familiarity only enhances its charm and grandeur. In eighteen years I never saw it twice the same. Its permutations of light and shadow, cloud and brilliance, benignity and menace, were endless. From my house on the slopes of Pregny I watched the sun making its daily progress across the mountain snows and the placid waters without ever exhausting the infinite range of their beauty, which no painter and no poet has ever succeeded in recording. Political Geneva was often a history of the failures and disappointments and pettinesses of men, but the glory of its setting restored them to perspective. It gave a sense of permanence and peace which reduced the agitated flux of human affairs to its just proportions.

To the stranger within its gates Geneva was a bright and hospitable city, once he had broken through the stolidity of the Swiss exterior. In fact it is not very Genevese, for one-third of its inhabitants are "Confederates" from other cantons, and another third French. But it still preserves a distinct personality of its own. The old aristocratic families, *les familles patriciennes*, as they like to call themselves, still maintained an aloof and slightly injured dignity, living in their ancestral residences in the Old Town during the winter and in their pleasant country mansions a few miles out in the summer. They naturally took some umbrage at the intrusion of a crowd of foreigners into their domain. The League meet-

ings with their comings and goings of ministers accompanied by their retinues of officials, journalists, and hangers-on of all kinds, male and female, disturbed the slumbering peace of the old Geneva and sadly reduced the importance of local affairs. In the early years too there was some resentment against the League among the people at large, who believed that somehow it had driven away the old-fashioned tourists on whom they had lived before the Great War. They did not realize that with the motor car and the ski the Victorian conception of placid holidays spent between the hotel and the casino with an occasional trip in a steamer at ten knots was a thing of the past. This commercial prejudice faded as international gatherings became more frequent and more extravagant. At no time, however, can it be said that the Genevese were enthusiastic about the League for its own sake. In their hearts the Swiss always trusted more to their tradition of neutrality than to a system of collective security, in which, sandwiched between three great powers, they might be called upon to play the uncomfortable role of supplying the battlefield. But they are decent, sturdy people, democrats to the core, passionately attached to their individual and national independence. The ghost of Calvin still haunts the streets of Geneva spasmodically but not oppressively. On the nights of the *Escalade*, the winter carnival, it vanishes discreetly and entirely. All classes are careful of their sous, but there are no slums and little poverty. A high level of education and comfort all round has not made them poets or artists, but just a happy, sensible people, who become very good friends when you get to know them. More ambitious social policies have produced far less solid results than are to be found in Switzerland.

In any case Geneva, with its Swiss background, was the

right capital for the League. Although it was so designated in the Treaty of Peace, there were rumors of Brussels or Vienna or some other more imposing city supplanting it. Indeed, had Albert Thomas not decided in 1920 to establish the International Labor Office in Geneva without further delay, who can say whether the League would ever have got there? Elsewhere it would inevitably have got mixed up in the struggle between fascism and democracy, which in the thirties was more or less violently agitating every country on the Continent except Switzerland and Scandinavia. Whatever other troubles it had to contend with, the League could always count on the silent sympathy of the Swiss with the ideas for which it stood and a complete absence of local pressure or interference. In this respect both the Federal Government and the people played their part with an admirable restraint and propriety. Whatever qualifications their attachment to neutrality placed on their support for the League's political action, no complaint could ever be made of their general attitude.

Why then did the League fail in these propitious surroundings? It is far too soon to undertake an inquest, and this would certainly not be the place to attempt it. Until the archives of the foreign ministries are laid bare, no one can estimate accurately how near it was to success and what were the precise reasons for its final failure. There are, however, a few general reflections which suggest themselves, perhaps more readily to those who lived through the whole experience month by month and year by year than to those who only attended periodical meetings or never saw Geneva at all. The outsider may often see more of the game than the players, but those in

the melee know some things about the actual play which escape the spectator's more distant view.

The notion that Geneva was just a second Tower of Babel bound to fall through the confusion of tongues was certainly untrue. The administration of the League and the I.L.O. was never hampered by difficulties of language to any serious extent. Both had enthusiastic and able staffs, which worked well together. The indiscriminate use of English and French for office purposes quickly became an easy working habit. In the meetings of the League, too, most of the delegates knew one or the other well enough for practical purposes. Furthermore, though interpretations were a great nuisance and apparently wasted much time, they had their advantages as well as their drawbacks. How often did one not see a hot retort simmering down into a temperate reply, while the colorless voice of the interpreter was reducing a provocative speech to the bare bones of its substance? Stripped of their flesh of verbiage, the bones sometimes looked very bare indeed! Of course it was a damping process for natural eloquence, but in any case oratory counted for little in the Assembly. The outside world sometimes pictured it as a gathering of utopian visionaries and well-meaning cranks. In point of fact it was a pretty hard-boiled collection of politicians, diplomats, and officials, all tied down by their instructions, most of them much more given to cynicism than idealism. Ramsay MacDonald's homilies left it cold. The studied, mechanical oratory of the classical French school, practiced by Viviani and Paul-Boncour, was frankly looked upon at first as a histrionic performance and later as an infliction. What impressed the delegates was not the form, but the matter. If a man was trying to say something, they would listen. If he really said something, they would listen with

attention—especially if the speaker represented a great power. Men like Lord Balfour, Monsieur Briand, and Lord Cecil who always had something to say and who said it quietly and well obtained a real hold over them. As in most modern assemblies, character and sincerity were always held in high respect and carried far more weight when oratorical artifices were discarded.

An international assembly never generates the same heat as a parliamentary gathering with its rapid fire of interjection and challenge; but that is no bad thing. Heat is the last element with which to forge international understanding. As time went on, however, the Assembly of the League tended to lose its parliamentary character altogether. The "declaration," carefully prepared, neatly typed, and often monotonously read, took the place of speeches. The proceedings became not only decorous but dull. The life went out of the debates and was transferred to the lobbies of the hotels where the hard diplomatic bargaining was in progress behind closed doors, afterwards to be recorded in some agreed formula or in a series of prearranged statements. This change of technique may have been unavoidable: it is hard to blame delegates with the interests of great nations in their hands for taking every precaution. But the result was undoubtedly to sap the League of some of its vitality.

In the Conferences of the I.L.O., however, freedom of speech was largely preserved, thanks to the presence of employers and trade-union delegates, who were not overburdened by official instructions and the cares of state. Discussion was therefore often lively and direct, but the language difficulty was greater, for few of the delegates, even on the government seats, were professional diplomats, and many knew

no language but their own. But Geneva at its worst never witnessed the dumbness which sometimes afflicted delegations in earlier times. My first international experience was in 1910 as secretary to the British delegation at a conference on "aerial navigation," as it was called in those days, held in Paris under the old rules, which prescribed French as the only official tongue. We had a splendid delegation of sailors, soldiers, and civil servants, but we suffered from a collective inability to speak the language of Voltaire, though the Admiral who led us was supposed to know something of Rabelais. We had a lot to say and important national interests to defend, but the soldiers and sailors were usually silent in all languages, including their own, and it was left to the senior civilian to present the case for the British Empire in the most excruciating French. This he proceeded to do with admirable perseverance and growing confidence, though his accent and grammar were irreparable, until one night the Admiral entertained us all to dinner at the *Ambassadeurs*. Stimulated to the veracity which champagne sometimes inspires, he suddenly turned on my unfortunate chief and said, "My dear Smith, you are the bravest man I know, and I know many. How you have the courage to stand up and talk that atrocious French beats me altogether." After that the communications of the British delegation to the conference were made in writing, unless they could be compressed into a monosyllable. But then even Lord Balfour was once heard to declare to a Frenchman that the only French he really understood was Mr. Lloyd George's.

Yet if language was not a serious source of weakness to the League, there were many others. The assumption on which it was built was that, as it would embrace the whole world,

there would be no country strong enough or rash enough to disturb the peace in the face of the collective opposition of all its members. When it was first launched in 1920, this was true, even in the absence of the United States and Russia. Europe was dominated by Britain and France, who together were powerful enough to suppress any disorder, if they really used their authority in support of the League. Germany was disarmed and helpless. Russia was still in revolutionary eruption and had ceased to count as a military power. Japan was isolated and a long way off, so that no trouble need be expected from that quarter. In these circumstances there seemed every chance of maintaining peace. Germany would settle down in time and could then be admitted to the League as a new boy on his best behavior. Disarmament would follow some time after that, and then the new order would become securely established.

For ten years this state of passive equilibrium continued, but its continuance failed to buttress the fragile new edifice against subsequent shocks. "Collective security" remained a phrase rather than a fact. In the last resort it was meaningless, unless the general will to suppress any breach of the peace was translated into practical engagements, economic, naval, and military, which would ensure the prompt and effective mobilization of the forces of order the moment that war was threatened. The most important attempt made in this direction was the drafting of the Protocol at the instigation of the British and French Governments in 1924. This document contained an automatic definition of an "aggressor" as a state which refused to submit any matter in dispute to a new procedure for pacific settlement under the direction of the Council. Should a country be declared guilty of "aggression" by

the Council, every member state would at once be obliged to take action against it not only by financial and economic pressure, but also by military force "in the degree which its geographical position and its particular situation as regards armaments allow." For both types of action detailed schemes were to be drawn up in advance. The Protocol was recommended unanimously by the Assembly for adoption by the Governments, but it perished in the following year, mainly on account of the opposition of Britain and the Dominions. The reasons which prompted this opposition were intelligible enough at the time, but look strangely mistaken in the light of what is happening now. The objections of the Dominions were summed up by Senator Dandurand as delegate for Canada: "In this association of mutual insurance against fire, the risks assumed by the different states are not equal. We live in a fireproof house, far from inflammable material." That was the prevalent feeling not only of the Dominions, but of other non-European countries. They thought they were living in a big world. Europe was thousands of miles away; therefore nothing that happened there was likely to affect them vitally. They did not have this attitude on emerging from the World War; then they had subscribed willingly enough to the Covenant. But when, only five years later, the Protocol was framed to implement it, the drift back to isolationism was already so strong that they repudiated it.

This was without doubt the first turning point at which the League turned downhill instead of up. It is futile to reproach the Dominions or Britain. Their reluctance to commit themselves in advance to a system of mutual defense, with all its unpredictable obligations, was shared by most, if not all, members of the League, as its subsequent history demon-

strated in connection with Manchuria, Abyssinia, the Chaco, Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Albania. Nor was this reluctance merely due to the timidity of the national leaders. It largely reflected the existing state of public opinion. No country, when it came to the point, was ready to pledge the lives of its soldiers and sailors "in other nations' quarrels." Many people still thought that the last war had ended war, while those who didn't had seen enough of war to be determined to avoid it at almost any price. This attitude was perhaps rather more outspoken among the English-speaking nations, who have a horror of indefinite commitments and a strong predilection in favor of taking fences only when they can see them. It had already prompted the American people to reject the Covenant and to decline the guarantee of the French frontiers, which President Wilson had been prepared to accept on their behalf, with far-reaching consequences on the history of the League and of the world. The same attitude settled the fate of the Protocol, the most resolute attempt made "to put teeth into the League." The fact was that the great majority of mankind was still thinking of the world in nineteenth-century terms. Geographical remoteness was still measured by Victorian standards. To the Americas the Atlantic still seemed an impregnable barrier against the troubles of Europe, while to most Europeans the Far East might have been on another planet. If they had been told that the first application of the Protocol would be in Manchuria and the second in Abyssinia, their enthusiasm for it would have been considerably chastened.

That then was the root trouble of the League. Public opinion was not educated to its necessity. The terrible argument of the Great War carried conviction for the moment, but the

consequences of that argument when pressed to its logical conclusion were too revolutionary to be easily assimilated by the man in the street. He had been taught at school to look on the world as a collection of separate states, each of which ran a lonely, selfish race against all the others. Even if some devil did occasionally catch the hindmost, every runner felt that all was well as long as he escaped. The average citizen of every nation had never been taught to think of himself as a member of a world society, with obligations to it similar to those that he owed to his town or his country. Though he was ready enough to pay five shillings in the pound for income tax, he was apt to grudge the halfpenny stamp which represented his contribution to the League. He was accustomed to maintain a police force to preserve internal law and order, but was shocked at the idea of participating in a collective effort to maintain law and order among nations by the use of force, if necessary. Some of the younger generation might be imbibing such newfangled ideas, but with the great mass of the older folk of all nations and all classes the traditional outlook on the world survived the shock which it had received from the Great War.

The charge against the statesmen who spoke glowingly at Geneva of the "League spirit" and the new era which it portended is that with a limited number of honorable exceptions they did nothing to educate their national opinion when they got home. Most of them dwelt upon the value and the significance of League gatherings and by doing so created the comfortable impression that as long as these went on all would be well. Enthusiastic supporters of the League somehow imagined that collective discussion could be substituted for collective action. In very few, if any, countries did the

public realize that in the last resort international law and order, like domestic law and order, could only be ensured by the use or by the threat of force. No doubt this idea was implicit in the Covenant, but nowhere did it become an axiom of national policy. In pacifist quarters the notion of a League "to enforce peace" was hotly denounced as a contradiction in terms. But if the League as an organization for the preservation of peace was debarred from the use of force, it was ultimately at the mercy of those nations which were prepared to use force. Its doom was sealed when Japan, Italy, and Germany felt strong enough to defy it. There were few politicians or statesmen, however, who had the courage to make the issue clear on the public platform. For the most part they were afraid of being accused of "warmongering." They preferred the easier course of swimming with the current of popular wishful thinking to the risk of indisposing their electors. Even those who demanded the maintenance of the authority of the League and the imposition of sanctions were often unwilling to face the logical consequences and to insist simultaneously on the armaments necessary for the execution of their policy.

On the other side there were those who decried the League and scoffed at collective security. The old school of politicians in Britain and France did so because they were still isolationists at heart. They hated the international restrictions which the Covenant imposed on national freedom of action. Others again were openly or secretly in sympathy with fascism as the bulwark against further encroachments on the existing order from the left. They harped on the punctuality of the Italian trains and eagerly swallowed Hitler's claim to be the savior of Europe from Bolshevism. Most of them delib-

erately shut their eyes to the evidence of the dictators' preparations for war, but were ready to support any diplomatic sacrifice rather than run the risks involved in upholding the crumbling fabric of the European system. Mr. Churchill was almost alone in preaching from 1932 onwards the dual policy of "arm and stand by the Covenant." In that policy alone, as he said, lay "the assurance of safety, the defense of freedom, and the hope of peace." But his words fell on deaf ears in the great democracies of the West. They were not echoed by any of their party leaders.

In default of a strong lead from above, public opinion floundered in a bog of muddled thinking, with the result that at each successive international crisis Britain and France were neither strong enough nor united enough to meet the threat of war by organizing collective resistance to aggression, upon which peace and their national safety depended. The public was no doubt much to blame for its shortsightedness, but a much heavier responsibility rested upon the national leaders who failed to make plain the appalling dangers which the collapse of the League system would inevitably entail.

As for the smaller countries, their position was unenviable indeed, but with a few exceptions they too were dominated by antiquated and hopeful thinking. Even under the shadow of Germany's vast armaments most of them could not admit to themselves that their national existence was menaced and that their only hope of preserving it lay in their assuming their part of the military burden of upholding the peace. They insisted upon their rights as equal members of the League, but were unwilling to undertake commitments which might expose them to the charge of being "unneutral" towards the dictators. Holland, Belgium, Switzerland, and the Scan-

dinavian countries put more faith in their traditional neutrality than in any system of collective action. Their attitude might possibly have been different had Britain and France given decisive leadership in the building up of a European system of mutual aid, but even then would not the "neutral" countries have suspected them of aiming at hegemony? Czechoslovakia and Poland, on the other hand, were hampered by no historical traditions and well understood the peril of their position. They had no illusions about Germany's intentions and, though they were unable to compose their own differences, asked for nothing better than to play their part in guaranteeing European security. At great sacrifice they built up powerful military organizations, which, if integrated in a Continental system of security headed by Britain and France and in all probability supported by Russia, might have been the determining factor in checkmating Hitler's designs.

But these things were not to be. The conception of such an order in Europe was too new to win general acceptance among the older countries, great or small. Given the strength of the old tradition in men's minds the constitution of the League implied a revolution in their outlook which could only have been effected by an intensive and persistent campaign of education conducted by the national leaders. The gulf between the old state of international separatism and something like a world federation was too broad to be taken in one jump. To expect national loyalties to be subordinated overnight to an international allegiance was asking too much, unless the latter was plainly shown to be the only sure foundation of national safety under modern conditions. Even that demonstration would probably have proved too difficult without some intermediate stage. As far as men had conceived any

sentiment broader than the national sentiment, it was regional rather than international. In the Americas there existed a bond of common interest and outlook, which was tentatively taking shape in the Pan American Union. Geographical, economic, and ideological ties held together a number of different races in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The Moslem view of life, which was shared by the nations of the Middle East, might possibly have drawn them in time into some sort of political affiliation.

There was also the British Commonwealth, a peculiar community of races and nations, which had to some extent solved the problem of reconciling national independence with collective action on matters of external policy and defense. It was always interesting to watch its delegations at Geneva. They frequently differed among themselves and voted against each other. This independence of the Dominions and its toleration by Britain was a constant source of bewilderment to foreigners, some of whom concluded that the British Empire was nothing but a façade with no internal cohesion, while the clever ones thought that these gestures of disagreement concealed some deep-laid plot manufactured in Downing Street. They did not see that the first working model of a League of Nations was functioning before their eyes, but the common front with which the British nations have met the dictators in the present war has shown how free peoples can work together harmoniously and effectively for a common end. The British Commonwealth no doubt possesses a number of particular features, which could hardly be faithfully copied, but its constitution, or rather absence of constitution, deserves much more attention as a possible method of international organization than it has so far received.

In Europe, where most of the trouble was apt to arise, there had been no attempt at Continental organization. Its races had been so deeply and bitterly divided for centuries that they no longer looked upon themselves as a society as they had in the days of medieval Christendom. Such sense of European solidarity as existed was watery in the extreme. The realization of the need for economic co-operation had scarcely dawned. A French commercial traveler or a Spanish peasant recognized no sort of affinity to a Swedish lumberman or a Rumanian shepherd. Only in the ranks of organized labor was there a community of aim and sentiment, which did much to facilitate the work of international co-operation in the International Labor Organization. And yet the wider objects of the Covenant were clearly unattainable unless the rule of law could first be established in Europe. If its principle had first been applied on a continental rather than a universal scale, if an attempt had been made to deal with disputes first by means of the groups to which they belonged before submitting them automatically to the arbitrament of a world body, greater success might have been achieved. One or two experiments were in fact tried on these lines. The Treaties of Locarno were really an attempt to reach the resettlement of Europe which had not been established at Versailles. Had they been followed, or still better preceded, by an attempt to give Europe a workable economy, the political history of the last ten years might have been different. Although they broke the old economic structure of Europe into fragments, the Treaties of Peace contained no economic provisions whatsoever, except to impose vast but unspecified reparations on Germany and to refuse her equal trade relations for a period of five years. The real accusation against the treaty-makers is not that they drew

unworkable frontiers, but that having drawn the frontiers, they made too little effort to render them workable. As J. M. Keynes wrote at the time, "a great part of the Continent was sick and dying. Its population was greatly in excess of the numbers for which a livelihood was available; its organization was destroyed, its transport system ruptured and its food supplies terribly impaired." [1] Never had the economic reconstruction of Europe been so necessary, but the Treaties contributed nothing to it. They stuck to the old political ruts, which the chariots of peacemakers had always followed, without realizing that the whole fabric of the new Europe was condemned to disruption unless it could be given a solid economic basis. The League patched up Austria and Hungary by a piece of brilliant improvisation, but the attempts to rationalize the economics of the Danube basin failed completely. In 1930, ten years too late, a Committee on European Union was set up at Geneva on Monsieur Briand's motion, but it had no plan, political or economic. From the first it was a suspect child; its early demise surprised no one.

By that time, however, the collapse of the European economy had begun. Under the fierce impact of the great slump the whole crazy edifice came crashing to the ground. From its ruins all the forces of despair and disorder, which had been burrowing under the surface, rushed into the open. The triumph of Hitler was assured. With its economic independence shown to be impossible, the political independence of Austria became the plaything of Germany and Italy. The feeble keystone of the Central European arch was cracking and wobbling. The foundering of the whole structure which it supported was scarcely more than a question of time. No

[1] *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*, Harcourt, Brace, 1920.

longer surrounded by powerful neighbors or restrained by any collective system of general security, Germany was free to follow the example of Japan in defying the League and to plunge Europe once more into chaos.

From 1931 onwards one felt that the sun had departed from Geneva and that the cold shadows were creeping on the League. But to some there was still hope in the Disarmament Conference, which after much diligent preparation met in February, 1932. It could hardly have been convened at a less propitious moment. Its only chance of success was at a time when the political barometer stood at "set fair," whereas it was then running down towards "stormy." While some people regarded general disarmament as a condition of peace, others regarded general peace as a condition of disarmament. Both were right. As long as armaments stood at a high level, the danger of some combination of military states trying to overthrow the existing order was always present. The preservation of peace against those who sought to disturb it, however, could not in the last resort be ensured, except by force. Even the conciliatory functions of the League could not be confidently discharged without the threat of force in the background. As Lord Robert Cecil has pointed out, the failure of the League to settle the quarrel between Poland and Lithuania over Vilna had as early as 1921 afforded "a melancholy demonstration, since repeatedly renewed, that mediatorial efforts without force behind them are ineffective." [2] It was therefore necessary that the principal League powers should retain sufficient armed strength to make any attempt to disturb the peace too hazardous to be worth while. Up till 1929 this state of affairs obtained in spite of some reduction of British naval

[2] *A Great Experiment*, Oxford University Press, p. 128.

and military establishments, largely prompted by the belief that extravagant expenditure on the army and navy was pure waste of money when no possible war was in sight. The undoubted prestige of the League during its first ten years ultimately reposed on the fact that only Italy and Hungary were aggressively inclined and that neither separately nor in alliance were they strong enough to challenge it with success.

In 1932, however, the position was very different. As a consequence of the slump Europe had fallen into a violent fit of unrest. Germany was again responding to the call of the most unbridled nationalist propaganda, and if unchecked by a show of force might be expected to break loose once more. Mussolini was loudly extolling the beauty of machine guns and proclaiming his intention of resuscitating the Roman Empire by a policy of opportunist aggression. Of the success which such a policy might achieve with skillful timing Japan had just furnished a striking example. When reduced to essentials, the Manchurian affair had demonstrated that without the certainty of wholehearted American co-operation the League powers, that is to say, the naval powers of Britain and France, were neither strong enough nor determined enough to bar the Japanese militarists in their attack on China. The significance of this demonstration was not lost on the Disarmament Conference, especially as the second phase of the attack had begun with fierce fighting at Shanghai four days before the Conference met. Japan's refusal to consider disarmament seriously did not provide it with a good start. That in such circumstances France, the Little Entente, and Poland should have displayed growing reluctance to pull down their defenses was hardly surprising. In spite of all the ingenious plans put forward for "quantitative" or "qualitative" disarm-

ament the Conference assumed an air of progressive unreality. As the European horizon darkened, everyone knew in the back of his mind that none of the restive states were going to renounce their weapons of attack and none of their possible victims their weapons of defense, which meant in effect that no one was going to give up any weapon whatever. Mr. Arthur Henderson as President struggled heroically against the tide, but his task was hopeless from the first. The Conference did not fail because Britain declined to abandon the bomber or because France refused to include trained reserves in the computation of military strength or because Hitler's offer to limit the German army to three hundred thousand men was not accepted at its face value. The fact was that all the subtle disputation over tonnage and effectives and air potentials was so much logomachy unless there was a general will to disarm, which plainly did not exist. Mr. Arthur Henderson summed up the whole matter when he wrote in his final report to the Conference that "none of the political difficulties foreshadowed during the proceedings of the Preparatory Commission and reflected in the Draft Convention framed by that Commission had been solved as between the Powers primarily concerned." In other words, political settlement was the necessary precursor of disarmament, and that settlement had not been effected by the Peace Treaties or during the years which followed them. Until there was a real settlement, there could be no general disarmament, because no one believed that peace was secure as long as some countries were known to be scheming and watching for the first chance to overthrow it. The choice before Europe was not between arms or the Covenant, but between arms *and* the Covenant or chaos. And in the end it was chaos.

Still there were times when hope flared up for a moment that the road which ultimately led to Abyssinia, Munich, and Vichy might yet be barred. Sir Samuel Hoare's famous speech in support of collective action against aggression galvanized the Assembly to a last effort to enforce peace. But the knowing ones were well aware that France under the sinister guidance of Laval would never play her part in blocking Italy's path. Even the Left parties in France were lukewarm. At bottom they were for the most part as reluctant as the British Conservatives to support any action which might lead to war with Italy. Neither Britain nor France was sufficiently united on the issue to make them fit to fight on it unless their governments gave them a decisive lead. On the French side the fear of Germany and the fond hope of securing Italian aid in checking Hitler divided counsel. On the British side when it came to an embargo on oil for the Italian forces, all sorts of invidious questions were whispered. Was the navy really capable of fighting the Italian fleet? Would it not encourage Bolshevism if Mussolini were beaten? And another more pertinent question, Who could be sure of the attitude of the United States? However favorable President Roosevelt might be to League action, could he or anyone guarantee that Congress would act in opposition to the powerful American oil interests? In answer it was freely hinted in American circles that contrary to expectation the President had actually induced these interests to co-operate in enforcing the embargo, but as the United States was not represented at the Council table, these hints did not become converted into official statements. As in the case of Manchuria, the absence of America from the Council table was a fatal weakness to the League. Its architects had planned it as a world-embracing institution, but

their plan had never been realized. The first two big tests of its strength showed that after all the world was a single whole. It became clear that no large-scale action to hamstring war by cutting off supplies was possible against Italy or Japan without American co-operation, and it is equally certain that the Pan American Union could not have constrained Bolivia and Paraguay in their quarrel over the Chaco by economic pressure without the co-operation of Europe. Though regional organizations might have done much to remove the underlying causes of war, in the last resort the combined action of the world as a whole has become necessary to stifle a major conflict, once it has broken out. The world is too small a place nowadays for peace to be divisible.

From the Abyssinian episode onwards the League was clearly on the wane. Germany, Italy, and Japan having withdrawn, only three out of the seven major powers in the world acknowledged membership. As a result, in the crises of the succeeding years it was deliberately left on one side. The appeals of the Spanish Government against the invasion of Spain by German and Italian troops were uncomfortably shelved. Neither Austria nor Czechoslovakia made any attempt to save their independence by invoking the aid of their fellow-members under the Covenant, no doubt because they knew that there was no willingness anywhere to honor its obligations.

Yet even at that late hour the League might have been made a formidable barrier to the militarist powers if it had been used to organize collective resistance to their ambitions under vigorous leadership from Britain and France. On the single occasion when this method was adopted it met with instantaneous success. The conference at Nyon called to stop Italian pi-

racy in the Mediterranean was a League conference held a few miles away from Geneva out of a mistaken deference to Italian dictation. In four days it was agreed that Britain and France with the co-operation of the smaller Mediterranean powers would establish a naval patrol and sink any submarine attacking merchantmen. Not a single merchant vessel was sunk thereafter. In Lord Cecil's view, "similarly vigorous procedure could have stopped the Spanish War." [3] There can be little doubt that he is right, at any rate to the extent that the despatch of external assistance could have been stopped and the Spaniards left to fight it out by themselves. The Franco-British fleets in the Mediterranean could have enforced a blockade against men and war material entering Spain from abroad as easily as they frightened the Italian submarines. A single setback to the dictators by collective action would have had a double effect—it would have made them cautious and would have encouraged the other countries of Europe to believe that if they stood together, the Axis might be halted. The supposition that the smaller countries would not have played their part under British and French leadership was not borne out by their attitude to sanctions and the Nyon patrol. Most of them took their share in both, because they knew well enough that their only hope was in the League. The electric effect of Sir Samuel Hoare's speech was due to the belief that it meant that Britain was prepared to give a strong lead against the totalitarians. As I left the Assembly Hall after hearing it, one of the Czech delegates said to me, "That speech has changed the whole outlook and has given a hope of peace to Europe."

[3] *Op. cit.*, p. 292.

The collective method had at least a far better chance of success than any other method. The tremendous efforts which Germany and Italy made to undermine the League both inside and outside Geneva are the best proof that they feared it. Had they thought it a negligible quantity, they would not have taken such pains to destroy it. It is possible that even collective action would not have prevented war, but it would have at least ensured the war's taking place under conditions much more favorable to the democracies. We should not have witnessed the tragic spectacle of country after country being destroyed easily and separately, because their aggregate strength was never brought to bear. After all, in politics as in most other things the old simple truths do not lose their validity. The resisting power of a bundle of sticks is much greater than that of each single stick in the bundle. In the League the instrument for making the bundle was fashioned, but unhappily for us all it was never used.

In comparison with the thorny and difficult path of the League, the road of the International Labor Organization was relatively smooth. It had one inestimable advantage. From the start everyone admitted, in principle at any rate, that the industrial and social questions with which it dealt were more than national questions. However much each nation might think its political problems peculiar to itself, no one could deny that its economic and social problems were inextricably mixed up with those of all other nations. The markets of the world being open to all, the producers who supplied them with foodstuffs, raw materials, and manufactures were all competitors in the same field. Their labor costs in the shape of wages and social charges were large elements in the success or failure of their business. Industrial rivalry was no longer

confined to a few "advanced" nations. British textiles, which had so long been supreme in the East, no longer were competing just with each other but had to meet the products of Japanese, Indian, and Chinese mills. Their prosperity and that of their workpeople were thus directly affected by the wages and conditions of employment in Osaka, Bombay, and Shanghai. As the possibilities of machinery worked by unskilled labor expanded, new industries of all kinds were springing up all over the globe in competition with the old industries of Britain, France, Germany, and the United States. Countries like Argentina, Australia, Mexico, and Poland, and even Iran and Egypt, which in the past had exchanged the products of their soil for manufactured goods, were now setting up their own manufacturing plants. The social problem was world-wide, because industry and agriculture were world-wide. No country could afford to neglect it, but no country could hope to solve it in isolation. It could only be tackled by an international body.

These truths were so obvious that the principles of the I.L.O. received a general assent which the League never commanded. There could be no question of keeping Germany out, for she was a formidable industrial rival. She was therefore admitted in 1919 at the first Conference. When Brazil left the League, she retained her membership in the I.L.O. So for some years did Japan, while in 1934 the United States under the impulse of President Roosevelt more than filled the place which had been vacated by Germany.

In a sense this situation presented a curious paradox. In the economic field as a whole governments still clung to the old belief in national remedies for their difficulties. They declined to put into practice the findings of the League Economic

Conference in 1927 and failed to reach any agreement at all at the London Economic Conference of 1933. Yet in the industrial section of the economic field they never questioned the need for international discussion and agreement. This was no doubt partly because the facts of industrial competition were so patently international, but it may be doubted whether they would have been so easily recognized as such without the presence of the representatives of industry. The trade-union group were always acutely conscious of the difficulty of raising the standards of their own people in the face of foreign competition. They produced a series of effective leaders and a powerful team spirit, which made their steady advocacy of broad international measures impressive and fruitful. The employers on their side were little disposed to dispute the general thesis of the labor group for they too were keenly aware of their own difficulties in retaining their foreign markets. Under this double pressure, then, the governments realized that there was a body of influential and organized public opinion behind the I.L.O. such as was never concentrated behind the League.

The International Labor Office was fortunate too in securing a leader of exceptional quality. In Albert Thomas, its first Director, it possessed a man of tremendous vision and energy, who regarded himself as the apostle of a new religion. His overflowing personality, his sparkling blue eyes behind his gold-rimmed spectacles, his luxuriant beard, his stocky, vigorous form, and his quick, incisive speech marked him at once as an outstanding figure. But he was not merely a formidable debater, a tireless worker, and a great fighter. He not only had tremendous faith in his mission and inexhaustible resource in executing it; in addition, he was an extremely warmhearted

human person, a brilliant and witty talker, as good a companion at a dinner table as one could wish to find. His experience as Minister of Munitions in France and his passionate sympathy with small nations had armed him with a breadth of view and a knowledge of European politics and politicians which he put to full use. By the force of his personality he made for the Director of the Office a position which the Secretary-General of the League was never accorded. It was the Director's business to lead. He spoke on every subject and whenever he liked. Whatever the topic of discussion, he was there to represent the international standpoint. Whether in the Conference or in the Governing Body, which corresponded to the Council of the League, Thomas established the tradition that the Office must have a view on every question and express it through the Director. The Director was the repository of the international experience which the I.L.O. had gradually accumulated and as such was entitled to be heard. But in order to secure acceptance of this doctrine Thomas had to struggle hard in the early uphill years, and he did it with undaunted courage. He did not hesitate to fight his own government publicly before the International Court at The Hague in order to preserve the right of the I.L.O. to discuss agricultural questions, which the French Government was contesting. From the first he strenuously defended the view, which was propounded by Lord Balfour and afterwards adopted by the Assembly, that League officials owed their allegiance to the League and not to their national governments. He was a great international servant, but he was also a fervent Frenchman. Had he lived, it is hard to believe that he would not have gone back to France to oppose tooth and nail the policies which led her to Munich. All his friends

must feel thankful that he did not survive to witness the terrible debacle of 1940.

One of Thomas's greatest services in building up the I.L.O. was his insistence on the need for propaganda. Being a publicist by training, he realized that its success must depend upon its hold on public opinion, which could only be acquired by preaching its aims and achievements in every highway and byway throughout the world. For missionary purposes there was little money available, and what there was was wrung with great pains from the national treasuries. But the utmost use was made of every available penny. Office publications were issued in almost every known language as far as finance allowed, for it was useless to expect the masses for whom the I.L.O. was created to read English or French. Unless they could be reached in their own vernacular, they could hardly be induced to take much interest in our work. In the same way contact was established with the national press and the industrial organizations of every member country, largely through the "correspondents," whom Thomas began by setting up in the great capitals, including Washington, and who by 1938 were to be found in almost every country. As much use as possible was made of the radio when the League station began to work, but its action was subjected to all kinds of limitations, which greatly reduced its efficacy. The fact that it was not allowed to broadcast on medium and long waves put Europe largely outside its range and thus deprived the League of one of the most essential means of spreading its message. Finally there was the policy of "showing the flag" by means of personal missions. Thomas was a great believer in seeing for himself and traveled indefatigably in four out of the five continents, preaching the message of

the I.L.O. and systematically building up connections for it wherever he went. Mr. Winant and I followed his example, with the result that the I.L.O. was felt to be not just an impersonal institution far away at Geneva, but an active body, whose Directors and principal officials became widely known and could be trusted to understand something of national problems through having gained personal acquaintance with them on the spot. All these different methods of direct approach, combined with the experiences of delegates who had been to Geneva, were beginning to make the objects and activities of the I.L.O. widely appreciated not only in Europe, but in most other parts of the world. The process of education which was so necessary before the great majority of people could be converted from their old isolationist outlook to an understanding of the need and nature of international action had been well begun. The League practiced these methods to a lesser extent, and if it had done so more intensively, its roots would have struck deeper into national soils.

Within its limited sphere then, the I.L.O. gradually succeeded in generating in fairly wide circles the belief that the social problem could be profitably attacked from an international angle. In the course of its progress its horizon began to broaden. During the first ten years or so its efforts were mainly directed towards constructing a world labor code. By a long series of conventions or treaties international standards were set up for hours of work, the employment of women and young persons, protection against sickness, accident, old age, and industrial disease, and so on. Each convention required a two-thirds majority in the Conference, but when it had been voted, each country remained perfectly free to adopt it or not in its own national legislation. This proved to

be a sound constitutional arrangement, as it avoided the embarrassments of a unanimity rule on the one hand, and left the final decisions to the parliamentary and public opinion of each country on the other, without any positive commitment in advance. But in course of time the ratifications flowed in as international standards were embodied in national laws, and once having ratified a convention, the country concerned was obliged to carry it out as much as any commercial or diplomatic treaty. In this way the international code became translated into reality. Its value was not to be estimated by what its various provisions required on paper, but by the actual changes for the better which it brought to the lives of millions of people. Judged by that criterion, it was a very remarkable achievement, of which I had ocular proof in many countries.

The great slump made it clear, however, that to set standards was not enough. To limit his hours of work and to regulate the conditions of his employment did not help the man who had no employment. International competition depended on more than differences in wages, social charges, and mechanical efficiency. It was largely determined by the standard of life of the producers and consumers of competing countries. It was idle to expect that the great overpopulated countries of the East could attain British or American wage levels. Their industries had to produce goods at a cost low enough for the meager purses of their vast agricultural populations, most of whom lived near the margin of bare subsistence. Even with the latest machinery Japan could not produce textiles at a price which was within reach of her peasants, if the operatives were to be remunerated on the levels of Lancashire and New England, and the situation that existed in

Japan existed even more extensively in India and China. In Eastern Europe social progress was likewise conditioned by the national income, which was found to remain very low as long as it was mainly derived from the products of an agriculture utilizing primitive methods and equipment. On the other side were great industrial countries like the United States, Britain, and Germany, in which millions were walking the streets of their cities in idleness, because there were not enough people in the world able to buy what they were so capable of manufacturing. As the slump went on, its disastrous consequences were no longer confined to the social field. In contrast to the peaceful progress of the preceding five years, political upheavals became the order of the day. In Germany and Japan violent nationalism won widespread support partly because it promised a relief from distress through the seizure of the supposed wealth of their neighbors. Fascism and *autarky* were held up as nostrums for a deep-seated malady, which democracy had failed to cure. In Europe and Eastern Asia the air was once more filled with wars and rumors of war. It was clearly no coincidence that the thickening of the whole political atmosphere followed immediately on the economic collapse.

The I.L.O. had therefore to probe deeper. To limit its purview to the technical problems of labor regulation was to confess the failure of its mission. As I remarked in my last report to the Conference, "Without regular work, without wages adequate to ensure a civilized level of feeding, clothing and housing—in a word without a solid economic foundation —labor legislation is only a very partial remedy for the social evils which the I.L.O. was created to combat." We therefore began to explore the problems of agriculture, migration, hous-

ing, nutrition, and the development of economic resources by means of state enterprise and planning. These inquiries soon brought us to the invisible frontier between the social and economic domains. Though working in close contact with the Economic Section of the League, the result left something to be desired. The economic like all the "nonpolitical" activities of the League were to some extent handicapped by their association with its political machinery. It was much more difficult to treat thorny questions like migration on their economic and social merits in the League than in the I.L.O., which had nothing to do with politics. Indeed, it was more than once suggested that the Economic Section of the League should be merged with the I.L.O. into some new organization which would have no political complexion. For this there was much to be said, but it would have inevitably altered the whole constitution of the I.L.O., which had proved its value, in favor of an experiment that might not succeed. It was, however, generally admitted that a hard and fast boundary between social and economic questions could not be maintained. They represented different approaches to the same problem—how to improve the general well-being of humanity—and that problem was intimately bound up with the problem of peace and war. Though all wars are certainly not the effects of economic or social causes, the contributory share of the latter in producing them has in the past been underestimated rather than overestimated. It is now becoming widely recognized that prosperity and social progress are as much conditions as concomitants of peace, a conclusion which all the experience of the I.L.O. went to confirm.

One other point is worth mentioning. It became gradually clear that the "universal" method, that is to say, treating every

problem as a world-problem and all standards as world-standards, did not always produce the best results. India and China with their huge populations and low standards of life could not be jerked up rapidly to the levels of Western Europe or the United States. But if the countries of Asia were to meet together to see whether practicable measures suited to Asiatic conditions could not be worked out, some real progress might be made. The idea was put forward more than once, but political obstacles stood in the way of its realization. A first regional experiment was, however, made when in 1936 the I.L.O. convened the first American Labor Conference at Santiago, the capital of Chile. It was attended by the United States, Canada, seventeen Latin American countries, and a delegation of the Governing Body, and gave a great stimulus to social thinking in South America. In 1939 it was followed by a second Conference at Havana, which was equally successful. These two meetings showed that it was perfectly possible to deal with regional problems within the framework of a world organization, a valuable pointer for the future.

With the spread of totalitarian ideas the inability of employers and trade unions to carry on their business without state interference began to strike at the very roots of the I.L.O. But in 1934 the defection of Germany was more than counterbalanced by the entry of the United States. Much water had flowed down the Potomac since 1919 when the first Conference had met in Washington at the invitation of President Wilson. When I arrived there to prepare for its meeting, I found the prospects of the Conference seriously jeopardized by the furious battle raging in the Senate over the Peace Treaty and by the inability of the President, who had been stricken down in the heat of the conflict, to super-

vise the arrangements as he had intended. One day I was fortunate enough to meet Mr. Franklin D. Roosevelt, then Assistant Secretary of the Navy, who at once promised every assistance. Our chief difficulty was to find office premises, but with characteristic energy he swept all obstacles aside and in a few days had put forty rooms at our disposal in the Navy Building itself. I could not help wondering how many junior ministers in London would have succeeded in converting a part of the Admiralty into the office of an international labor conference. Next time I saw Mr. Roosevelt he was in the first year of his Presidency and engaged in the herculean task of guiding the great social transformation of the United States usually known as the New Deal. He was astonishingly well informed about the I.L.O. and all its works, and had evidently made up his mind that America should play its part in them. Next year towards the end of the Conference the American Consul General informed me officially that both Houses of Congress had adopted a resolution authorizing the entry of the United States. The presence of strong American delegations at every subsequent meeting was a great source of strength and encouragement to the I.L.O. and all its members, not least because the President was known to take a keen interest in its fortunes and to be always ready to give it a helping hand. In the face of the hostility of the dictators and of the growing difficulty of making headway once the armament race had begun, the certainty of steady American support was an asset of inestimable value.

Early in 1938 I was forced greatly against my will to resign the post of Director rather than make an appointment which one of the leading governments pressed relentlessly upon me, but which would have set a fatal precedent for all

future international administration. In the critical position that then existed in Europe, it was not even possible to thresh the matter out in public without serious political consequences. Some day the story may perhaps be told. In itself it was of minor importance, but it turned round a vital question of principle, as subsequent events have amply shown. It was a bitter disappointment to give up the work of eighteen years, but no greater consolation could have been offered me than the appointment of Mr. John G. Winant in my place. Apart from his character and capacity, nothing could have been more fortunate for the Office than to have an American Director when war broke out. He could wield an authority such as no European could have exercised, and was thus able to steer it safely through the worst of the storm. Under his guidance the nucleus of the staff was transferred to Montreal, where it is preparing to resume its full activity when the time comes to rebuild a free world, for the I.L.O., perhaps with a widened domain,will be an essential piece of the machinery of reconstruction.

In retrospect those Geneva years were a wonderful experience. The constant procession of the leading men of almost every country across its stage was something which the world had never seen before. They were not all very great men; in fact, there were few giants among them. The qualities of heart and mind required for great leadership on the highest political plane are after all rare. One may therefore be grateful to men like Balfour and Briand, Austen Chamberlain and Arthur Henderson, Fridtjof Nansen and Hjalmar Branting, to name only a few of those who are dead, for their untiring efforts to make the League a power in the world strong enough to root out the vast evil of war. But whether they

were great men or small, the fact of their constant meetings was both new and significant. It was the first admission that the world is now so small that nations can no longer conduct their affairs in a vacuum. They live close together and must work in close association if their common life is to be made tolerable. No one who passed through the Geneva experience with open eyes can doubt that this was its outstanding lesson. The particular method embodied in the Covenant may or may not have been the best available method. In the end it failed to harness the forces of violence and disruption and to prevent their producing another world-wide cataclysm. But that does not prove that the notion of organizing the world for peace was chimerical. The League was created to meet a need which the course of history had clearly demonstrated. It was the first attempt to cope with a new problem, and the fact that it did not succeed has not removed the problem. On the contrary its failure is now seen to be a disaster, which cannot be allowed to recur. That a second effort profiting from the experience of the first will be made to save the world from political and economic chaos seems inevitable. As with improving communications it becomes yet smaller and the interests of its peoples become more closely interlocked, the need for an ordered society of nations will become increasingly clearer. To regain prosperity and to resume the onward march of civilization will be seen as a task in which all must bear a part of the burden and of which all must reap their just share of the common benefit. The failure of the first experiment in world-government will then be seen not as an end but as a beginning.

CHAPTER THREE: FRANCE

In a democracy alone will the freeman of nature deign to dwell.

PLATO

WHAT can any Englishman who has known and loved France say of her now? She is passing through the bitterest hour of her long history. She has been prostrate before, but in her previous agonies of defeat she has never doubted her own survival. The destruction of French military power at Waterloo and Sedan meant a political revolution within and the loss of her Continental hegemony without, but no one dreamt of the disappearance of the French spirit. Though her armies were crushed, her soul was intact. French intellect and French art would still radiate through the world. The tradition of liberty founded in 1789 would continue to guide her internal policies and through the influence of French literature to permeate every country in Europe. Though the prestige of her soldiers might be tarnished, the standards of her writers and thinkers would still be borne in the vanguard of civilization as long as France was free.

But now France is no longer free. She not only has had to submit to the dictates of a military conqueror; she is threatened with total extinction. Hitler has never concealed his intention of annihilating his victims body and soul, and he has always attached more importance to the soul than the body. If he finally gained the mastery of Europe, he would obliterate the French spirit as surely as he is attempting to obliterate

the Polish and the Czech spirit. It is inconceivable that he would tolerate a France on his borders, where all the ideas which he fears and abhors could be incubated in an atmosphere of free thought and free speech, which could only breed the demand for free government. Yet without these things the French genius cannot live. Whether under monarchy, empire, or republic its critical spirit has flourished. The debt which the world owes to Descartes, Voltaire, Montesquieu, Renan, and a host of other French thinkers is its debt to that spirit. The right to criticize has been the lifeblood of the French as it was of the ancient Greeks. It is the right of all rights which the "new order" under Germanic tutelage will never concede. If France were allowed to live, it could only be on the condition that her soul had perished.

When one looks back over the brilliant pages of French achievement in every field of the intellect, it is impossible to imagine Europe without the stimulus of its curiosity, its daring, and its precision. One wonders whether a France in shackles would still astonish the world with inventions such as photography, the automobile, and the airplane, whether it would produce new Pasteurs and Curies for the benefit of the German overlords, whether a France assimilated to Nazi principles would produce a Balzac, a Flaubert, or an Anatole France. Surely not, for the French mind could never flourish in prison. We are therefore witnessing not just a tragic episode in the life of France, but a disaster which may affect the whole future of civilized mankind. It is as well to remember this at a moment when many people are inclined to think that the French betrayed us and themselves. When invasion is threatening from French ports and bombers are taking off nightly from French airports to destroy our cities with blast

and fire, these bitter feelings are natural enough. But in the long run our fate is linked with that of France. Though she is now under a dark cloud, her spirit will survive. Of all the countries to whose rescue we are pledged, none is so vital to the future of the Continent, in which we cannot help living, as a regenerated France.

For eighteen years I lived within two miles of the French frontier. Few week ends passed without a trip into the hills of Savoy or the Jura, or beyond into the valley of the Rhone or those pleasant old villages of Burgundy which produce the best wine in the world or the fat land of Breese, from which every self-respecting French fowl claims its origin. If one acquired the true French reverence for good food and good drink, and neither in excess, there were Beaune and Mâcon and Dijon and Bourg and Vienne and a dozen modest but reputable village restaurants which commanded the best of cooks and the best of cellars. There one witnessed the Frenchman's devotion to the principal amenities of life, almost religious in its fervor. The careful consultation with the *patron* on the menu, the still more anxious discussion of the wine list, the triumphant emergence of the dishes from the kitchen, the solemn uncorking of some precious bottle by the great man himself amid the ecstatic awe of his staff, these things were part of a well-used ritual, which embodies one of the cardinal traits of French life. The Frenchman likes good cheer and considers it affectation or stupidity to think otherwise. He does not eat nearly as much as we do, but when he eats, he likes to eat well. He is as contemptuous of a half-cooked dish or a raw wine as an American of a motorcar which will not start on a frosty morning. And why not? Eating is a large and necessary part of living, and it hardly needs

French logic to suggest that it is worth spending some trouble on it.

But in the eyes of Frenchmen eating is more than a pleasure; it is something which belongs to the soil, the consummation of the peasant's unremitting labor. The great majority of them are half-hearted townsmen; their true passion is the land. Take, for instance, my old friend Monsieur Bourgeois, who presided over the famous but unpretentious little inn at Priay. Presidents and ministers had tried in vain to bribe him to bring his culinary arts to Paris, but he stubbornly clung to his vineyards and his little restaurant, where he dispensed his exquisite dishes in his shirtsleeves, proud of his talent and prouder of his independence. He would rather fish in the silvery Ain and tend his vines than coin the small fortune awaiting him in Paris or mingle with the great ones whose patronage he resented. When he broke his elbow he scorned an anesthetic, and had he lived, he would surely have scorned the authors of the surrender. He typified the tough, shrewd, hard-working Frenchman of the countryside, who will provide the backbone of the new France.

When holidays allowed, one could wander further still into quite other scenes. Down the Rhone towards Avignon one gradually passed from the poplars and the green meadows of the Vaucluse into the cypresses and the arid landscapes of the South. The real frontier of the Midi is somewhere near Montélimar. The people become more exuberant, gesticulatory, and talkative, with the hard, flat accent of Italy and Spain. Once beyond Avignon and across the big bridge over the Durance lies the beginning of Africa, bare rocky hills, parched fields, eucalyptus, cactus, and palm trees, always under a glaring sun and a cloudless sky. The inhabitants of the

tortuous villages take life easily and dirt philosophically. They believe in solar sanitation and as little work as is convenient. Interminable games of *boules* in the middle of the road, innumerable *verres* and insatiable gossip in shady, untidy cafés, a cheerful indifference to the graver problems of existence, take them comfortably through life. They are ardent lovers and ardent politicians, but though extremists in both, they take neither love nor politics too tragically. Communism was fashionable before the war, and most of the Riviera fishing boats were challengingly named after Stalin, Lenin, Karl Marx, or some other apostle of revolution, but this did not prevent their owners from achieving a substantial income and abundant leisure at the expense of little toil. But for all their lack of ambition the people of the South were true Frenchmen in their hatred of regimentation and their love of a free and easy existence. It was always a relief to reach the frontier post at Ventimiglia after driving through Italy. The factitious fuss and the fraudulent efficiency of the Fascist official, the futile scrutiny of passports at every hotel, the aggressive swagger of the Black Shirts in the streets, all melted away before the familiar humorous nonchalance of the French Customs officials—unless of course they happened to be in one of their bad moods, when they pulled all the luggage out onto the ground and talked entirely with their shoulders instead of their mouths. But they were good fellows at heart, and one cannot imagine them fitting into a Prussian strait jacket.

Instead of striking south from Avignon one might cross the Rhone and plunge into the Cévennes and on into the tangled mountains of the *Massif central.* There are few more curious parts of Europe. In a few hours one can pass from Italy into Scotland, from a country of white Tuscan houses

and orange groves to rugged valleys watered by foaming trout streams with here and there a grim, weather-beaten castle, and then on to the deep canyon of the Tarn and the bare, bleak plateaus of the Causses, not failing to return by the lonely, lovely road from Mende to Le Puy, with the little torrent of Chapeauroux running alongside, from its infancy on the desolate uplands to its merger with the Allier. The tough, thrifty peasants and mountaineers have not changed since Stevenson tramped among them with his donkey, and probably little for generations before that. Many of them are still fiercely Protestant, with traditions going back to the persecution of the dragonnades in the seventeenth century and even to the war of extermination against the Albigenses by order of Pope Innocent III.

Or again one could set out from Geneva northwest along the historic road to Paris through the quiet old towns of Autun, Avallon, and Auxerre, still full of the charm of a simpler, bygone France in spite of the tourists rushing through in noisy, flamboyant cars towards Nice and Monte Carlo. And if one wanted to recapture the spirit of old France only a short digression was necessary to the famous Abbey of Vézelay, overlooking from its hill the forests of the Morvan. Its beauty and dignity are as fresh as when St. Bernard preached the Second Crusade there, but they now seem to be shunned and aloof. Their attraction for the inquisitive tourist has saved the great church and its satellite buildings from neglect, but their interest for the average Frenchman is antiquarian, and tepid at that. One often wondered why the great French shrines, such as Vézelay, Chartres, Rouen, Notre Dame itself, seemed so forlorn. Unlike the great English shrines, they seemed shut off from the current of na-

tional life, relegated to a forgotten backwater. In St. Paul's and Westminster, Canterbury, Winchester, and York, one feels that they still belong to the nation and the nation still feels that they belong to it. Like the Colleges of Oxford and Cambridge, their tradition still lives on subtly to permeate and inspire the twentieth century. In them something of the idealism of the Middle Ages has survived and has mellowed our modern materialism. In France it is dead. Did the Revolution and the Age of Reason kill it, or the pomp and arrogance of the Bourbon regime, or the intellectual revolt of the Renaissance? No doubt all had a share, but though the break with Rome has never been complete, the medieval roots of France have withered, whereas the Reformation, the Puritan Revolution, the rationalism of the eighteenth and the commercialism of the nineteenth centuries have been powerless to blight them in England. Nor is it just a question of faith or sect. However much they may differ from the Anglican creed, millions of British Free Churchmen and agnostics look upon our great churches and cathedrals with pride as part of the national heritage, in which they have a share, as embodiments of the English spirit, which is common to all, whatever their religious beliefs or unbeliefs. English culture is somehow Gothic. The great monuments of Gothic architecture still strike one as typically English, but in France they are not typically French. French civilization has largely forgotten its Gothic ancestry. Its shrines belong to an age which is dead and buried. In the minds of many Frenchmen they are symbols of a religion against which the fierce antagonism of the parties of the Left has been directed ever since the Revolution and which was finally divorced from the state less than forty years ago, after a bitter conflict which still smolders on.

Here lies one of the causes which divided France against itself in the face of the enemy. For generations the champions of democracy and progress had been violently anticlerical. Whatever the rights or wrongs of their controversy with the Church, it had produced a cleavage in French life which the years had not healed. The Revolutionary opposition to the *château* and the *curé* still dominated the outlook of the peasantry. In his brilliant and mordant satire *Clochemerle* Gabriel Chevallier has shown with more truth than many Frenchmen cared to admit how it affected the whole fabric of French provincial society. In the words of François Mauriac, "The peasant shuts his eyes and casts his vote for the Left, certain that he can make no mistake if he votes against those who wash and go to mass." [1] If he did not inherit these prejudices from his father, he would suck them in at the village school, where the schoolmaster is usually the champion of secularism, the official foe of social distinction. The small French farmer, like the small artisan, the small official, the small shopkeeper, is a fierce individualist and therefore a fierce radical. He admits the fact of social inequality, but under perpetual protest. His attitude is admirably summed up in the phrase, "If we must have inequality, I would like to hear some good loud shouting for equality at the same time." [2]

Nor is this social antagonism, which dates from the Revolution and long before it, a one-sided affair. In his brilliant study published ten years before the war, Siegfried pointed out that the counterrevolution was always latent in ever-changing forms. ". . . the counter-revolutionary party keeps

[1] *La Province*, p. 34, quoted in André Siegfried, *France: A Study in Nationality*, Yale University Press for the Institute of Politics, 1930, p. 33.
[2] Alain, *Eléments d'une doctrine radicale*, p. 131, quoted in Siegfried, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

constantly rebuilding itself as its spirit crystallizes into new forms. Although it has long been threatened on the Left by the Marxians and Communists—whom it detests!—our democracy must still defend itself against the *ancien régime*. . . ." [3] " 'I doubt if a salon exists,' says Alain, 'where the hostess accepts the sovereignty of the people without question.' " [4] The remnants of the aristocracy and a large section of the upper middle class were never reconciled to the Third Republic. In their hearts they hated the revolution of 1870, as they had hated the revolutions of 1789, 1830, and 1848, and never abandoned the hope of reversing it. The *Action française* and the *Camelots du Roi* declaimed against it every day, and as the doctrines of fascism spread in Europe, the adversaries of republicanism saw in them the means by which they might gain their end. To their political detestation of the regime was added a strong religious motive in the whole Catholic community. The disestablishment of the Church and the seizure of much of its property in 1906 aroused violent passions, which cooled slowly. The Catholic sections of the army and the *bourgeoisie* never entirely forgot this injury, and though many of them were perfectly loyal republicans, the parties of the Left were never able to convince themselves of that loyalty. The struggle between Right and Left was not therefore just a struggle between conservative and radical as to the degree and speed of reform. At bottom it represented a profound dissension as to the whole structure of the state, which divided the country into two warring camps. In that lay a further contrast between the French and British outlooks. Since 1832 the right-wing parties here have never

[3] Siegfried, *op. cit.*, p. 34.
[4] Alain, *op. cit.*, p. 47, quoted in Siegfried, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

dreamt of putting the clock back. They recognized popular government as an irrevocable fact and social reform as a political necessity. Though they have often put the brake on, many far-reaching changes have been introduced by Conservative administrations and voted by Conservative majorities in Parliament. As they valued their political existence, they could never risk the charge of being stubbornly reactionary. As a result, class antagonism has never become acute, because all parties have tacitly agreed on fundamentals. The wealthy have made great concessions with good grace, while the liberal and labor programs have not tried to force the pace to a point which might break down the political machine.

In France both sides were more unyielding, more "logical," as they would call it, so much so that one might well ask why the Third Republic survived for seventy years. The answer was again given by Siegfried, who pointed out that the peasant though politically radical was socially conservative. Though he might not be rich, he belonged rather to the "have's" than to the "have not's." He did not want social reforms for himself. In the village commune, the fight for elementary hygiene—drainage, pure water, clearing ponds of mosquitoes, the removal of dung heaps from the main street—met with his uncompromising opposition on two grounds, first that it would cost money which he declined to pay, secondly that it would involve official intrusion into his land, his arrangements, perhaps even his house. To him independence and economy were far more important than health, even if he was less ignorant of the dangers of germs and bugs than his fathers before him. As long as he was left to himself and allowed to run his farm in his own way, the peasant was not

going to upset the balance of society. If he did not want reform for himself, still less did he want it for anyone else. He would listen enthusiastically to the florid oratory of his Radical or Socialist deputy at the Sunday afternoon banquets of his constituency, but when it came to doing anything, the farmer entrenched himself in the cautious conservatism of his calling. To talk of reform was fine and satisfied his radical instincts, but to act might be very imprudent. His political philosophy was wittily summed up in the phrase "*Toujours à gauche, mais pas plus loin*" (*on towards the left, but not an inch further*).

On the other side the wealthier classes were prepared to tolerate a great deal of radical agitation as long as it was not translated into action. Direct taxation could for the most part be evaded by all sorts of ingenious methods, if the simple method of declaring only a fraction of your income did not suffice. Social legislation interfered little with the cost or the conduct of their business. They were obstinately averse to any concession that would eat into their profits. Any suggestion of concession was usually condemned as being "*généreux*," for generosity had become a term of reproach, implying the folly of giving something for nothing. Thus France was behind many less advanced countries in matters such as hours of work, social insurance, the school age. The speeches of her representatives at Geneva often suggested that she led the van of social progress, but the statute book hardly bore out the claim and the enforcement of the law when it existed was apt to be ineffective. As long as France remained an agricultural country, therefore, the social equilibrium was not likely to be seriously disturbed. Governments whether of the Right or of the Left could be trusted to leave well enough

alone and to avoid embarking upon dangerous reforms, for which there was no demand from the great mass of rural electors.

But France too was changing. The drift from the country to the town had set in at the beginning of the century. Industry was expanding and with it the power of the urban proletariat. The wage-earner did not share the peasant's comparative contentment with his lot. The Frenchman detests mechanical work in which his individuality finds no scope. He is a magnificent craftsman, but a reluctant machinist. The discipline and monotony of the factory are profoundly repugnant to his nature and his conception of life. Under any conditions he would have been restive, but under the poor conditions which still persisted in French industry he became rebellious. He was not content to talk about reform. He wanted real changes—shorter hours, better wages, more leisure. Since the end of the war the tide of revolt had been rising, but little had been done to stem it by introducing timely improvements. Already in 1930 Siegfried could read the signs of the times. "But what is to happen," he asked, "now that a new conception of production comes to transform the face of the world and disturb the balance of our social structure?" [5] In 1936 that question ceased to be academic and became a very present reality. The Popular Front came into power. The factories were occupied by strikers. A series of radical but belated reforms were rushed through Parliament. A shiver of fear ran through the propertied classes, who could see no halfway house between the existing state of things and communism. The struggle, which had so long been dormant, blazed up. The motto of a large section of the Right

[5] Siegfried, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

was "Resistance rather than reform." The left-wing parties had made the destruction of the powers and privileges of the "Two Hundred Families," who controlled the economic life of France, the big plank in their electoral platform. They had got their mandate, but the Families, backed by all the foes of republicanism, anticlericalism, and democracy, decided to fight. And so a bitter political conflict broke out three months after Hitler had marched into the Rhineland, at a moment when the German peril so dreaded by all Frenchmen loomed once more on the horizon in a more ominous form than ever before.

The center of the drama as of all French dramas was Paris, not only because it was the capital, but also because it was the largest industrial center in France. Paris too had been changing. Its streets were as bright and its buildings as imposing as ever. The sweep of the Champs Elysées and of the Avenue Foch was still incomparable. The charm of the old Cité and the Faubourg St. Honoré was unimpaired. The broad swift stream of the Seine flowed on through to its heart. Paris was still the most beautiful metropolis in Europe. And yet to the frequent visitor its ancient dignity and prestige seemed to be declining. Its reputation in the eyes of the world was no longer derived mainly from the light and learning which radiated from it. For centuries Europe had looked to Paris as the oracle of the classical tradition and as the final arbiter in all matters of literary and artistic taste. Its intellectual supremacy was undisputed throughout the Continent. It needed no other title to fame. Its politics might be chaotic, its municipal organization out of date, its business methods antiquated, its morality deplorable. None of these things mattered as long as Paris preserved its instinct for harmony and

beauty in all the arts and its devotion to truth and knowledge in all the sciences. But somehow since the beginning of the century its beacon had not burned with the same pure light. Paris still produced good literature, good pictures, good music, good acting. It was still the birthplace of great scientific achievements, but these things no longer preoccupied it so much as in former days. Whereas of old, Paris had conquered its foreign devotees, now it had begun to bow down before them. Negro music, American money mania, Russian decadence, Asiatic exoticism, were adopted instead of being patronized by Parisians. Their sense of intellectual superiority was no longer so sure of itself. Commercialism, which had always played a secondary role, discovered that it was more profitable to exploit the foreigner's purse than to improve his mind. The wave of raw materialism which emanated from New York in the days of "permanent prosperity" swept over Paris too. It laid itself out to lure the stranger and to pocket his money. Its quietly elegant hotels became flaunting caravansaries, in which a well-stocked American bar was more important than Empire furniture. Luna Park, multilingual cinemas, salacious cabarets, extravagant restaurants, "curious" bookshops, bizarre dress shows, were all part of the stock in trade to draw the pleasure-seekers with big check books from the four corners of the earth. Chicago millionaires, Indian princelings, Argentine beef kings, Brazilian coffee lords, Hollywood stars, the new rich of Yokohama or Manchester, Michigan or the Rhineland, all set sail for Paris, when they wanted to convert their wealth into a "good time." Its chief claim to fame was no longer as the Mecca of the student and the artist but of the blatant hedonist.

Though thoughtful Frenchmen deprecated these tenden-

cies, they excused them on the ground that they did not affect the real Paris. Its amusements and vulgarities were for foreign consumption, but the true Parisian still retained his traditional respect for good taste and hard work. Though there was much truth in this, there was also much wishful thinking. In the last twenty years the worship of money had gone far towards replacing the worship of reason among Parisians. Not that the French were ever indifferent to money. The acquisitive instinct was always well developed among them. The avarice of Père Grandet was not uncommon among the peasants. Thrift and frugality were general and often overdone in all ranks of society. But in the past the quest of money had seldom been allowed to override spiritual values altogether. The ostentatious display of luxury had been comparatively rare. The conversion of Paris to the cult of Mammon was of quite recent date, and it had much to do with the weakening French resistance. What we know of the debacle already suggests that despair and defeatism percolated from the top downwards, not from the mass upwards. They had their origin in the capital rather than in the provinces. The fear of the destruction of Paris with all its accumulated wealth weighed heavily in the conduct of the campaign. The Parisians of 1940 were apparently less resolute than the Parisians of 1870 and 1914. Many of them were more obsessed by their material possessions and less ready to sacrifice everything in a supreme effort to throw back the invader. The great mass were probably as courageous and patriotic as their forefathers, but they were helpless without a lead from above, which was not given. For this decline of the French spirit and for much else that contributed to the great disaster the decay of Paris was largely responsible.

To unravel the tangled threads of the last decade in France will be a long and highly controversial task, but anyone who has seen something of the French political life of that period at fairly close quarters can hardly doubt that of the causes of the French collapse, the unhealthy greed for money was surely one. The whole political atmosphere was pregnant with corruption. One political scandal succeeded another, and all of them were matters of money. The major ones, such as the Oustric, Madame Hanau, Aéro-postale, and Stavisky affairs, boomed through the press as nine-day wonders, and were then quietly interred by the tacit consent of all parties. In all of them prominent politicians were alleged to be discreditably involved. In the Stavisky affair no less than seventeen deputies were shown to have been mixed up with that flashy crook. There were a few resignations, but no thorough inquiry was ever carried through. No one knew how far a ruthless investigation might not lead. The press too was tainted. Few newspapers were financially self-supporting and their staffs were poorly paid, so that the temptation to use their power in order to extract money was difficult to resist. It was commonly whispered in Paris that ministers disbursed their *fonds secrets*, not to obtain information about the machinations of France's enemies within and without, but to keep political columnists docile or to swing newspapers to their support. Several scabrous weeklies subsisted entirely on personal and political blackmail. I well remember the fury of Albert Thomas when one of them published a libelous article on the International Labor Office and promised further installments unless they were bought off. He did not pay, but there were plenty who did. An international crisis opened up a gold mine for worried editors and needy journalists. During the Man-

churian and Abyssinian affairs it was notorious that Japanese and Italian money was circulating freely in Paris. It was competently calculated at the time that the metropolitan press netted some sixty million francs for its championship of Mussolini's African adventure. During the months preceding Munich the majority of French newspapers were in favor of any settlement and prepared to throw the Czechoslovak alliance to the wolves in order to procure it. How many of them were directly or indirectly in the pay of Herr Abetz, Von Ribbentrop's agent in Paris? In any case their judgment of the issues was fatally warped by their partisanship in the furious struggle between democracy and reaction. The leanings of the Right towards Germany which paved the way to the capitulation were already apparent. Only a minority of the press still maintained a sane national outlook.

Nor was the political system itself calculated to promote strong and honest government. A government however capable was always at the mercy of a snap vote of the Chamber engineered by a *combinaison* among those who were thirsty for power. Loyalty to party leaders was seldom proof against the chance of earning the title of *Monsieur le Ministre* for life, nor was disloyalty apt to be penalized by a dissolution with all the hazards and expenditure of a general election. Once elected, deputies knew that their seats were safe for four years, during which time they were free to push their personal interests as they liked. The cry for constitutional reform occasionally rose from an exasperated public, but it was condemned in advance to certain defeat in Parliament. Few if any deputies were going to sacrifice their freedom of action and security to the interests of stable government. I have not forgotten an animated conversation at a Parisian

lunch one day among half a dozen deputies of different parties, who all agreed that reform was eminently necessary but practically unthinkable. The freemasonry among the deputies of all parties was too strong. However much they blackguarded each other in public, they tutoyered each other in private. The bond of their common interest in preserving their privileges was so solid that, as an experienced politician remarked, "Actually there is left less difference between two deputies, although one may be a revolutionary and the other not, than between two revolutionaries, one of whom is a deputy and the other is not." [6]

As a result politics became a game of poker in which anyone had a chance of office if he played his cards well. Success depended largely upon building up one's personal connections. To this end no means could safely be neglected, and among them the influence of women was often of paramount importance. The intricate web of personal intrigue in which politics were enmeshed was incredibly complicated by the loves and hates of the wives and mistresses of ministers and deputies who crowded the galleries of the Chamber and who sometimes penetrated even into the inner councils of state. The way to power might well be found through feminine favors, but another way not less necessary to success lay in rendering personal services which might place a supporter under an obligation or placate a possible adversary. If Mr. Deputy Y could use his influence to get a permanent job for Monsieur X, the latter became his *protégé*. He might be the son of an editor or the nephew of a wealthy industrialist or the cousin of a political opponent. His appointment might

[6] Robert de Jouvenel, *La République des Camarades*, p. 17, quoted in Siegfried, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

stand Monsieur Y in very good stead next time a change of government was in question. The qualifications of Monsieur X for the particular post in question were usually a matter of indifference. He might be lazy or incompetent or devoid of moral principle, or all three together, but once appointed that would be the responsibility of his chief. Indeed, the more patent his demerits, the more grateful would all his friends and relations be to Monsieur Y for having placed him. Job-pushing exists of course everywhere. It was a flourishing pastime in this country during the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth century. It is common enough in most countries now. As Director of the I.L.O. I came across a good deal of it in my time, but nowhere was it practiced quite so cynically as in political France.

Running through the whole tangle of politics and journalism was the influence of big business. The tentacles of the *Banque de France,* the *Comité des forges,* and the industries under their control stretched out in every direction. No one could tell how many newspapers and politicians were directly or indirectly under their orders. There were always the editors and deputies ready to respond to the nods and winks of the banking industrialists on the Left as well as on the Right. The allocations of public contracts had to be assured, whatever government might be in power. There were few milieus into which the subtle power of their money could not and did not penetrate.

It is easy to imagine the effects of this system on the civil service. As with us the regular civil servant was appointed after examination, but in most departments the real power was exercised not by the permanent staff but by the "cabinet," the minister's private secretariat consisting of his personal

nominees. To them were entrusted the questions of policy, the making of appointments, and the control of finance. The *Chef de cabinet* was usually a professor, a journalist, or a lawyer with political or social ambitions, often a man of considerable ability but with little experience of administration, and what he learned during his brief term of office was not passed on to his successor. Sometimes he was obviously incompetent or uninterested, in which case the business of the department was apt to be conducted on the most precarious lines. This peculiar system was an inheritance of the revolution of 1870, which found most of the permanent posts occupied by Bonapartists, in whom the republican ministers could repose no confidence. To deprive them of their power, the effective control of the departments was transferred to the cabinet, who could be trusted to keep a sharp and unfriendly eye on the suspect bureaucrats and to carry out the ministers' behests with unquestioning loyalty.

In spite of its anomalies the system was not ill adapted to the French mentality. The Frenchman is an inveterate individualist in all relations of life. He does not like working as part of a machine, whether he is a minister or a mechanic. Ministers therefore take a far more personal view of their position than with us. Every act of his department is his act, not the act of an impersonal ministry. As a corollary he signs a vast number of letters with his own hand every day. The "signature" is quite a ceremony. The letters are of course written in the first person and most of them are drafted in his private cabinet. The idea of allowing important letters to be written "by his direction" and signed by some permanent official without his ever seeing them would be anathema to the average French minister. This emphasis on his personal

responsibility had its merits as well as its drawbacks, but the vesting of so much power in the cabinet diminished the status of the regular civil servant. The extent to which this happened in the case of higher officials depended of course on their personality. In spite of all the limitations imposed upon them, many of the older men were excellent administrators of great capacity and integrity. My friend Arthur Fontaine, the head of the Ministry of Labor and the first Chairman of the Governing Body of the I.L.O., was a splendid example of the best type of French civil servant. Jules Gauthier, with his black cape, his double spectacles, and his patriarchal white beard, was another. After the Great War, however, the standard declined. Many of the promising juniors had been killed, and official salaries were not adjusted to the devaluation of the franc. The status of the service was accordingly lowered and no longer offered the same attraction to able men. The temptation of much higher remuneration in private business drew away many of the good men who survived. As a result the average French civil servant tended to become a bureaucrat confined to routine duties and often qualifying for the opprobious nickname of *rond de cuir*. In the period of political confusion between the two wars the absence of a strong corps of experienced administrators made itself acutely felt. Too much depended on the brilliant improvisation of individual ministers, too little on the execution of a continuous departmental policy. And this in a country where governments changed every few months constituted a serious weakness in the state.

One further trait of French political life was bound to strike the outside observer. Its intense individualism not only made strong party organization difficult but rendered strong

leadership almost unattainable. In all countries there is keen rivalry among ambitious politicians, but in France personal jealousies and mutual distrust were so pronounced that the appearance of a strong leader tended automatically to produce a combination to check the growth of his power and prestige. This tendency was reinforced by the fear of a "dictator" which continually haunted republican circles. The memory of the Napoleons and of General Boulanger died hard, while the spectacle of Mussolini, Hitler, and Franco naturally reinforced their apprehensions. Ministers who took strong action in the interest of efficiency or economy exposed themselves to the charge of being arbitrary and tyrannical. In the eyes of the Left the interests of the individual usually took precedence of those of the state. The conduct of government was therefore confronted by a zareba of parliamentary checks and obstacles at every turn. In the absence of a stable majority, which the Chamber rarely provided, a strong and consecutive policy was out of the question. Consequently, at every crisis the Prime Minister demanded "full powers" to enable him to proceed by decree without reference to Parliament. He usually obtained them in a more or less emasculated form, but Poincaré alone succeeded in establishing his authority and really governing the country. Doumergue, Blum, Daladier, and Reynaud in turn failed. Even under the stress of war it was impossible to form an administration which could take strong decisive action without fear of Parliamentary maneuvers. Monsieur Daladier so distrusted the Chamber that he avoided taking it into his confidence if he could. He felt that he could not govern with it, but ultimately it proved impossible to govern without it. The virtual suspension of Parliament and the application of a rigid censorship kept the nation

in the dark during the first six months of war. It did not realize its peril, and when the hour of decision came was psychologically unprepared to meet it. It wanted a strong lead, but the political system made strong leadership at all times difficult and in the state of internal dissension which then prevailed absolutely impossible.

Since the fascist and antifascist riots of February, 1934, France had apparently been in a state of suppressed civil war. "Secret mobilizations" of the *Croix de feu*, outrages by the Cagoulards, communist parades, and monster republican demonstrations kept the public mind in a constant state of anxiety and ferment. Papers like *Gringoire*, *Candide*, and *Le Jour* carried on a campaign of unexampled venom against everything republican and democratic. The sympathies of the Right with Germany and Italy were openly proclaimed during the Spanish war. Their hatred of Britain was thinly veiled and occasionally burst out in print as in Henri Béraud's famous article declaring that "England must be reduced to slavery." On every issue, domestic or foreign, the country was split. Feeling ran so high that political opponents were hardly on speaking terms—unless perhaps they were deputies. Thus it came about that during these critical years, while Germany and Italy were preparing the ground for their great gamble, France was helpless. No prime minister could pursue a national policy designed to meet the coming danger, because the nation was dubious of its own destiny. Though the Left was at times ready to help the Spanish Republic, the Right was violently opposed to it and greeted with loud approval the presence of German and Italian troops beyond the Pyrenees. That they might be paving the way for the downfall of France was less important than that they were defeating and murdering the

"reds." Like a smaller but equally shortsighted clique in London, they were blinded to national issues by partisanship. Some of them went so far as to adopt the slogan "Hitler rather than democracy." How far men like Laval and Marcel Déat, La Rocque and Doriot, were the accomplices of Germany before or at the moment of the collapse, no one can yet say. What is certain is that in the eyes of many political Frenchmen the danger of a communist revolution loomed larger than the danger of German conquest. To some of them patriotism was less important than party, to others it was less important than property. These men bear a very large part of the responsibility for the defeat.

But the whole of the responsibility is not theirs. However necessary or just they may have been, the industrial reforms of the Popular Front were disastrous at a moment when Germany was carrying through a colossal program of intensive rearmament. Just when Hitler and Göring were keying up German industry to an unprecedented output and lengthening working hours to sixty or seventy a week, French industry was indulging in a forty-hour week and a fortnight's holiday with pay. The French worker may have earned them, but he could not afford them then, if he valued his ultimate freedom. In the airplane works conditions became so chaotic that production fell to less than fifty aircraft a month, one-tenth or even less of the German figure. In many factories the management made little effort to adapt itself to the new regime, while the men worked spasmodically and indifferently. Both sides were surly and suspicious. Co-operation between them for the defense of the nation was a notion over which personal and political considerations usually took precedence. There were no doubt other troubles—administrative, military,

and financial confusion—which would in any case have obstructed the rearmament program, but the addition of industrial confusion as well completed the tragedy and delivered France half-armed to her enemies.

Yet in this desperate internal struggle, which did so much to prepare France for defeat, there was a certain air of unreality. The average sensible hardheaded Frenchman did not believe that there was any real likelihood of a bloody revolution either from the Right or the Left. By reading the papers and the speeches one might have supposed that France from 1934 to 1939 reproduced the Germany of 1930 to 1933, a country in which political life was reduced to perpetual conflict between armed factions and in which there was nothing between the extreme Right and the extreme Left. In point of fact the reality was completely belied by these outward appearances. The manifestations of the *Croix de feu*, the *Jeunesse patriote*, the *Parti populaire*, and the rest of the fascist organizations were very feeble imitations of the National Socialist Party in Germany. Even at the moments of greatest excitement the country never took them very seriously, and they knew it. Their Paris parades provoked as much laughter as hooting or applause. As for the communists, they were even less dangerous to the security of the state. Because they hated and feared Hitler, they even donned the garment of patriotism, cheering the army and adopting the slogan, "*Pour une France libre, forte et heureuse.*" With many of them, it is true, this show of patriotism was spurious, as they showed by swinging abruptly round when their orders from Moscow were reversed after the Nazi-Soviet pact. But at all times the only revolutionary elements among them were drawn from the great cities, which in France are few and far between.

The peasants and fishermen who swelled their electoral power did so because they opposed fascism, reaction, the clergy, the landowners, and big business. They were therefore communists (or socialists or radicals) *par principe*, but if anyone had seriously suggested, which the communist candidates emphatically did not, that their land should be turned into collective farms or their boats taken over by a Commissariat of Fisheries, he would have had very short shrift. This fact also was perfectly well known to anyone who understood the peculiarities of French politics. Even Colonel de la Rocque himself remarked on one occasion, "My country will never go red." Between the two extremes stood the great mass of the peasantry and the *petite bourgeoisie*, who wanted nothing but a quiet life and a fair return for their work, which on the whole they were getting. They had not suffered the ruinous inflation or the devastating unemployment which had sapped the foundations of German society. If Paris had really tried to stage a communist or a fascist revolution, the provinces would have quickly put it in its place. But the revolutionary bogey was too good a political scarecrow to lose. It was constantly used by the propaganda machines both of the Right and the Left to stir up fear and hatred, with the result that the national unity and the national morale of France were undermined to such an extent that in the hour of crisis the house was divided against itself. The spirit of self-sacrifice, which can only spring as it sprang in 1914 from an overwhelming sense of common danger and common ideals, was lacking. The common faith in France, transcending all party loyalties, was temporarily clouded by the play of political passions and interests. No leader had sufficient authority to appeal for a united effort above the heads of all parties.

In this atmosphere of political confusion the country drifted towards disaster. The rot might have been stemmed by a few strong personalities, but something seemed to have gone out of so many of the men who had survived the war. The old, tough, aggressive French spirit so formidable in men like Clemenceau, Poincaré, and Barthou was no longer there in the succeeding generation. Herriot, Daladier, Flandin, Blum, Delbos, Chautemps, Paul-Boncour, to say nothing of Paul Faure, Bonnet, and Laval—the best of them seemed afraid of themselves and afraid of their public, when it came to taking strong action; therefore they usually fell back on political trimming in the hope that something better would turn up to avert something worse. At each successive crisis provoked by Hitler—rearmament in 1933, conscription in 1935, militarization of the Rhineland in 1936, Spanish intervention in 1937, Munich in 1938, the French attitude was always the same—protests, appeals to the Council, neatly drafted exposures of German illegality, or face-saving formulas, but of action none. No one who saw them at work had much doubt that they were men of words, clever words, facile words, true words, false words, but not men of deeds. This was a fact which the Germans, the Poles, and the Little Entente were not slow to discover. That discovery undermined the whole position of France in Europe and with it the security of France itself.

In 1930 France was still beyond dispute the first power on the Continent. Her army was by far the largest, best-equipped, and best-trained land force in existence. Poland and Czechoslovakia were her allies. Yugoslavia, Rumania, and Belgium were constellations in her orbit. Despite all the fascist fanfaronade the French despised the Italians and refused to

take them very seriously in international affairs. Spain was friendly of course, but she could never afford to be anything else. Britain, though inconveniently interfering at some moments and alarmingly indifferent at others, was nevertheless the kind of ally who could be depended upon in the last resort, though not entirely perhaps at any earlier stage. To all intents and purposes France dominated Europe. Her political and military positions were unassailable, and when in 1931 Britain had to come hat in hand to Paris to save herself from financial collapse, the climax of French ambition had been achieved. Some of her more enthusiastic publicists saw a French economic hegemony added to her other titles to power and respect, and a clipping of the wings of the pound sterling, which though not what it was in the sovereign days, had always carried more weight than the franc.

And yet the whole diplomatic structure, which France had so carefully constructed over fifteen years to protect her against the German peril, crumbled almost in a few months, when it was called upon to bear the first strain. Faced with Hitler's challenge in 1933, France wilted. She was not prepared to incur the risk of trouble involved in demanding an inquiry by the Council of the League into German armaments under Article 213 of the Treaty of Versailles. Marshal Pilsudski made the suggestion and offered to support it without result. Being a rough old soldier, brought up in a hard school, he quickly saw that there was nothing to hope from the French politicians and decided that the French alliance was a broken reed in the face of Hitler's growing armament. So he swung sharply over on to the opposite track. He made his pact with Germany in January, 1934, and put every ounce of Polish national effort into rearming. Within a few days of the sig-

nature the disturbances of February 6 took place in Paris, a clear indication that French politics were in a parlous state. Europe started whispering that French power was on the decline. But then Monsieur Barthou returned to power. Though seventy-three years of age, he made a vigorous tour of Europe in the hope of retrieving the situation. He set off to visit Prague, Warsaw, Bucharest, and Belgrade, where he began to restore confidence in France and to lay the foundations of an Eastern pact. Many people disliked him for his outspokenness, which often amounted to rudeness, but his toughness and resolution were so unmistakable that his bluff manners carried more conviction that the suaver methods practiced by most of his colleagues. His scheme seemed to have very fair prospects of success despite the recalcitrance of Poland, but in October he was murdered at Marseille in company with the King of Yugoslavia. This dastardly coup, planned in Italy, had appalling consequences for France and for Europe. It was characteristic of the complete lack of principle governing French politics that Monsieur Barthou's successor was none other than Monsieur Laval, whose ideas on foreign policy were a complete contradiction of those to which the last months of Barthou's life had been devoted. Laval soon began to work for an understanding with Germany and Italy; he hated and despised Geneva and was no friend of Britain. His policy consisted in undermining the Franco-British entente and the League of Nations, which he did with conspicuous success during the Abyssinian affair, and of destroying the faith of France's Eastern allies by flirting with Mussolini and Hitler. What Barthou had accomplished towards restoring French prestige was quickly undone by Laval, with whose accession

to the Quai d'Orsay the final debacle of French influence began.

The crucial test came on March 7, 1936, when Germany reoccupied the Rhineland. It was not too late, as the German soldiers very well knew, to stop Hitler at the outset of his career of conquest. The German army was half-armed, half-manned, and half-trained. The Poles and the Czechs were ready to march if France gave the sign. It is true that a large section of the British public completely failed to grasp the situation and seemed to think that Hitler ought to be encouraged to throw the Treaty of Locarno into the wastepaper basket, while the British Government, taking note of this view and disgruntled by the behavior of France concerning Abyssinia, was not disposed to put itself out for the sake of France. But France was quite capable of looking after herself. Once more seriously threatened by Germany, it is inconceivable that her elder statesmen would have asked British leave before doing anything. All she needed was one or two resolute men to give the country and its allies a firm lead. Had that been done, Britain as a signatory to the Treaty of Locarno would not have repudiated her obligations, and it is now known that the German troops would have withdrawn, with disastrous results to Hitler's prestige. But unhappily there were no such men left in France. Monsieur Sarraut and Monsieur Flandin decidedly did not belong to the Clemenceau class. So it all petered out in protests to all the world, an elaborate agreement between the Locarno powers for joint action which no one meant to take, a solemn but futile condemnation of Germany's behavior by the Council, followed by an equally futile negotiation with the Reich, terminating in

Mr. Eden's famous questionnaire, which is still waiting for a reply.

The same indecision marked the French attitude to Spain. Torn by its own internal conflict, France looked at the struggle between Franco and the Republic through ideological rather than national spectacles. The victory of the Right over the Left was more important than the German and Italian threat to the French position in the western Mediterranean or the prospect of having to defend a third hostile frontier with an army which was monthly becoming weaker as against the *Reichswehr* and an air force which had already been outstripped by Göring's *Luftwaffe*. In such a situation a much bigger man than Monsieur Blum would have been needed to lift the vital problem of Spanish intervention above the mud-slinging of party controversy on to the higher plane of national defense. It would not have been easy, and it would have been easier if an example in this direction had been set by England, but there, too, most political dinner tables were content to believe that the Republicans were all "red" and the followers of Franco all "good fellows"—and that was enough to know. The whole complex and dangerous game of the Axis and any possible danger to the British position in Gibraltar or in northwest Africa were brushed aside as irrelevant. The great thing was to ensure the defeat of the Republic by permitting German and Italian intervention under the threadbare cloak of "nonintervention." Indeed, the logical conclusion was that because the Insurgents were "good fellows," the Germans and Italians who helped them must be "good fellows" too, but at that point most, though not all, Englishmen took refuge in their traditional dislike of logic. In any case the British attitude still further weakened the position of

the French Government and still further strengthened the confidence of Hitler in the feebleness of the Western democracies. He judged rightly enough that they would not stir when in the following year he stretched out his hand to seize Austria, the key to central and southeastern Europe. It was another affair of protests. Neither France nor Britain dared to appeal to the League, which seven years before had knocked the Customs Union on the head at their request. Finally, when it came to fulfilling her treaty obligations to Czechoslovakia, France was militarily too weak and politically too much divided to be capable of anything but repudiation. The whole of her diplomatic system of security collapsed like a castle of cards. Her role as the leading power on the Continent was finished.

A few days after Munich I talked with Monsieur Daladier. He was under no illusions. He knew that France had suffered a disastrous defeat, and that there would be no peace in his time. He was much more depressed than elated by the tremendous ovation which had greeted him on landing at Le Bourget, for he knew that the people were unconscious of the gravity of their position. They had been nursed too long in the belief that in the last resort they were safe behind the Maginot line. They had suffered terribly in the last war and felt that another holocaust would be the end of France. They had not forgotten the devastation of the north, the flood of refugees into the interior, the disappearance of a large part of their savings in Russian stocks and bonds. The whole country was utterly averse to war, unless it became inevitable in self-defense. For that, under courageous and united leadership, they would have fought as they had fought before, but the leaders were neither courageous nor united.

As a wise Frenchman has since said, "It is easy to be lucid after the event." Beforehand, both people and leaders in France were too pacific, too moderate, too shortsighted, to sacrifice spontaneously the benefits of peace and to accept the immense efforts and restrictions which the military security of the country would have required. In the face of the present calamity it is not for us to throw any stones. We too were duped, shortsighted, vacillating, and intensely pacific, until war was actually upon us. We too were only half-armed, but we had the good fortune to live on an island. But the future of France is of immense importance to us, not so much as a military counterweight to Germany, but as the home of the democratic ideal on the Continent. We have not merely to defeat Germany but the German spirit, which has found its supreme expression in the Nazi creed. To do this we have not only to liberate France but also to liberate the French spirit. That it still exists under the German heel we need not doubt. The Vichy period is a purgatory through which France is condemned to pass, but once the nation is freed from its fetters, its old faith in liberty will flare up with a purer fire. The tribulation through which it is now living, the bitter taste of tyranny and brutality, the suppression of the values which France prized most, are experiences which will fortify the old devotion to freedom for generations to come. A friend of mine was walking in the mountains with a French guide a few years ago. While eating their sandwiches they talked of the bad state of France. "The country has always had to fight for its liberty," said the guide. "We have overthrown the power of the aristocracy and the power of the Church. Now we shall have to overthrow the power of the politicians, and that will be a hard fight." But that fight too will be won in

the end. Just as the rot set in from the top downwards, so recovery will spread from the broad masses of the people upwards. The great body of the small folk—peasants, artisans, shopkeepers, and workmen—is sound at heart. They will not be bemused by the mirage of a "new order" or the cant of the corporative state. Somehow or other a new France will emerge, perhaps before the struggle is over, again to become the partner of the British and American peoples in rebuilding a free and peaceful world, in which the individual is not at the mercy of the state, but the state at the service of the individual. That after all is the essence of the French spirit and the real bond between them and ourselves. However different our habits and temperaments and outlooks—and they will always be profoundly different—we cannot forget what we have owed to France in the past or what we expect of her in the future.

CHAPTER FOUR: GERMANY

Man muss die Deutschen von innern befreien,
von aussen hilft nichts.[1]

HEINE

THE RIDDLE of Europe is the riddle of Germany. To attempt its solution requires some knowledge of the German mind and German history, of which most Englishmen are profoundly ignorant. To the great majority the German people have been a closed book, their language unintelligible, their ways of thought obscure, their outlook on life a mystery. When the Germans are temporarily quiescent, the English begin to admire their virtues. They are clean, they work hard, they are efficient, they love orderliness and punctuality, they are convivial and hospitable, and as the Englishman likes to think that he possesses these same virtues, he is tempted to imagine that the German is a kindred soul. In any case he is prone to think him easier to understand than the French. The German's brain is not so agile. He does not talk so fast. He gesticulates less and is more deliberate in all his processes. He is a bit of a gambler and free with his money when he has a little to spare. From all these observations the Englishman often draws the most erroneous conclusions. He pictures the German as a reserved, matter-of-fact, unimaginative being, a simple, honest, good-natured fellow, in fact, something like the popular idea of the typical middle-class Englishman. And

[1] The Germans must be freed inwardly, for then outward freedom alone is useless.

yet at times the German behaves in the most unaccountable manner. He suddenly develops a furious hatred and contempt for his neighbors; he exalts the glories of war and proclaims himself the superwarrior destined by nature to be the overlord of the rest of mankind; he regards mendacity and bad faith as laudable means to attain his political ends; he marches with blind fanaticism out to conquest behind some loud-mouthed, braggart emperor or dictator, and in these moods of exaltation is capable of boundless brutality and tyranny. These exhibitions enrage and bewilder the Englishman the more because they show that his conception of the German character was somehow utterly wrong, and yet he cannot believe that his own impressions, often gathered by travel and personal contact with Germans, can be so completely mistaken. He felt this way in 1914, but then he ascribed the extraordinary lapse of the Germans to the sinister influence of an autocratic Kaiser surrounded by a clique of untamed militarists. Once they were eradicated, all would be well, and Germany would settle down as a decent member of the polite democratic society of Europe. Hence when the German army was completely defeated in the field, the German navy had surrendered at Scapa Flow, and Wilhelm II had decamped into Holland, the British people heaved a great sigh of relief. They felt that they had not only won the war but the peace as well. German militarism had been crushed. The imperial war lord had been replaced by a respectable republic. Germany and therefore Europe had been made safe for democracy, and there would be no more war.

In this popular analysis of the German situation there were two fundamental mistakes. The first was the supposition that

the Kaiser led the country into war against the will of the people. The second was the supposition that German society and German psychology had been radically changed by the disappearance of the imperial regime, that contrary to all his past teaching and tradition the German had been converted into a democrat. To correct these false assumptions a few trips to the Bavarian Tirol, a week at the Passion Play at Oberammergau, a taste of the night life of Berlin, a pilgrimage to a Wagner festival in Bayreuth or Munich were not enough. One had to live with the Germans to know them. One had to read their literature, not only cosmopolitan poets like Goethe and Heine, but national historians like Mommsen, Treitschke, Ranke, and Spengler, and national thinkers such as Herder, Fichte, Hegel, and Nietzsche, whose work constituted the background of German thought and German education. Indeed, to obtain something like a true perspective, one had to dip into military writers as well. Men like Clausewitz, Bernhardi, and Ludendorff had exercised a profound influence on the mind of a country in which from the days of Frederick the Great the army had been the supreme institution in the state. Germans of all classes had been systematically brought up for generations in the belief that war was good in itself, the ultimate expression of a nation's will to live and develop, the final means of fulfilling the German destiny. In constantly harping upon this theme, the Nazis only revived and intensified the leitmotiv which had dominated the German symphony for a hundred years.

My first acquaintance with Germany was in 1906. I began it in a pension kept by two elderly dames, widows of Prussian officers, in the pleasant surroundings of Godesberg, later to become famous for the fateful meeting of Hitler and Cham-

berlain. In those days it was a quiet little place with the river sweeping along in front of it and on the opposite bank the Drachenfels towering up with its *Aussichtstürme*, its *Bierhallen*, its picture postcard kiosks, and all the paraphernalia of a German *Sehenswürdigkeit*, for the German does his sightseeing, like everything else, conscientiously and laboriously. My old ladies were kindly and hospitable, but I soon discovered that their great theme was the glory of the German Army. Their memories were always harking back to the great days of 1870, when the loathsome French had been smashed, and at such moments their grim old faces lit up with a fanatical fire. I thought these ebullitions of hate and vainglory were just the natural symptoms of old age, a recurrence to the happy recollections of youth, when they had walked down the street in the reflected glory of their husbands' tight blue uniforms, clanking swords, and shining spiked helmets.

But as I penetrated more deeply into German life, I gradually realized that the worship of war was not just a thing of the past, but a living force permeating the present. For the benefit of foreigners it was usually kept in the background, except in the windows of the bookshops, where war, the final overthrow of France, and the reckoning with the decaying British Empire took pride of place. The only serious rivals to these topics were semipornographic treatises on sexual problems, "*wissenschaftlich und gründlich betrachet*" (*treated thoroughly and scientifically*), which under the Empire as later under the Republic exercised an unhealthy fascination on the German mind. But at times even the foreigner got an inside glimpse of what his German friends and companions were really thinking. A year or two later I was at a very cheerful New Year's Eve dance in Dresden. Many young

Germans and a few young English people were enjoying themselves vastly and were on the best of terms. Suddenly an elderly lady, who as the *doyenne* of the party was enthroned on a dais, said in a loud voice, "I like the English. We *won't* have a war." In a trice the whole atmosphere changed. It was easy to see that the thought to which the old lady had given such inopportune utterance was latent in the mind of every German in that room. Nor was the expectation of war confined to the adult or the elderly. It had been instilled into the children also. The Kaiser may not have had so eminent an artist as Dr. Goebbels to dope and drill the minds of his people, but his war propaganda was pretty effectively done, particularly the propaganda for a big navy with which to challenge England. Waiting one day for a train on the platform at Leipzig, I amused myself by looking at a film of the maneuvers of the High Sea Fleet in a penny-in-the-slot machine. When I had finished I found three little urchins gazing up at me curiously. The eldest, who may have been ten years old, then said with a touch of defiance, "You're an Englishman, aren't you? What do you think of the German fleet? We're going to have a scrap one of these days, aren't we?" (*"Wir werden uns einmal hauen, nicht wahr?"*)

And so it went on. German life was pleasant enough in those days. The country was comfortable and well-to-do. Though the Kaiser was always clamoring for a place in the sun, Germany was a sunny land. Expanding industry was reducing emigration. The standard of living was steadily rising. There was no *Versailles-Diktat*, no craving for revenge, no economic collapse which its leaders could use to goad the people into war. They had only to go on working to become the greatest and richest nation on the Continent, if they had

not already achieved that ambition. But that was not enough. The whole German soul was shot through with a megalomaniac lust for power, dressed up in all the romantic trappings which appeal to it so irresistibly. The Nibelung saga was not just a gorgeous fantasy of poetry and music. It was the call of the blood. In it the heroic and tragic destiny of the Teutonic race found its highest expression. When he listened to Siegfried's horn or to the rushing music of the Valkyries' ride or to the devouring crackle of the fire music, the stolid German's visionary soul was filled with rhapsody. He dreamt dazzling dreams of mighty struggles and world-shaking cataclysms, in which he was cast for the role of the sublime warrior. He liked to think of his natural kindliness being transmuted into the ruthless stuff of which Attilas are made. His incurable romanticism was untamed by the hard common sense of the English or by the cold logic of the French. He was at the mercy of a leader who flashed the mirage of victory and conquest before his eyes. "*Weltmacht oder Niedergang*" (*world power or extinction*) became the slogan of a German crusade against humanity. With tears in his eyes he chanted Father Arndt's program for a Germanized universe.

So weit die deutsche Zunge klingt
Und Gott im Himmel Lieder singt,
Das soll es sein!
Das, wackrer Deutscher, nenne dein! [2]

One did not have to live long in the old Germany to become aware of a fanatical devotion to this national myth of war and power underlying the placid, plodding exterior of Hans

[2] As far as the German tongue is heard and sings songs to God in heaven, that shall it be, that, stalwart German, name thine own. E. M. Arndt, "Des deutschen Vaterland" (1813), in his *Gedichte*, Berlin, 1860, p. 234.

and Gretel. However good natured and harmless they might seem as individuals, as particles of the national mass they were ready to be transformed into pitiless disciples of blood and iron when the work was given from on high. For the vast majority was devoid of any critical faculty. They had never been spiritually free. Their whole training from infancy had been in obedience to authority. According to Count Hermann Kayserling: "The Germans are physiologically a caste people, in the same way as the Hindoos." [3] Whatever scientific value there may be in this assertion as regards the Hindus, the Germans had always been ruled from above. The German people had never controlled its own destiny. Unlike the English and the French, it had never taken its fate into its own hands and made the popular will the source of authority. It had never beheaded or exiled a king. It had never acquired the instincts of democracy by daring all in the cause of political and personal liberty. It had never produced a Hampden or a Cromwell, a Robespierre or a Lenin. In consequence it knew nothing of liberty. Its attitude to the state was the attitude of the Middle Ages, when kings ruled by divine right. The German had never attained the status of free citizenship, which gives every individual some responsibility for shaping the policy of the nation. That was determined by "higher authority," whose behests he executed almost automatically. The Englishman, the Frenchman, or the American thinks he is as good a man as his rulers and that he has a right to be heard as to how he should be ruled. Not so the German. He does not trust his own judgment. He leaves the affairs of state to be settled by an élite, to whom he regards himself as inferior and whose decisions he does not really feel entitled to question. Having

[3] *Europe*, Harcourt, Brace, 1928, p. 105.

no belief in his own rights, he has little conception of the rights of others. Distrusting his own political capacity, he wants to be led. Being unaccustomed to exercise his political intelligence, he is ready to give blind obedience to leadership, as long as it purports to be leading him to national greatness.

In those bygone days nothing was so surprising to the stranger as the meek acceptance of authority by the great mass of Germans. One heard of liberals and socialists who were opposed to the imperialist policies of the Kaiser, but when one met them, their timidity was devastating. At the time when the outcry against Chinese labor on the Rand was still echoing through Britain, I remember discussing the massacre of the Herero in Southwest Africa with a German liberal. He expressed disapproval in principle of such colonial methods, but he thought any public protest would be not only futile but wrong, as the authorities must know their own business best. The most spirited opposition came from *Simplicissimus*, the famous Munich weekly, whose brilliant cartoons and biting satire fought a vain but valiant battle against Prussianism and reaction. Other papers, such as the socialist *Vorwärts*, indulged in milder but regular criticism of the Government, none of which would be tolerated for a moment by the Nazis. In words the opposition was often effective, but when it came to deeds, it was deplorably feeble. At international congresses the socialists talked boldly of declaring a general strike to stop war, but when it came to the point they voted the military budget in 1914 unanimously and enthusiastically. At heart they were as German as the rest. Albert Thomas told me that when attending a socialist conference in Germany, he once slipped into a meeting of the local Social Democratic party, which was to be addressed by Bebel, the

great German socialist leader. The latter's harangue ended with an exhortation always to be on guard and always ready to march against France, the hereditary enemy. Thomas shouted from the back of the hall, "*Grüsse von dem Erbfeinde*" (*greetings from the hereditary enemy*), which rather spoilt the meeting, but he had learned that for the prevention of war no reliance could be placed on the professions of the German socialists.

But however anxious the left-wing parties might have been to preserve peace, they waged a hopeless fight against the weight of authority among a people who were predisposed to accept any official utterance at its face value. That meant not merely that what the Government said was fairly certain to be swallowed unhesitatingly, but that what professors and schoolteachers said was almost equally certain of credence. A professor was after all a higher official. He belonged to the third grade of the complicated hierarchy of officialdom. He was inferior to the nobility, to the higher officers of the army and navy, and to the heads of the civil service, but superior to anyone else. He ranked above an industrialist or a banker, unless the latter had managed to infiltrate into the aristocracy, and his pronouncements, based on his lofty position in the state and the reputation for immense erudition which German professors had acquired, were accordingly treated as oracles. While at Munich I got to know a young teacher in the university, a man of considerable intellectual capacity and of liberal tendencies. Occasionally we talked politics, and in the course of a discussion he once admitted that war between Britain and Germany was inevitable, if the Kaiser and Von Tirpitz persevered in their naval challenge. I remarked that Germany would in that case be defeated, as we should never

allow her to outbuild our fleet, to which he replied that German victory at sea was certain, because the British navy was manned principally by Negroes. On my inquiring the source of this surprising piece of information, he said that it came from a book written by a German professor, after which there was nothing more to be done. No evidence that I could adduce was of the slightest weight as against such irrefutable authority.

And so even in those days when the press was largely free and there was no hindrance to German intercourse with the outside world, when foreigners could enter and travel about the country without a passport, the German remained incredibly ignorant of international realities. He was told that the British and the French were too soft to fight, and he believed it. He was told that these same decadent peoples in alliance with the Russians, who were too corrupt and ignorant to fight, were preparing a monstrous plot to encircle and crush Germany by force, and he believed it. He was told that after a sharp, jolly war (*ein frischer, fröhlicher Krieg*) he would have the world at his feet, and he believed it. The great mass of the German people did not want war, but they were the slaves of the national myth, so when the order came they obeyed it with tremendous enthusiasm. They were gullible, and they had been gulled into a great military adventure prepared for many years in advance before the eyes of the world. They fought bravely and, according to their lights, cleanly. They were still a Christian people, who in their private lives observed a fairly high standard of decency, piety, and honesty. But because they had never been spiritually free, they made no attempt to impose any standards of international conduct upon their rulers. Though they had long since been released

from the external shackles of subjection to landowner or employer, they had never experienced that liberation from within, which as Heine saw was still needed to complete their emancipation. The result was a terrible nemesis, another luckless and bloodstained page in the tragic history of Germany.

For eight years I had not seen Germany, when I returned to Berlin early in 1921; it was a shabby, miserable, half-starved city shorn of all its imperial pomp and splendor. There were no more swanking, monocled officers in gorgeous many-colored uniforms; their place had been taken by the neat, sober gray of the *Reichswehr* officers who went about quietly and modestly as befitted the servants of a republic. Altogether soldiers were few and far between. Germany had become outwardly demilitarized. It was now a civilian nation, and one could not help noticing how badly dressed it looked. Of course textile materials were scarce and the country had been ruined by the war, but even with the return of apparent prosperity five years later, the Germans did not learn how to wear their clothes. For some occult reason their tailors, who knew how to cut a smart uniform as well as any in the world, never discovered the art of turning out a well-fitting lounge suit. Whether this was the fault of the cutter, or whether the German body like the German soul could only adapt itself to the stiff garments of regimentation, I was never able to decide. But the Nazis followed the national instinct when they put everybody back into uniform, not merely by embodying millions into the army, the Storm Troops, the Labor Corps, the Hitler youth, the German Girls' Corps, and so on, but by inventing uniforms, badges, and insignia of all kinds for diplomats, officials, and even journalists. By pandering to the innate German love of parade and decoration they struck a shrewd

blow at the drabness and dullness of the civilian Republic, which had always been one of its chief weaknesses. The German always felt slightly ashamed of himself in mufti, a little bit lost and forlorn, as if to find himself just a solitary individual, his own master instead of a unit in a disciplined throng, gave him a chilly sense of isolation and bewilderment. Put him into uniform, however, and his chest swelled, his self-esteem was restored, he was part of an organized mass only called upon to obey orders instead of having to make his own decisions. I remember seeing a music-hall pageant of the three periods of German history, Frederick's Prussia with its iron discipline, William's Empire with its military panoply, and Ebert's Republic with its bourgeois simplicity. The audience evidently experienced an acute sense of depression at the realization that they had been reduced to a motley collection of ordinary citizens, free to live their own lives, but unable to rejoice in the glories of a uniform and the sensation of mass action. This collectivist psychology is one of the most deeply rooted German traits. The Republic was totally unable to satisfy it, but Hitler understood it. His vast parades with waving flags and blaring music restored to the average German, and particularly to the women, something which they loved and of which they felt themselves unjustly deprived. Nor was it merely the pomp and the showmanship which they wanted, but the comfortable sense of being one of a crowd again instead of lone individuals. The herd spirit is stronger among the Germans than among any other Western people. The great majority have never valued personal liberty, perhaps because, as the Nazi leaders assert, they have never felt the want of it.

Still in 1921 Germany was a republic, and there were other

signs besides its civilian exterior to suggest that the "revolution" had really changed things. The old, rigid class distinctions had gone. The social superiority of the aristocracy, the army, and the officials was no longer aggressively proclaimed. There was less ceremonious bowing and heel-clicking. The relations between people of all ranks were less constrained. But with the loosening of the old social order had gone a general relaxation of morals, both public and private. The terrible strain of the war years, the bitter disillusionment of defeat, the impoverishment of all classes, and the chaos of the demobilization period had all contributed to this decline. The atmosphere was full of violence and murder. One *Putsch* followed another. The Free Corps of disbanded soldiers were always looking for trouble. First the Spartacists, then Kapp, then the Saxon communists, then Hitler, were bloodily suppressed. Kurt Eisner, Karl Liebnecht, Rosa Luxemburg, Matthias Erzberger, Walther Rathenau, and many lesser men were successfully assassinated by the disciples of reaction. The rule of law was spasmodic and precarious. Shady finance, dishonest trade, and wild speculation were rampant in the commercial community. In great cities the ordinary social restraints were openly defied. In large sections of the upper and middle classes religion and respectability were thrown to the winds. Berlin night life reached a pitch of licentiousness never equaled in modern Europe. Vice of every kind was flaunted in the Kurfürsten-Damm with an ostentation at which Paris would have blushed. The first five postwar years culminating in the total collapse of the currency witnessed a demoralization from which the nation never really recovered.

But when one looked for signs that the revolution had converted Germany to democracy, one began to doubt

whether it had ever taken place at all. Though the outward appearance had changed, the internal balance of forces, the real springs of power, remained the same. Behind the façade of a humdrum, mostly middle-class Parliament, the army and the civil service were still supreme, and at heart they were the same army and the same civil service. It was characteristic of the German "revolution" that it had failed to alter the structure of the state, without which it could not be a real revolution at all. In November, 1919, there had been some real fervor for political emancipation. The working class had turned against the old order, but it did not find the vigorous leadership without which no great revolution has ever been accomplished. Its own leaders, drawn from the old majority socialists, who had supported the Kaiser and the war from the beginning until very near the end, possessed neither the will nor the ability to remold the political and social traditions of the country. To establish any kind of democracy the first task was to destroy the power of the army and to subordinate it to the people. This task was never attempted. The first act of the new popular government was to entrust the withdrawal of the troops from the front and their demobilization to Marshal von Hindenburg and the old General Staff.

When in January, 1919, the Spartacists made an ill-planned attempt to establish the authority of the people, Herr Noske, the socialist Minister of War, entrusted the preservation of order not to a militia drawn from old soldiers sympathetic to the Republic, which might readily have been formed on the model of the Austrian *Volkswehr*, but to troops organized by a typical collection of generals and "vons" of the old Prussian school, Von Lüttwitz, Von Hoffmann, Von Roeder, and the rest. These were the men who in fact crushed the "revolu-

tion" within two months of its birth. They did it with the approval and support of the majority socialists, who in their brief hour of authority threw overboard most of the principles which they had professed since the days of Karl Marx. Not being strong men themselves, they were always conscious and apprehensive of the reactionary forces arrayed against them. As one close observer remarked, "even after the revolution it could not be said that there was a bare majority of the German people for democracy and parliamentary government." [4] The fact was that there was only an abdication of power by the old regime when defeat stared it in the face, never that uprising of a great democratic majority of the nation in which most people in the allied countries fondly believed.

Having quickly learned to lean upon the old army diehards, the Republican Government made little effort to suppress the Free Corps, composed of mercenaries and adventurers and commanded by notoriously reactionary officers, who breathed uncompromising hatred of the Republic and all its works. From their ranks came the murderers of the few genuine revolutionaries, such as Eisner, Liebknecht, and Luxemburg, and of mild but able reformers, such as Erzberger and Rathenau, who, they feared, might consolidate the democratic system. Though they suffered a temporary setback with the failure of the Kapp *Putsch*, the Free Corps with the *Reichswehr* secretly arming and encouraging them, became a real power in the state against which the civil authorities were helpless. Even if the Government had had the means to repress them, it may be doubted whether they would have used them. Successive Republican Governments did nothing to

[4] H. G. Daniels, *The Rise of the German Republic*, Scribner, 1928.

prevent the gradual recovery by the army of its old domination, its progressive defiance of the military clauses of the Treaty, or its scarcely concealed expansion by the arming and training of "Security Police" and civil militia. During all the years from 1919 to 1933 the army was slowly laying fresh foundations of military power which might some day bring revenge within their grasp, while Parliament and the people stood passively by. They probably did not know what was going on underneath, but if they had, would the majority have offered more opposition than they did to the introduction of conscription in 1935? There is indeed little doubt that the army was almost as responsible for the second counterrevolution under Hitler as it was for the first counterrevolution under Noske fourteen years earlier. At no time had its authority been seriously shaken or even seriously challenged. By throwing the responsibility of making peace upon the "democrats," it had brought off a brilliant double coup. Not only did it evade its responsibility for the defeat, but it rendered "democracy" hateful in the eyes of the people by saddling it with the odium of the humiliating peace, to which the blunders and follies of the old regime had condemned Germany. But then the army knew, as Hitler knew, that few things are easier than to mislead the German people.

If the political power of the army was never destroyed, that of the civil service remained equally intact. When I first went back to Berlin after the war, I made some inquiries about the civil servants whom I had known as members of the German delegation in Paris in 1910. If I had imagined that they had been thrown out as scions of the old antidemocratic bureaucracy, I was quickly undeceived. There they were still in their old places, as authoritative and as authoritarian as

ever. As I was brought into close contact with various departments, I soon realized that little had really changed. The permanent heads were as powerful as ever, and most of them hardly troubled to conceal the fact that they were still as antidemocratic as ever. Otto Braun, one of the strongest socialist leaders and Prime Minister of Prussia for many years, roundly condemns the mixture of arrogance and subservience which marked the higher civil servants, though the great majority were content to swallow their convictions for the time being in order to keep their posts and their pay. He admits too that the military spirit was still predominant among them, but defends their retention by the need to keep the public services running and the lack of trained substitutes. In retrospect he recognizes, however, that this was a political mistake,[5] and he might well have added a mistake of immense magnitude. No government, certainly not a reforming government, least of all a "revolutionary" government, can hope to succeed unless it can count upon the loyalty of its officials, but there was little of that quality to be found in the heavy, well-appointed offices of the Berlin bureaucracy when it came to executing democratic reforms. A few new men with a more or less democratic outlook were brought in, but they were not allowed much rope by the permanent officials. Ministers like Wissell, who were trying to effect changes, were hemmed in and sterilized by their advisers, as they sometimes wryly confessed. The civil service, like the army, was never democratized and never stripped of its power. The absence of any real revolution in Germany was proved by nothing so clearly as by the fact that the higher civil service survived the up-

[5] Otto Braun, *Von Weimar zu Hitler*, Europa Verlag, 1940.

heavals both of 1918 and of 1933 almost unscathed. Men trained in the Prussian bureaucracy who had been loyal to the Kaiser could not bring loyalty to the Republic. Still less could men who had been loyal to the Republic have brought loyalty to Hitler, and yet the Nazis with all their heresy-hunting and all their thirst for well-paid jobs, could find few higher civil servants unworthy of the confidence of the Führer.

And so the so-called German Revolution never really happened. Before the Weimar Constitution was six months old, this was clearly perceived by an able and clear-sighted man like Wissell, one of the shrewdest and most convincing of the socialist ministers. He did not shrink from telling his party congress in 1919 that "the constitution has been prepared without any real and active participation on the part of the people. . . . Essentially, we have governed according to the old forms of state life. We have only succeeded in breathing very little fresh life into those forms. We have not been able so to influence the revolution that Germany seemed filled with a new spirit. The inner structure of German civilization, of social life, appears little altered—and even so not for the better." [6] It was the realization of these truths which made some of the few genuine seekers of peace and international understanding like Wilhelm Foerster regret that Germany had never been occupied by the allied forces. Had that happened, he believed that Germany might have become a new country, a federation of autonomous republics imbued with a new spirit. Condemning, as he did openly, the Germans' lack of faith in moral ideas, their "brutal mentality" and their materialism, he too hoped that they might attain liberation

[6] Quoted in Arthur Rosenberg, *A History of the German Republic, 1918-1930*, London, 1936.

from within, but he thought it impossible except through the medium of constraint from without.

And so the new Germany began almost where the old Germany left off. *Deutschland über alles* remained the national anthem of the Republic as it was of the Empire and was to be of the Third Reich. Its ideas were unchanged, its law courts were unchanged, its machinery of government was unchanged. The failure of its spiritual revolution was manifest long before the Treaty of Versailles was drafted, and became more manifest every year as the forces of reaction gradually recovered their grip.

But surely, it may be said, democracy would not have perished if the Treaty had not imposed an impossible reparations burden, if Germany had been admitted to the League, if Poincaré had not occupied the Ruhr, if inflation had not spread ruin and despair throughout the country. These are the familiar German pleas by which the Nazis justified their revolution of nihilism and by which the democrats excused their failure to prevent it. No doubt the economic chapters of the Treaty were folly. No doubt the occupation of the Ruhr was a political and economic blunder, but whether they were responsible for the breakdown of German democracy is quite another question. That they gave the counterrevolutionaries a splendid opportunity of discrediting the Republican Government which had signed the peace is certain. With Germany a member of the League at its birth, the democratic forces in the nation might have been strengthened and their hesitant leaders encouraged. If the reparations burden had been lighter, the charge of ruining the nation could not have been so readily laid at their door or at the door of the Allies. If their troops had never occupied the Ruhr, the

French would not have been saddled with the blame for inflation. But Germany was in any case economically exhausted by the war. She must in any case have passed through a period of dire distress. Inflation on a large scale had already begun before a single French soldier entered the Ruhr. In the previous two years the value of the mark had already declined from 244 to the pound to 34,323 to the pound. Without the complete dislocation of German industry caused by the occupation, the collapse of the currency might not have attained the astronomic proportions which it finally achieved, but under the most favorable circumstances Germany could not have escaped the ruin which the huge drain on her resources, ending in defeat, entailed. But is it to be supposed that the army and the reactionaries would have tamely admitted that this ruin was caused by their blunder in plunging into war and by their military failures? Deprived of the reparations slogan, would they not have claimed that ruin was due to the loss of the iron ore of Alsace-Lorraine and of the coal of Silesia? Their outcry against the territorial clauses of the Treaty would have been just as loud as the uproar over paying a fraction of the indemnity which was wrung from France in 1940. In the face of such an outcry it is unlikely that the republicans would have stood much more firmly than they actually did. If the fear of the Allies had been less, they might even have been driven from power earlier rather than later. When the Rhineland was evacuated, Foerster prophesied with perfect accuracy that the event would be the signal for a military and nationalist reaction, which might have taken place even sooner if the Rhineland had never been occupied. Though all such speculation on what might have been is necessarily vain, there is certainly no reason to

think that the failure of German democracy was primarily due to the Treaty. To suppose that a peace without reparations or indemnity would have scotched the militarist and reactionary elements in Germany rests on a reading of its history and psychology which is difficult to sustain. It is at least as arguable that in no circumstances were the democratic aspirations of the nation sufficiently virile to bring about a revolution in the whole German outlook and tradition, without which they could not prevail.

A different conclusion might suggest itself, if democracy had made vigorous efforts during the five years which followed the evacuation of the Ruhr. During that time Germany staged a recovery which astonished and deceived the majority of Germans and the majority of the outside world as well. Production rose rapidly, unemployment declined sharply, to such an extent indeed that by 1928 the number of people receiving relief in Germany was only six hundred thousand, half the number in Great Britain, with a population thirty per cent smaller. In those days the country seemed to be recovering its old prosperity. Beer flowed freely once more, food was good and plentiful. Municipalities went in for ambitious schemes of development financed by money borrowed in London and New York. Not content with model-housing estates and sanatoria, they launched out into luxury expenditure on mammoth halls, athletic grounds, swimming pools, and planetaria. Cologne spent millions upon a press exhibition, lavishly housed, elaborately organized, and amazingly dull. Frankfurt, not to be outdone, staged a music exhibition over which it lost two and a half million marks. Berlin rebuilt its Opera House with a subsidy of fourteen million marks from the Prussian Government. Receptions to foreign delegates

were on a scale of sumptuosity which was only surpassed by the Nazis when their turn came. The German love of the grandiose and the spectacular was able to find expression once more at great cost to the foreigner. It has been calculated that out of one pocket Germany paid four hundred million pounds in reparations under the Dawes plan during these five golden years, while into the other she took seven hundred and fifty million derived from the trusting bankers of Lombard Street and Wall Street. So on balance the country was doing well, and seemed to be rapidly making good the losses of war and inflation. The Republic could no longer be charged with having cursed the people with perpetual poverty, nor, as the French and British troops began to leave the Rhineland long before their time, could the Allies be charged with undying vindictiveness. There seemed a fair prospect for democratic government in Germany and for continuous peace in Europe.

These appearances were, however, deceptive. It is true that the wave of crime and disorder had subsided. The Nazi party with about a hundred thousand members was still a negligible factor in politics. I used to see its flaming red posters on the hoardings at election times and was told it was run by an obscure lunatic called Adolf Hitler. Stresemann had a long and copious lunch with Briand in the grubby little inn at Thoiry. Germany made full use of her membership in the League to push her claims in every direction, but not to show any active sympathy with its aims and principles. When she was admitted, a deputy of the *Reichstag* said "the League will find us uncomfortable people," and it did. At times I was disposed to think that Germany did not receive a fair deal at Geneva. Her officials in the Secretariat were not given much scope, and her representatives in the Assembly were

always regarded with some suspicion. But when one looks at their previous records and their subsequent performances, one realizes that the German officials of the League were with hardly any exceptions alien to the whole conception of international co-operation. They were interested in Germany, but not in the League. Many of them had been officials saturated with the ideas of the old order and became enthusiastic Nazis when Hitler climbed to power. The remainder, who were dubious about him at first, hastened to make their peace when they saw that he was leading Germany back towards domination in Europe. Their inward sentiments were concisely summed up by one of my German colleagues in the International Labor Office, a socialist who had been given a haven there to save him from a concentration camp. When he was asked whether he did not consider the rape of Czechoslovakia monstrous, he replied that no good German could disapprove of it. And now he too has made his peace.

The same tendencies were creeping out in German politics. The Republic, despite the prevailing prosperity and its increasing prestige abroad, was losing rather than gaining ground in the hearts of the people. Its very existence was already becoming precarious. As early as 1925 the writing on the wall had become plainly legible. When President Ebert died, the contest for the Presidency of the Republic lay between Von Hindenburg, the figurehead of the old regime, and Marx, the candidate of the Catholic party. The old Marshal won by a handsome majority, while Thaelmann, the only "revolutionary" candidate, polled only two million of the thirty million votes cast. From that time onward the ascendency of the army was unquestioned and unquestionable. The President appointed one of his old staff officers, General

Groener, as Minister of the *Reichswehr* and allowed no civil interference in military affairs. The secret funds of the army, which were shielded from any republican prying, were swollen by all sorts of dubious methods and devoted to building up the power of the war machine and its masters. When President Von Hindenburg received the Governing Body of the International Labor Office in 1927, it was easy to perceive that he was a typical product of the old Prussian military school—still upright and soldierly in bearing, an affable host proud of talking French to his French guests as a concession to public duty, but at heart just an honest old reactionary. He performed his functions as President of the Republic with outward punctilio. He stuck to the letter of its constitution, but its spirit was quite foreign to him, for he neither understood nor believed in democracy. After all he was eighty years of age, and at that time of life one does not readily acquire a new political outlook.

Nor were other signs lacking that the second phase of the counterrevolution, which culminated in the election of Von Hindenburg, was but the forerunner of a third phase, which would see the overthrow of the whole Republican edifice by violence. Uniforms were once more becoming prominent in the streets, not the battle gray of the *Reichswehr*, which still kept discreetly in the background, but the varied uniforms of the private political armies. There was the *Stahlhelm* (Steel Helmets), mostly ex-service men organized by ex-officers and subsidized by big business, who constituted an antidemocratic reserve running into hundreds of thousands. There was the *Reichsbanner* (Reich Flag), recruited for the defense of the Republic and wearing its red, black, and gold colors. If this corps had been formed in the early days, it might possibly

have enabled the Government to disband the Free Corps and really to assert its authority in the country, but when it was organized in 1924, it came five years too late. There was the Red Front of the communist party, and there were Hitler's Storm Troopers. The stage was in fact set for civil war. Political manifestations came to assume the form not so much of public meetings and *Reichstag* debates as of Sunday parades and nightly brawls between the rival gangs. No serious attempt was made by the Government to dissolve these illegal organizations or to ban the wearing of private uniforms. Any such measure could only have been carried through with the consent of the army, which would doubtless have undertaken to break up the Red Front and the *Reichsbanner* with alacrity, but which would certainly not have raised a rifle to suppress the *Stahlhelm* or the Storm Troops.

Thus the Republic was slipping towards extinction even in the halcyon days of fictitious prosperity. With Stresemann's death its only notable statesman disappeared, the only man capable of holding it together. His past record did not suggest that he was an ardent democrat or ever likely to become one, but he was a realist and therefore, for the time being at any rate, a republican. His principal aim was the recovery of Germany's place as a great power, which he strove to achieve by peaceful means. He was averse to war as an instrument of policy, and as his "policy of fulfillment" improved Germany's position in the world, it was tolerated as a necessary stage in the reconstruction of German power even by those who hated it most. The bitterness and strength of the forces working for his eventual overthrow, however, were clearly revealed by the furious outbreak of the nationalist opposition against his acceptance of the Young plan. When

Hitler took the reins, he condemned Stresemann as a traitor to his country and tried to expunge his name from German history. Still Stresemann was an able and a strong man, who was opposed to any assault on the constitution. Had he lived, the Republic might have lingered on for some years longer despite the growing strength and determination of its adversaries, if the era of prosperity had continued.

But its fate was sealed by the onset of the great slump of 1929. With the collapse of the inflated values of Wall Street the flow of American credit across the Atlantic dried up and with it the balloon of German prosperity came sagging to the ground. Its deflation had nothing to do with the Young plan, but the National Socialists did not miss the chance of fixing the blame for the growing distress of the people on its enemies of the Great War and upon its republican leaders. Though during the good times the Nazi ranks had not attracted many recruits, with the pricking of the economic bubble a startling change came over their fortunes. As the unemployment figures mounted, so did those of the Nazi party. Its double appeal to nationalism and to socialism, its double promise to smash the Versailles Treaty and to cure unemployment, began to sweep the country, and particularly its youth. Stark poverty was now gripping Germany once more. The comfortable mirage of the past five years had suddenly vanished into thin air. To a people of little political intelligence all the old parties seemed to have failed, and in despair millions of them turned to Hitler. The world was astounded and perturbed when at the election of 1930 the Nazi vote bounded at one jump from 810,000 to 6,401,000. The end of the Republic was in sight.

When the crash came, it came easily and without resist-

ance. To the end all the party leaders clung to the vain hope of a compromise with Hitler, which would permit the parliamentary game to go decently on. Even the trade-union chiefs deluded themselves into the same sense of false security. A few days after Hitler became Chancellor, one of them assured me that nothing would really be altered, but that they would come to some arrangement. He was soon in prison, poor fellow, and went on to a concentration camp. The leaders could not bring themselves to risk all the wealth and power of the great trade-union movement by calling a general strike. Had there been one such man at the top, millions might have followed him. It would probably have been a forlorn hope, but at least the minority who believed in freedom would have made an honorable fight for it. As it was, they were wiped off the map. One May morning Dr. Ley quietly took over the buildings and the accumulated savings of the strongest working-class organization in the world without anyone's lifting a finger. As he contemptuously remarked, "It was just as if the leaders of the trade unions had waited for them to be taken over, and breathed a sigh of relief when they were finally relieved of their burden." [7]

Hitler had not been many months in power before he severed all ties with Geneva. That was the logical and necessary consequence not only of all his agitation, but of all his purposes. He did not leave the League because he objected to this or that clause in the disarmament convention, but because it was his intention to rearm to the limit. He cut loose simultaneously from the I.L.O., not because Germany had not equal rights there (which she had always had), but be-

[7] S. H. Roberts (Methuen), *The House That Hitler Built*, Harper, 1938, p. 218.

cause it was a necessary step to rearmament. To achieve that object he required not a forty-eight-hour week, still less a forty-hour week, but a sixty- or seventy-hour week or even longer. When I was in Berlin in 1937, Dr. Schacht gave me a homily on the evil of short hours in industry, while Herr Göring was calling on the workers for "overtime on overtime to forge the sword of the nation." From the day of his assumption of office Hitler's objective was the constitution of overwhelming military power, which would enable him not merely to regain Germany's lost provinces, but to extend her rule over Europe and then beyond the seas by the sword. But Hitler's weapon was not the sword alone. The path to military victory was to be prepared by the poisoned pen and the corrupting word of propaganda. Long before Germany possessed an army and an air force, Hitler had won a resounding victory by persuading the wealthy in many countries that he alone stood between Europe and Bolshevism. He did it in Germany, he did it in France, he even did it to some extent in England. On the day when he sent his troops into the Rhineland, I happened to meet an eminent British banker, who stoutly maintained that London ought to lend Germany all the money it needed, "because Hitler was the great barrier against communism." He had innocently accepted the Nazi propaganda at its face value, oblivious of the fact that at no time since January, 1919, had Germany stood in the faintest danger of a communist revolution. Successive general elections, the overwhelming power of the *Reichswehr*, the police and the private armies of the Right, the passive conservatism of the people, all rendered such an explanation of the Nazi revolution a fantastic absurdity to anyone who knew the country. But the majority of foreigners, including a con-

siderable number of influential Englishmen, did not know it. They were obsessed by the red bogey. They cheered Hitler's diatribes against Stalin and his henchmen, and naively looked on him as the savior of Western civilization.

And yet there was much in her recent history to suggest that Germany's eyes always instinctively turned to the East. The *Drang nach Osten,* the eastward urge, had always haunted the minds of her leaders. The General Staff had always seen in Russia the final insurance against a British blockade. As early as 1922 Rathenau had torpedoed the Genoa conference by announcing his treaty with Lenin and Chicherin, to the dismay of Lloyd George and Barthou. In 1926 Stresemann had prepared his entry into the League of Nations by a new treaty with Russia, declining to accept any military obligation of the League of which the Soviet Government might disapprove. Hitler reversed this policy in appearance, but his aim remained the same, if his method was different. He toyed with a nationalist revolt in the Ukraine. In the light of what we now know of German "fifth-column" activities in other countries there is no reason why the evidence furnished by the Moscow trial of 1937 should not be genuine, according to which Germany attempted to suborn Marshal Tukhachevsky and to undermine the Red army. Whether by force or by agreement the German plan to acquire control of the vast resources of Russia was never dropped. Hitler himself made no secret of it. In 1936 he said to the Labor Front, "If we had at our disposal the incalculable wealth and stores of raw material of the Ural Mountains and the unending fertile plains of the Ukraine, to be exploited under National-Socialist leadership, then we would produce,

and our German people would swim in plenty." [8] It was only a question of the timing and the method by which this dream was to be realized. A year before the event, Hermann Rauschning, who was familiar with the inner forces molding German policy, forecast the Nazi-Soviet pact. "There are many well-known political elements," he wrote, "who desire a solution of this sort. . . . If Germany and Russia were to join together, the Western Powers and the small States would be compelled to capitulate without a struggle. There is a good deal of evidence that this policy might prove attractive for reasons of internal politics. In any case dynamism sees in the volte-face of an alliance with Soviet Russia a last chance which might be of incalculable revolutionary effect." [9] That trump card was played unblushingly by Hitler in August, 1939. It served his purpose by sealing the fate of Poland and avoiding a war on two fronts for a time. But as he has now confessed, it was a temporary arrangement rendered cynically expedient by the needs of the moment, which he meant to throw overboard at the earliest convenient occasion, that is to say, when he had extracted the maximum profit from perfidy. In the last resort the mastery of Russian foodstuffs and raw materials was indispensable to his survival in a struggle against the British Empire and the United States, and his dream of European hegemony was in jeopardy as long as Russia remained a great power.

There is no need to recapitulate the stages of Hitler's progress. By now they are sufficiently well known and understood even by those who would not see. The kernel of his whole effort has been to uproot every democratic seedling in Ger-

[8] Quoted in *Survey of International Affairs, 1936*, London, 1937, p. 381.
[9] *The Revolution of Nihilism*, Longmans, Green, 1939, p. 226.

man life. He has done it with characteristic thoroughness and ruthlessness, and it would be foolish to suppose that he has not largely succeeded. Every official, every university teacher, every schoolmaster, with a tinge of liberal sentiment was summarily ejected, unless he could give plain proof of his conversion to the Nazi creed. No newspaper, no book, no film, no play was tolerated which did not harmonize with the Nazi view of life. Every instrument of education and propaganda was turned to its inculcation. Fairy stories and schoolbooks were rewritten, science was falsified, economics and history travestied, in order to ensure that no word of any other doctrine should penetrate into the minds of the young. Lest a new intelligentsia should arise, which might be the source of heresy, brawn was deliberately cultivated instead of brain. After six months' physical toil in a labor camp followed by two years' grueling in the ranks of the army, the critical faculties of the most promising scholar might be safely regarded as atrophied. In the old imperial days military service was adapted to the needs of the budding student. He was a one-year volunteer, who did not serve his time as an ordinary private in the ranks and whose duties were often related to his intellectual interests. The opposite was rather the case with the Nazis. The whole object of their system of education was to eradicate individualism and independent thinking. The future leaders picked for special training were chosen for their physique, character, and devotion to the ideals of Hitlerism rather than for their mental capacity. The clever boy was generally discouraged and reduced to mediocrity. The result of the system is a generation of narrow-minded fanatics imbued with a blind worship of the Führer and a total inability

to think for themselves. To suppose that among them are to be found thousands of good democrats thirsting to throw off the Nazi yoke and to co-operate in building a new world with their youthful contemporaries in other countries is pure illusion. One of the most baffling of future problems will be the youth of Germany, whose mental horizon is bounded by Hitlerdom and whose stunted intelligence is probably incapable of conceiving any other view of life. To convert them into rational beings, to say nothing of decent members of civilized society, will be a task of herculean difficulty.

The Nazis boast that the Germans have never belonged to the West and its civilization. They claim that through the centuries they have fought a long fight against the culture of Greece and Rome and against the teachings of Christ. Their true ancestry always derived from the old pagan gods and from the barbarians of the primeval forests, who threw back Varus and his legions. The claim is not wholly false. Though they produced Luther, Jakob Böhme, Kant, Goethe, and Beethoven, they have never wholly assimilated the spirit of the Occident. As a nation the Germans have never spoken its language fluently or shared its ideals fully. At heart they have always retained something of the outlook of primitive man, something of the tribal conception of society. They have continued to confound violence with virility, to venerate as leaders generals rather than statesmen, to honor the virtues of the warrior and to despise those of the saint. To them the action of the individual has always been subjected to the law of the tribe. His right to lead his own life has been subordinated to his duty to the state. For ninety years and more every liberal tendency has been systematically crushed out and increasing

homage paid to the traditions of savagery and brutality inherited from primitive Germanity.

The Nazi revolution was the climax of this process. It carried the doctrines of Pan-Germanism and racialism, which had so long been gathering force, to their violent and logical conclusion. It put the clock back by several centuries. How can it be put forward again? It cannot be done in minutes or in months. To reverse the whole trend of German development over a century will be a matter of years, if not of generations. It can only be done by the Germans themselves. Like every other people they can only gain their freedom by their own exertions. It cannot be imposed upon them from without. To achieve reality it must come from within. Until this spiritual revolution has occurred, Germany will remain a danger, actual or potential, to the rest of the world. We who know what freedom is can encourage its growth by precept and example, but we must leave Germany to fight out her own salvation, whatever its price in blood and tears. Until she has found it, it is idle to suppose that Germany will take her place as a willing partner in a new world order based upon the principles of liberty and democracy. To cure her economic evils will not be enough, for German nationalism becomes more overweening in good times than in bad. Of no people is it truer that their appetite grows with eating. With most of Europe at their feet, they see the goal in sight. Now, as Hitler never tires of repeating, the fall of the dice may decide the fate of Germany for centuries. The present struggle will determine whether their conception of life is to triumph and to throw back Europe into the barbarism of the dark ages, or whether it is to be finally extirpated. To liberate the nations now under the German heel and to liberate the

rest of the world from the peril of Germanity, there is no way but the utter destruction of German power. Nothing else will suffice to crush that evil German spirit, which has perverted the soul of the nation, stamping out tolerance, chivalry, friendliness, and respect for others, spurning the love and charity of the Christian religion. Until that spirit is exorcised and cast back into the outer darkness from which it sprang, there is no conciliation possible between Germany and the Western world.

CHAPTER FIVE: AUSTRIA

Hauch ihn ein, den letzten Odem,
Riesige Vergangenheit.
Flach dahin, auf flachem Boden
Geht die neue flache Zeit.[1]

GRILLPARZER

IN THE old days the grand tour of Europe ended in Vienna. There was to be found an imperial court which prided itself on being the oldest and most exclusive in the world. There too was to be found a gay, pleasure-loving city inhabited by an easy-going, agreeable, artistic people. They spoke German with a broad drawling accent, but they were very un-German. For centuries they had lived on the borders of Slavdom. Their empire included all sorts of Eastern races, Czechs and Slovaks, Poles and Magyars, Croats and Slovenes, Rumanians and Ruthenians. From them the Austrians had acquired a touch of oriental nonchalance and of Slav melancholy, and somehow or other a pleasant sense of humor. Time was less important to them than leisure. They hated Prussian punctuality and efficiency. They ridiculed the stiff manners and bourgeois behavior of the upstart German Empire. Though they too loved music, their taste ran in a lighter vein. Vienna never produced a Beethoven, a Bach, a Mendelssohn, or a Wagner, but was at least as proud of having mothered Mozart, Schubert, Strauss, and Franz Lehár. It was the capital of the greatest empire in Europe and ruled over its subjects with

[1] Draw, towering past, thy last expiring breath. Bleakly this bleak new age plods on its lowly way.

tact and adroitness but without ever allowing them to forget that they were subject races. The Hapsburg dominions were by no means the worst-administered territories on the Continent, but no amount of Austrian suppleness and geniality could stem the fierce passion for independence which fired the hearts of all the non-German races. Still less was it stemmed by the harsh and overbearing rule of the Hungarians. Though economically it was a solid structure, politically the Double Monarchy had no meaning. It was held together by the Crown and by the force which the Crown commanded. For the Emperor the great majority of his subjects felt neither national loyalty nor personal affection. He was just an alien ruler, whose yoke they threw off as soon as his power collapsed. In the last months of the Great War this venerable empire, which had held sway over Central Europe for centuries, quietly and automatically dissolved. It was nothing but an outworn dynastic formula, which had lost its content.

This historic event, as sensational as the destruction of the Byzantine Empire by the Ottomans, entirely transformed the map and the life of Eastern Europe. Trieste was no longer the outlet of a great German hinterland with fifty million people, stretching from the Adriatic to the borders of Russia, but a second-rate Italian port going rapidly to seed. As one traveled past it in the Orient Express the beautiful white castle of Miramar jutting out into the sea, the home of the fated Emperor Maximilian, was now only an historic monument instead of the first landmark of Austrian elegance and power. Beyond the forest-clad hills of Carniola lay the great new kingdom of Yugoslavia, in which Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes were reunited in uneasy partnership after a lapse of

a thousand years. Beyond that again lay the realm of greater Rumania, with all the Rumanians once more brought together in one kingdom after an equally long period of separation and servitude. To the north of them lay the new republics of Poland and Czechoslovakia, the resurrection of two long-lost Slav races, and in the middle the truncated territories of Austria and Hungary. But unhappily the boundaries cut between the races were not clean cut, nor could they be. Each of the new states contained one or more alien minorities, whose rights and protests were a constant source of disaffection at home and of controversy at Geneva. They kept fanning the embers of the feuds of centuries, nor was there any way of extinguishing them, except by the drastic method of an exchange of population, so sensibly and successfully practiced by the Turks and the Greeks. Nationalism is still the most potent political passion in Europe. It is only rarely that by long association and the force of geographical circumstances three different races can learn to live together in amity, as have the Germans, French, and Italians of Switzerland, and the English, Scotch, and Welsh of Britain.

A first view of Vienna after the Great War was a saddening spectacle. The marks of privation could be seen on almost every passer-by. Gaunt, hungry faces gazed wistfully at the unappetizing food displayed in the shop windows at prices far out of the reach of the working man. But in their distress the Austrians remained true to their character. At the opera the standing room was closely packed by people who had paid for their tickets a sum which would have bought them a square meal. But though half starving they preferred to deprive themselves of food rather than of music. Nor had they lost their manners. A gentle courtesy distinguished the Aus-

trians of all classes above all Europeans. When I first crossed the frontier, I was traveling with an American subaltern in uniform, for Allied officers were still going about Central Europe on all sorts of military missions. He was a thoroughly nice boy, but obviously relished the experience of traveling as a victor through a conquered country. The elderly guard explained to him with an incomparable mixture of deference and paternal kindliness that officers were not allowed to wear uniform in Austria. The young American was at first inclined to resent this interference when I interpreted the guard's tactful little speech to him, but whatever he might be saying, the old man's manner was so irresistible that the youthful lieutenant went off and changed into mufti with an admirable grace. It was my first experience of Austrian gentlemanliness, and I amused myself for some time by wondering what would have happened had the incident taken place in Germany..

But though misery stared you in the face at every turn, Vienna was very unlike Berlin. It was neither sullen nor revengeful nor hopeless. Not even the most pressing poverty could obliterate the good humor of the Viennese. They did not brood over their wrongs, but dismissed them with a shrug and went on to get what was still left out of life. They showed little bitterness against their conquerors and not for a single moment did they dream of fighting to recover the Empire they had lost. In the middle of the famous Kärntner-Strasse I noticed a shop called *Zur englischen Flotte* (*To the English Fleet*) with a White Ensign in enamel on the door. In some surprise I asked my Austrian companion if it had been there all through the war, to which he replied with equal surprise, "Of course. Why not?" Again I thought of what would have happened in Berlin. The fact was that the

great majority of Austrians of all classes had been either indifferent or openly hostile to the war, and cared little about the loss of their empire. The aristocracy regretted the disappearance of the Court, round which it had revolved. The bureaucracy regretted their shrunken prospects with nothing but a tiny republic to administer instead of the imperial domains. But though they joked and jibed at the bucolic manners of the Czechs and Serbs and Poles, they harbored no ferocious feelings of hatred and revenge against them. Their philosophy was to live and let live, and in defeat at any rate they were quite ready to apply it honestly. As for the working classes, like the Russians they welcomed peace at any price whatever, and when it brought with it the overthrow of the old regime, against which they had fought unrelentingly for three generations, they welcomed it with added enthusiasm.

Nor was the atmosphere of the country by any means hopeless. It had undergone a real revolution, though a bloodless one, and was full of optimism as to its democratic future. The levers of power had really changed hands. The army had crumbled to pieces, the nobility no longer counted. The officials who remained were loyal to the Republic. For the first time the people had taken their destiny into their own charge, and they were plainly enjoying the new sensation. Under the leadership of a group of able men such as Karl Renner and Otto Bauer, the socialist leaders, and Ignaz Seipel, the head of the Catholic party, the infant Republic faced its bleak prospects with courage and intelligence.

But its prospects were bleak indeed. The new Austria was like an emaciated body with a huge head and no limbs. The capital with its two millions had nothing behind it but the old

German provinces with their four million people. Without its markets in the Succession States, Austrian industry was doomed. Vienna had been the financial and commercial center of Eastern Europe, but unless it could retain its old clients, its banks and mercantile houses were likewise doomed. There were really only two alternatives, either a Danubian confederation, which would have left Austria its old economic hegemony, or union with Germany, which would have given a new outlet for her financial and industrial activities. During the bare twenty years of its existence the politics of the Austrian Republic oscillated between these two poles.

The idea of a Danubian confederation was attractive as an abstract proposition, and if it could have been realized, it would probably have proved the best recipe for bringing peace and plenty to southeastern Europe. But unfortunately in the first years after the war it was quite impracticable. To expect that the Czechs, the Yugoslavs, and the Rumanians would agree to guarantee the continuance of the economic supremacy of Vienna when they were enthusiastically celebrating their liberation from the Austrian yoke was asking too much of human nature. It was easy enough to condemn the peace settlement and the "Balkanization of Europe" from armchairs in London. It was all very well for the economists to demonstrate by industrial and banking statistics that the new grouping of the states was unworkable, and to a large extent they were right. But national sentiment takes little account of statistics. To the traveler who witnessed the ecstasy with which all the liberated peoples were reveling in their newly won freedom, it was obvious that the peace settlement was in its broad lines not only right but inevitable. The Austro-Hungarian Empire was not broken up by the Peace

Treaties. It had already disintegrated before a line of them had been written. The peacemakers were confronted by a *fait accompli* brought about by one of those irresistible surges of spontaneous mass action, which cannot be checked by any appeal to reason or consideration of long-range policy. After all, the Allies had fought the war for the principle of self-determination, and no other principle would have been accepted by the Western democracies. The right of nations to cherish their own traditions, to speak their own languages, to guide their own destinies without alien interference is still a fundamental postulate of democracy. If anyone doubted it, he had only to go to Belgrade or Zagreb, Bucharest or Cluj, Prague or Pilsen, Warsaw or Cracow, in the first flush of their national resurrections. The new energy and self-respect which freedom breeds were plain to be seen on all hands. Every peasant and every crossing-sweeper somehow felt himself a better man, however far he might still be from having achieved political equality or economic security. The new nations had attained self-consciousness for the first time; they had won the distant prize for which their heroes and martyrs had struggled for centuries. In their mood of exaltation they would have laughed at the suggestion that they should exchange a single particle of their national independence in return for better banking facilities or more assured markets for their produce. These were problems of tomorrow, for which their newly found national enterprise would find a solution. It might not be the ideal solution, but it would be better than submitting a moment longer to Austrian tutelage however attenuated.

In such an atmosphere the notion of Danubian confederation was vastly remote from practical politics. The real

objection to it was that it could not be realized without preserving a large measure of the domination which Austria and Hungary had exercised over their subject races. The latter would have remained in a state of semidependence, if they had had to look to Vienna as their money center and to Austrian industry for their manufactured goods. As for Hungary, in her fury at being deprived of the great domains which she had exploited by Slovak, Croatian, and Rumanian labor under conditions little better than serfdom, she would certainly not have accepted any arrangement which recognized their permanent loss. On their side the new states were violently opposed to anything which savored of the Hapsburg dispensation and were therefore determined to become not only politically but financially and economically independent. They knew that their political freedom would be insecure as long as their finances were controlled by their old masters. They also realized that they could not improve the low standard of living of their peoples as long as they relied wholly on agriculture for their national income and were compelled to import all their manufactured requirements from abroad. They wanted to develop industries of their own, which meant that in their early stages they would have to protect them by heavy tariffs against the old established industries of Austria. No doubt it was all very foolish and reprehensible when viewed with the cold eye of the pure economist. It implied that the new states would have to put up with high prices for their finished goods and that their financial envoys would have to journey to London, Paris, or New York for their loans instead of making the short familiar trip to Vienna. It also implied that Austria could no longer maintain herself as a going concern, but all these considerations seemed secondary

and irrelevant to the leaders of the emancipated peoples, whose only aim was to achieve complete and final independence.

There was then little hope for Austria of any amicable arrangement with her new neighbors by which she might be allowed to maintain her old banking business and her old channels of trade. It may even be doubted whether such an arrangement, which must have had some color of humiliation, would have been very agreeable to the majority of the Austrians themselves. They would have still felt very small and lonely surrounded by their ex-vassals, who bore no love for them. There was, however, a better course, which would solve all their economic difficulties without any serious sacrifice of pride—union with Germany. The rivalry between Hapsburg and Hohenzollern no longer stood in the way, for both imperial houses had gone. Germany too was in revolution and had a socialist government. The two countries felt a greater affinity than ever before. It was therefore natural that the Austrian Republic opted for the *Anschluss* from the first week of its existence. On November 11, 1918, the day on which the German delegates signed the armistice at Compiègne, the Social Democrats' proposal for unity with Germany was carried unanimously in the Political Council, and on the following day the Provisional Legislative Assembly declared by Article 2 of the new constitution that "German-Austria is a constituent part of the German Republic." An agreement with the German Government was subsequently negotiated by Otto Bauer as Foreign Minister concerning the conditions of Austria and incorporation in the Reich. He considered this agreement was "extremely favourable to Aus-

tria," [2] but it could not become operative without the consent of the Allied and Associated Powers gathered at the Peace Conference. In Paris counsels were divided, but throughout the opposition of France was adamant. Moreover, second thoughts in Austria destroyed the original unanimity, with which the idea of union had been killed. The Spartacus riots in Germany had frightened the Austrian *bourgeoisie*. The aristocracy could not as yet reconcile themselves to abandoning all hope of a Hapsburg restoration. The Austrian claim to self-determination, which might have been almost irresistible had the united front been maintained, was fatally weakened. In the end, instead of the union being approved by the Peace Treaty, it was expressly prohibited, except with the consent of the Council of the League. As consent could only be obtained by a unanimous vote, any proposal for uniting the two countries would henceforth be at the mercy of the veto of France or of the Little Entente; which always had a place on the Council. In other words it was dead.

It is interesting to recall these facts and curious to speculate on what might have happened if the *Anschluss* had been accomplished in 1919. Some people believe that the inclusion of Austria and the influence of the Austrian socialists might have changed the history of the German Republic. No one could fail to respect Bauer's brilliant intellect or Renner's strong character, which expressed itself with a typically Austrian charm of manner. Both were convinced democrats, who fought communism and fascism alike sternly and consistently. In vigor and vision they were the superiors of the German socialist leaders and might have breathed the spirit of democ-

[2] Otto Bauer, *The Austrian Revolution*, London, 1925, p. 111.

racy into the German revolution. It was even said that one of Bauer's motives for promoting the *Anschluss* was personal ambition. He believed that he and the other Austrian leaders would quickly rise to the top by sheer energy and ability and find themselves the rulers not of six million but of seventy million people. There are more impossible things. The German counterrevolution was led by Hitler, an Austrian. The German revolution led by men like Bauer and Renner might possibly have become a reality.

As it was, both the roads to Austrian salvation were effectively barred, and it only remained to reap the consequences. Those who prophesied that Austria could not survive in isolation saw their predictions being gradually fulfilled. The League saved the state from insolvency, but it could not save the people from misery. An adverse trade balance, an unbalanced budget, and chronic unemployment were permanent features of Austrian economy. At times they were temporarily relieved, but even in the years of world recovery (1926-1929) there was no prospect of restoring the country to stable prosperity. The problem of an overpopulated capital of an underpopulated countryside remained insoluble.

In spite of their difficulties the Austrians made a brave struggle. Social reform was pushed forward with skill and determination. The forty-eight-hour week, unemployment insurance, and annual holidays were rapidly introduced, while a system of works committees under the vigilance of the trade unions ensured the enforcement of the law. The municipality of Vienna carried through a scheme of slum clearance and housing which became a model for Europe and which the Nazis continued in their efforts to conciliate the working classes. Health and education were greatly improved, and if

its economic position could have been consolidated, Austria might have become a flourishing and contented community. But these measures, and in particular the attempts at socialization, which were much less successful, aroused the strenuous opposition of the business community and the peasants. Heavy taxation was needed to meet the bill for social reform, which in their financial troubles they found intolerable. Violent political strife gradually developed between the Catholics under Seipel, who relied on the support of the peasants and big business, and the socialists, backed by the solid ranks of the trade unions. As early as 1927 political murders began. The parties of the Right were abetted by Mussolini, who was said never to have forgiven the Austrian labor movement for christening their new meeting place "Matteotti Hall." The battle between fascism and democracy had been joined, and both sides organized private armies. It reached an acute stage when the slump destroyed all semblance of prosperity. Drastic cuts in wages and state expenditure were inevitable, and as the Social Democrats could not accept responsibility for them, which would have meant abjuring their principles, the field was clear for their enemies to take over the direction of the state.

When Hitler seized power in Germany, it was generally felt that the death of Austrian democracy was in sight. Dollfuss set up his feeble dictatorship, but the Nazis were already working to overthrow him. The country was divided into three more or less equal parts—one-third Nazi, one-third socialist, with Dollfuss, the monarchists, and the Catholics posed uneasily between them. Acting it is said on Italian instigation, the "pocket dictator" decided to crush the socialists by force. On February 12, 1934, the working-class dwellings

of Vienna were attacked by tanks and artillery and the socialist leaders arrested. For four days the opponents of fascism fought with great courage against hopeless odds. Their defeat meant the end of Austrian democracy. It also meant the end of Dollfuss and the end of Austria. By destroying the strongest force with which the Nazis had to reckon before they could conquer the country Dollfuss left himself with no hope of defending himself or of preserving the independence of the nation. Within eight months he was murdered by a Nazi *Putsch*, which only fell short of complete success because Hitler's courage failed him at the last moment and the expected German aid was withheld. But his victory was only postponed for a time. Schuschnigg, who stepped into the bloodstained shoes of Dollfuss, was not the man to rally the country against the Nazi peril. His only chance would have been to win over the democratic forces, which fifteen years before had demanded union with republican Germany, but were now the bitterest enemies of the Third Reich. But Schuschnigg was devoid of imagination and perspicacity. He preferred to maintain an inefficient but infinitely vexatious police regime. His sympathies were strongly Italian and he honestly believed that Mussolini could and would save him from the jaws of Hitler. He only realized after his humiliating interview at Berchtesgaden that Italy was a broken reed. He hated the socialists and could not bring himself to seek their support, in order to save Austria, until it was too late. And so on March 12, 1938, Hitler marched unopposed into Vienna with his tanks and armored cars. The *Anschluss*, for which most Austrians had yearned as long as Germany was a republic, was accomplished by force against the will of the majority of the people. Because Hitler knew

this, he broke in before the question could be submitted to a plebiscite. But even then the workers who hated him most could not forget the distress and unemployment of the past twenty years. As one of them said to a friend of mine on the day of Hitler's entry, "We don't love dictators, but as we seem condemned to have one, perhaps we shall be a little better off under a dictator who will give us work."

That was the end of Austria, the first nation murdered by fascism. Its disappearance left Europe the poorer, for it was the most civilized and cultured section of the German race. It was the only section which had produced a real will to democracy and a genuine aversion to war. In the early days of the German revolution it might possibly have leavened the whole lump; but that, like Austria itself, is nothing but a dead dream. It is not even certain that the dream would not in any case have turned into the nightmare which it has now become. As long as Germany remained pacific, the attachment of Austria would have been an economic liability, though it would always have been a moral and cultural asset. But as soon as Germany's lust for expansion revived, the possession of Austria offered her the key to southeastern Europe. It meant that Czechoslovakia would be enclosed by Germandom on three sides, that Yugoslavia would be exposed to invasion from the north, her weakest frontier, that Hungary, directly under the German shadow, would perforce look to Berlin to remedy her grievances and that Rumania would therefore be in constant danger of Hungarian claims against Transylvania supported openly or secretly by Germany. These fears, which have since been abundantly justified by events, were always present in the minds of the statesmen of the Succession States. They were right in thinking that the union of Germany and

Austria would be a direct threat to their national independence. Nor did the Western powers fail to see that it would imperil the whole structure of Europe founded on the Treaties of Peace. When therefore a Customs Union was proposed in 1931, it was firmly vetoed by Britain and France. Mr. Arthur Henderson, then Chairman of the Council as well as Foreign Secretary, read a severe lecture to the Germans and Austrians at Geneva, and when one of his staff suggested that he should do something to pacify Dr. Curtius, the German delegate, who was fuming, he quietly pulled out his watch and remarked dryly that he thought it was time for lunch.

But when the *Anschluss* was finally forced upon an unwilling Austria by Hitler seven years later, no one lifted a finger. Only three years before at Stresa Britain, France, and Italy had solemnly declared that the "necessity of maintaining the independence and integrity of Austria would continue to inspire their common policy," but by 1938 there was no common policy, though until the last moment Dr. Schuschnigg preserved a pathetic faith in its existence. By then Italy was firmly riveted to the Axis. France, torn by domestic strife, already in the Munich mood, declined to move. At the critical moment she happened not even to have a government, Monsieur Chautemps having resigned four days before, because, it was loudly whispered, he had got wind of what was coming and preferred to be out of the way. In Britain there was immense indignation not unmixed with alarm. Mr. Churchill pointed out to the House of Commons that "mastery of Vienna gives Nazi Germany military and economic control of the whole of the communications of southeastern Europe, by road, rail, or by river." But without France and

Italy Britain could do little or nothing, and she too was in the Munich mood. Her military weakness and her reluctance squarely to face the consequences of what was taking place in Central Europe imposed upon her an attitude of peace at any price. Without French and British support the Little Entente was helpless. Its members were fated to pay for their failure to solve the Austrian problem with their national independence. Whether they could ever have solved it by forming a Danubian confederation, when after five years or so of independence they felt themselves more secure, is doubtful. The ancient animosities against Austria probably still burnt too fiercely in the hearts of all of their peoples. But, as it turned out, the choice between a Danubian confederation and the union of Austria and Germany was a matter of life and death not only for Austria herself, but for all the Succession States as well. All that can be said is that whereas a confederation might have preserved their life, the *Anschluss* condemned them to certain death.

To speculate on the future is fascinating but fruitless. It is impossible to say how far the Austrians have been reconciled to the German overlordship, which in their hearts they must still detest, by the economic advantages which it may have conferred upon them. To foretell what would be their reaction if the German power collapsed is equally impossible. Have the Austrians still the will to live as a nation? Would they once more revolt as they did against the Hapsburg regime? If they broke their German fetters, would release from a common bondage create a feeling of fellowship between them and their old neighbors and enemies? If the Czechs, the Yugoslavs, and the Rumanians became reconciled to the Austrians, what reconciliation could there be between these races

and the Hungarians, who under the cover of German bayonets have once more fallen upon them? Or is some wider solution possible, some organization of Europe as a whole, which would enable Austria to have her place in its economic system side by side with her Danubian neighbors but without being tied too closely to them? These are questions to which the present can suggest no answer. The Danubian dilemma still seems utterly insoluble. But if the solution which lies hidden in the future permits the miracle of an Austrian resurrection, the rebirth of Austrian art, Austrian literature, and Austrian democracy will give back to Central Europe an element of its civilization of which it stands in need.

CHAPTER SIX: NEW NATIONS AND OLD

La déclaration des droits des nations est la même que la déclaration des droits de l'homme. Liberté, sureté, propriété, égalité et résistance à l'oppression, voilà le droit public. Cette vérité est prématurée, mais c'est une vérité.[1]

RABAUT-SAINT-ETIENNE (1743-1793)

THE Treaty of Versailles between the Allied Powers and Germany wrought no essential change in the life of Europe. The western boundaries between France and Germany were once more modified, as they had been half a dozen times in the last three hundred years. That was a normal consequence of every war in which the two countries were opposed. Such wars had recurred at periodical intervals, and their traces are to be found everywhere along both banks of the Rhine. But this swaying struggle between Frank and Teuton had not permanently altered the pattern of Europe as a whole, nor indeed would the loss to Germany of part of Posen and Silesia and the city of Danzig have been enough to do so either. These territories had been part of an independent Poland one hundred and thirty years before and might become so again without vitally weakening the solidity of Germany, as the story of the next twenty years was to prove. But the treaties

[1] The question of the rights of nations is the same as the question of the rights of man. Liberty, security, the right of ownership, equality, and resistance to oppression—there is the public right. This truth is premature, but it is a truth none the less.

with Austria and Hungary meant nothing less than an European revolution. With the disappearance of the Hapsburg dominion, which had for centuries been the binding force holding together the races of southeastern Europe, the political and economic balance of the whole Continent was radically altered. And yet the fateful documents signed at St.-Germain-en-Laye and the Trianon bulked far less sensationally in Western eyes than the settlement of Versailles with Germany. Not one person in a hundred realized that by them Europe had taken one of the decisive turnings of its history.

The heritage of the old Austro-Hungarian Empire was thenceforth partitioned between the new states of Czechoslovakia, Poland, Rumania, and Yugoslavia, the first two resuscitated after generations of servitude, the two latter so enlarged in territory and population as to bear no resemblance to the old kingdoms of Rumania and Serbia, which constituted their core. These four new countries represented a vast experiment in nationalism launched under the most difficult conditions. None of them was uniform in race or language. None of them was practiced in the art of government or in the working of democratic institutions. In other words, though they all possessed the aspirations and the elements of nationhood, they needed the consolidating experience of several generations before they could acquire that internal cohesion which time alone can bring. The ingredients of national metal had been poured white hot out of the furnace of the Great War into their new molds, but a long period of peaceful development was required for the molten mass to cool and solidify into hard steel.

The Western powers, who were momentarily in control of

European destiny, betrayed little understanding of these historic processes. Though they had seen how gradual had been the consolidation of the new Italy and how after a hundred years Flemings and Walloons were still far from being harmonious in Belgium, though they might have reflected on the slow evolution of British and French national unity in earlier times, the majority of British and French statesmen were inclined to look upon the four new nations as having suddenly leapt full grown into the international arena, having somehow miraculously skipped the delicate stages of childhood and adolescence which are as much the natural law of nations as of individuals. History has so far yielded no example of nations coming to maturity without severe growing pains. Deep cleavages invariably exist at birth or are revealed with the passage of time, which cannot be closed without violent strife. The French and the Germans, the British and the Americans all won their way to unity by the bloody path of civil war. To expect peoples so far asunder in outlook and political education as the Serbs and the Croats, the Czechs and the Slovaks, to work spontaneously and easily together was to ignore history and to require the humanly impossible. To expect the Rumanians of the old Kingdom with their semi-oriental outlook and tradition to settle down quickly and readily with their compatriots of Transylvania, to say nothing of its Magyars and Saxons, was equally contrary to historical precedent. As for Poland, the reunion in a single society of Poles educated under such different constitutional and social ideas as those of the Hohenzollerns, the Hapsburgs, and the Romanoffs was bound to be fraught with difficulties scarcely less formidable. It is as hard for human beings to change the ideas in which they have been born and bred as to change

the shape of their faces. However strong their emotional desire to fraternize and to work with long-lost compatriots under the impulse of racial sentiment, the older generations are seldom strong and magnanimous enough to suppress the antagonisms which surge up instinctively from different ways of thought or different traditions of culture. However ardent their patriotism, it is psychologically impossible for them to slough off altogether the mental equipment derived from home and school and to slip comfortably into an entirely new set of ideological garments. The secret of such sudden transitions has not yet been vouchsafed to human nature. Mankind in the mass remains conservative at heart even at moments when it is acclaiming some new dispensation. Only in the slow process of time can it evolve new habits of thought and with them a new environment. Those who had fought against each other in the struggle between Puritan and Cavalier or between North and South for the most part took their animosities with them to the grave, but their children and their children's children gradually built a new world in which the old antagonisms were forgotten and the old loyalties synthesized in a national consciousness. If the new nations of southeastern Europe had been left to work out their destinies in peace for fifty instead of fifteen years their internal incompatibilities, which loomed so large in the eyes of the old, might have been resolved by the young, haunted by no background of ideas derived from bygone regimes but determined to consolidate the structure of the only country they had ever known. But this period of peace was not granted to them. Before they had secured the foundations of their existence, they were assailed by the disruptive forces let loose by fascism and Germanism. They were plunged into a

struggle for survival before the mortar binding their national edifices had firmly set.

That they were unprepared to meet these tremendous shocks was certainly not their fault; still less does their inability to do so imply that they were unfit for nationhood, though this theory was freely advanced both in Paris and London as an excuse for the complete abdication by the Western powers of their duty to sustain the European system which they had brought into being in 1919. The fact was that neither Britain nor France had worked systematically and in concert to bring this new and untried Europe into harmony and balance. They alone could have done it, and only then by a close co-operation which after the bitter disagreements over the Treaty and the Ruhr never existed except at rare and fleeting intervals. For the most part they went their own ways—Britain steering a wavering course between its instinctive isolationism and its "commitments" under the Covenant, France intent on brigading the new nations as supporters of its own system of national security. Neither of them had a real European policy, for that would have involved a recognition of political obligations and occasional economic "sacrifices," which both their statesmen and their peoples were unprepared to admit. They thus played into the hands of a regenerated Germany, which never ceased to regard the new countries as *Saisonstaate*, ephemeral phenomena destined to perish as soon as the German sword could enforce its inheritance to the Austro-Hungarian dominions.

It was characteristic of the British attitude that from the first it took little interest in the new children of the Treaties. The problems of their growth and of their protection against covetous neighbors were for them to solve as best they could.

In the superior circles of Whitehall it was fashionable to ignore them. Mr. Chamberlain was not the only British statesman who was prepared to dismiss Czechoslovakia as a country about which we knew nothing. It was a common attitude among politicians and civil servants, and one that was taken not towards Czechoslovakia alone, but to her three newly liberated neighbors also. Indeed, one of the most noticeable features of British policy was its seeming indifference to the progress of the new nations, which owed their freedom to the Allied victory over German and Austrian imperialism, and upon whose stability the whole structure of European security, including that of Great Britain, ultimately depended. It was symptomatic that no British statesman had ever visited the capital of any of the new countries officially until Mr. Eden as a junior member of the Cabinet went to Warsaw and Prague in 1935, sixteen years after.

In ordinary circumstances there is no doubt much to be said against ministers making official pilgrimages abroad. As a rule foreign policy cannot be profitably conducted by ministerial peregrinations. Relations between nations are usually more securely based on communications framed after due deliberation and conveyed through the cold medium of print or type than on speeches delivered in the heated and enthusiastic atmosphere of official banquets. But there are occasions when misunderstandings can only be removed by personal contact, when a ministerial visit can produce psychological results which a volume of official notes and memoranda would be powerless to achieve. In these days of popular participation in foreign affairs the courtesy and interest implied by occasional visits of a responsible minister are of vital significance in building up relations with new nations and new institutions,

so much so indeed that the omission of such marks of good will is interpreted as want of sympathy. In the case of the League, for instance, the fact that Mr. Lloyd George, Mr. Baldwin, and Mr. Chamberlain never went to Geneva for an hour, was rightly or wrongly so interpreted. The aloofness of British ministers from the new countries was similarly construed, the more so when it was noted that they found time and occasion for visiting Italy and that with the advent of Hitler several members of the Cabinet found reasons for making trips to Berlin. No doubt there were important matters for discussion with the dictators, but it seemed a little odd that they should receive all the attention, while the smaller countries who were trying in the face of great difficulties to practice the principles so frequently proclaimed by British statesmen were entirely neglected. It looked all the more odd when Herr Göring, Dr. Goebbels, Dr. Schacht, and other German high lights began to tour these countries under various pretexts with the obvious aim of weaning them from British principles. Those much-advertised journeys were not mere joy rides. They were all part of a careful plan to detach the smaller countries from the democratic camp, and unfortunately they met with a great deal of success, as we discovered to our cost when Rumania and Yugoslavia were confronted with the demand that they should join the Axis. Britain had long been looked upon as the traditional standard-bearer of liberalism in Europe. Not only was she the mother of parliamentary government, but for more than a century she had stood for the freedom of small nations. Though she continued to enunciate her time-honored principles, she gave few overt signs of encouragement to these new countries, which were trying to organize their national lives and to

establish parliamentary institutions with little guidance from tradition or experience. It is true that British influence was often exerted to help them behind the scenes, particularly behind the financial scenes, but that was not quite enough. Most nations, particularly new nations, do not live by bread alone. They attach an importance to open manifestations of friendship, which may seem exaggerated to Englishmen, so accustomed to an attitude of self-dependence in international affairs and so apt to be embarrassed by public expressions of sentiment. A few cordial gestures of British interest in their affairs would have produced an enormous effect, and would have been a powerful antidote to the Nazis' efforts to poison the springs of democracy. As it was, the colorless correctness of the British demeanor was interpreted as chilly indifference, and did not therefore provide a good foundation upon which to build friendships and alliances in time of need. In my wanderings in Europe I was frequently conscious of a wistful regret that England remained so distant and unapproachable, so very careful not to show too much sympathy with the new countries for fear of giving offense to their enemies and ours, past, present, or future. As an Englishman, I was welcomed more warmly perhaps than I should have been had I belonged to another nationality, just because there were so few Englishmen in official positions who displayed any interest in what the new countries were doing. The very warmth of these welcomes left me with an uneasy feeling that as a nation we were not playing our part in building up a free Eastern Europe, and that we were throwing away golden opportunities of strengthening the forces of peace by giving them leadership and encouragement.

While it is easy to blame British policy for its shortcomings,

it is equally easy to understand it. Since the break with France in 1789, we have never thought of ourselves as Europeans. When in 1783, in the midst of war, Admiral Suffren invited his prisoner William Hickey to an excellent lunch on his flagship at Trincomalee, he spoke of his British adversary, Sir Edward Hughes, as "a truly philanthropic citizen of the world," meaning the European world, the only civilized world known to Englishmen and Frenchmen at that time. Though they might fight diligently among themselves, the members of the European family felt a kinship as against the rest of humanity comparable to that which bound all the citizens of the Greek city states against the "barbarians" of Asia and Africa. It was largely an aristocratic sentiment, a sort of club spirit among the families figuring in the *Almanach de Gotha*. With the French Revolution and the rise of the *bourgeoisie* to power, it rapidly declined, while in the case of the British the expansion of their commerce and empire overseas diverted their gaze from Europe to the continents beyond the oceans. Moreover, as an island people they could never enter fully into the political anxieties of their neighbors living behind land frontiers. Until the Battle of Britain began, they could not appreciate what it meant to have a foreign country just over the river or beyond the mountains, behind which some dire military action might be secretly preparing. The traditional British phlegm, so often the admiration or despair of Continental statesmen, was in a large degree the outcome of a comfortable sense of insular security. In the British as in the American experience there was nothing to justify that perpetual nervosity and distrust of their neighbors, which was common to all Europeans, divided from each other by a few customs barriers on the roads and some imaginary

lines on the map. With the transfer of the first theater of battle from the ground to the air, all that is now changed. The average Englishman feels as vulnerable as any Continental, and the average American is beginning to realize that in a few years' time his position will be no better. But until air warfare had given terrible proof that Britain was no longer isolated, it was pardonable, if irrational, for us to suppose that the Continent was a separate world, from which we could still hold safely aloof. Though our ancestors had constantly felt that the subjugation of Europe by any single power was a threat to British security, and though we had just fought a long and arduous war to avert that threat once more, we still did not realize that our own security was intimately bound up with the stability of Europe. We still thought that the peace of Europe was divisible, that the Continent could be partitioned off into war-tight zones. At Locarno we agreed to guarantee the frontiers of France, Germany, and Belgium, but our interests were not thought to extend beyond the Rhine. That river Mr. Baldwin prescribed as our new frontier, a pronouncement which was probably accepted more because we had fought the last war in defense of France and the Low Countries than because the nation realized its new relationship to Europe. It was only after the whole European system had been overturned by the seizure of Austria and Czechoslovakia that we suddenly extended our political horizon to the Vistula, the Carpathians, and the Aegean Sea. We offered guarantees to Poland, Greece and Rumania because we had seen at last that the peace of Europe as a whole was vital to our own safety. In the League an admirable instrument had been provided for ensuring it, which with the energetic support of British statesmanship and British power

was capable of holding in check the volcanic fires that might destroy the new nations by a fresh eruption and imperil our own national existence. If we failed to see the need for making the League an irresistible force for peace, it was because we still did not feel the danger of Europe in our bones.

The attitude of France was very different. She had always been pre-eminently a Continental power and only turned her thoughts outward to her colonial empire when her position in Europe was declining. Her long predominance in science, letters, and the arts gave her access and influence in all the new countries. Every self-respecting Rumanian was steeped in French culture and talked its language fluently. Many Polish, Yugoslav, and Czech teachers, engineers, and politicians had imbibed their knowledge in French schools and universities, and looked back to France with gratitude and admiration. Many of them indeed had spent years of exile in the liberal and hospitable atmosphere of Paris, Lyon, or Montpellier. When the four new countries attained their freedom largely through the valor of French arms, their old debt to her became further enlarged and they were predisposed to fall into line with French policy. All these claims upon their loyalty and affection were carefully cultivated by successive French Governments. With the liberal aid of public funds the number of French institutes and schools steadily expanded. They were not merely propaganda agencies but genuine centers of culture and learning, which enhanced the prestige of Western civilization, an example which the British Council followed in friendly rivalry and with conspicuous success. By frequent visits French ministers brought personal testimony to the friendly interest of France in the welfare of the new states, which was deeply appreciated and led them

to look to France as their principal political support. As a result Poland and Czechoslovakia became her allies, while Rumania and Yugoslavia generally worked in harmony with French policy. No doubt this network of mutual attachment running through southeastern Europe to the borders of Russia was a powerful bulwark to the security of France, but it was also a much-needed guarantee of the existence of the new states, all of them at grips with perplexing internal problems and liable to be exposed to grave external dangers. The future of the Poles, the Czechs, the Rumanians, and the Yugoslavs, and with it the peace of Europe, seemed assured as long as they could rely upon a strong and resolute France.

There were, however, two great weaknesses in the French system, which finally produced its collapse. In its essence it was negative rather than constructive. Its aim was to prevent the resurrection of Austria, to keep the Hungarian frontiers as they had been fixed by the Treaty, and above all to stifle the revival of German power. But these objects could not be attained by negative methods alone. Sooner or later Germany was certain to recover. If at that moment Austria was still economically unworkable and Hungary still smarting under a sense of injustice, which though greatly exaggerated was not altogether groundless, they would both snatch at the first helping hand, which Germany would certainly not withhold. The only hope of ensuring the security of the new states was to ensure the contentment and stability of Austria and Hungary as well.

In the previous chapter the psychological obstacles to any kind of Danubian confederation in the early years have been pointed out, but it cannot be said that France did much to overcome them. On the whole the French attitude was as

opposed to any Danubian understanding as it was opposed to the *Anschluss*. No serious attempt was made from the French side to promote a constructive solution of the Danubian dilemma until 1930, when Monsieur Briand initiated his Committee for European Union at Geneva. It was then too late. By then Germany and Italy, who professed to see in it another French maneuver to control southeastern Europe, were strong enough to block it, and Austria, already drifting to fascism, was moving steadily into their orbit. The answer was the projected Customs Union between Germany and Austria, which was in turn nipped in the bud by the Council of the League. But as the plight not only of Austria but of the Succession States as well was becoming desperate under the pressure of the slump, something had to be done. In 1932 a last attempt was made at the London Conference to solve the political problem of southeastern Europe by approaching it from the economic angle. Monsieur Tardieu put forward a scheme for the creation of a Danubian Customs Union, consisting of the five states of the old Austro-Hungarian Empire, with the support of Britain, France, and Italy. Five years earlier such a proposal might possibly have had some chance of success, but it was resolutely opposed by Germany, Italy, Austria, and Hungary, while the British refused to waive their most-favored-nation rights as a contribution to a settlement. Not only was the Tardieu scheme killed outright, but the manner of its demise revealed a regrouping of the forces in Central Europe which threatened the very existence of the new states. In the face of this new block their safety came to depend more than ever upon the armed might of France and her determination to use it. Her army was the strongest in Europe and the declarations of her statesmen

lacked nothing in vigorous assertion of French determination. But for reasons which have become evident in previous chapters the national will was found to be fatally enfeebled, when tested by the challenge of Hitler.

When that challenge came, it inevitably exploited the inherent weaknesses of the Succession States. Of these the two greatest were the presence of substantial minorities in their midst and the immense difficulty of organizing their economic life in the face of the troubles which the Great War had bequeathed to Europe.

The question of their minorities was a bugbear to all of them, in varying degrees. In Poland, the Germans were too few and too scattered to make any serious agitation. Even in the western provinces, where they were strongest, they represented less than 10 per cent of the population, and altogether they counted less than a million. The province of Pomorze, which the Germans cleverly persuaded the world to know as "the Corridor," was a bone of contention not because its inhabitants were mostly German, but because, being overwhelmingly Polish, it separated two German provinces from each other. Its existence was perhaps a geographical anomaly, but it was certainly not an ethnical anomaly. The five million Ukrainians, on the other hand, were mostly concentrated in eastern Galicia, where they had always nursed utopian dreams of reunion with their brothers over the Soviet border in an independent state. They were therefore the object of distrust both to the Russians and to the Poles. The latter offered autonomy to the Ukrainians in 1923, but the pledge was never redeemed. Constant trouble and occasional bloodshed marked the relations between the Poles and their Ukrainian subjects. Time alone could have eased the quarrel

between these two Slav races, and the constitutional concessions which in the first flush of national exaltation the Poles could not bring themselves to implement might have ultimately brought about a reconciliation, which would have vastly strengthened the Polish state. As it was, Ukrainian discontentment was a fertile field for subversive activities directed from Berlin or Moscow.

Nevertheless, the inbred patriotism of the Poles was so strong that the differences originating from their varied upbringings were soon merged in a sense of national unity. Whether they had been educated under the Austrian, German, or Russian yokes, whether they had returned from exile in Britain, France, or America, they were always Poles first. Though Polish politics were often stormy and the country torn by bitter discussions, its solidity in the face of external dangers was unshakable. Neither German nor Russian propaganda succeeded in breaking the national front. When the hour of trial came, there were no traitors. No Polish Quisling could be found to sell his country for money or for power or to become the willing tool of the German conqueror. Under the stress of the most brutal tortures and oppressions the Poles refused to accept collaboration with the victors.

The case of Rumania was more complicated. From a small agricultural community of seven and a half million people, it had expanded suddenly into a great state with seventeen millions. On to its former principalities the new territories of Transylvania, the Banat, Bucovina, and Bessarabia had to be grafted. Though in all of them Rumanians were in a majority, they were as full of minorities as they were of problems. There were Magyars and Saxons and Swabians, Serbs and Russians, Bulgars and Turks, and in all of them Jews, who

were generally disliked by the other races for their greed and acumen in money matters. None of these alien races took kindly to Rumanian rule, but all of them who had been under the Hungarians found a bond of common feeling with the Rumanians in preferring their present to their previous lot. The Magyars remained for the most part irreconcilable, and too many of them had been included in the boundaries of the new state for its harmony and tranquillity. But however its frontiers had been drawn, large minorities inextricably entangled with the Rumanian population would have been inescapable. The Rumanians were faced by a problem which might have taxed the resources of the wisest statesmen and the most capable administration. It was not rendered easier by the difference of outlook of the Rumanians of the old Kingdom and their long-lost brothers in the new territories. Most of the latter had been accustomed to Austrian or Hungarian administration, which though in many ways oppressive aimed at some standard of Western efficiency. The administration of old Rumania, on the other hand, still had an Eastern flavor. When I first went there in 1921, I discovered that business in government departments was only transacted between the hours of 10:00 A.M. and 1:00 P.M., because the officials had to supplement their meager salaries by following some other avocation in the afternoon. In fact, I came across the permanent secretary of one ministry who derived most of his income from bookmaking, but this did not prevent him from being quite an efficient functionary in the forenoon. In all the departments there was an atmosphere which might have been Ottoman or Russian or both in its origin, but which was unmistakably oriental. Everybody seemed to drift into the antechamber of the Minister, which often presented an

animated and varied scene. No one seemed to have any other occupation than to wait as long as might be necessary with inexhaustible patience. On the part of the officials no trace of hurry was to be observed. As for the Minister, if he appeared in the end, he behaved as if he were a maharajah dealing with his subjects. His prestige was more important than his performance, and required to be maintained by a suitable display of magnificence. Some question was raised in regard to the expenditure of some three thousand pounds of public money by a good friend of mine on flowers, but as he explained to me with perfect candor, his political reputation would have been ruined if he had failed to send the usual floral offerings to the wives of ministers and others who had invited him to official meals—and to say exactly which were not official meals was of course so difficult.

Executive government was not improved by the fact that the spoils system was in vogue, which meant that when the party in power changed, so did the greater part of the civil servants. As a result administration tended to run on partisan lines, and it was traditional that the party in power and its officials should reap pecuniary benefit from it. Such a machine was not well adapted to solve the multifarious problems which confronted the new state. There were many mistakes and a good deal of confusion at the start, and no doubt not a little corruption, but the spirit of national unity was strong and some progress was made along the path of national consolidation. By degrees the country began to settle into its new mold, though the problems of Bessarabia and of the Magyar minority remained intractable. The other minorities had not any great grievance against Rumanian legislation, which was not illiberal, but they complained bitterly of its administration.

The laxity and venality of the officials kept nationalist feeling constantly alive among the minorities. They were probably not exploited very much more than native Rumanians, but being less accustomed to such treatment they resented it more. Before Rumania could incorporate her alien subjects into the nation, she had first to put her own house in order. There were some signs of improvement, as the Transylvanians with their higher standards insisted on bureaucratic reform, but to achieve it would have been a long process. It had hardly commenced before German propaganda and German money began to seduce the minorities and to sap the unstable foundations of the state.

The problem of Yugoslavia was very different from that of Poland and Rumania. Her alien minorities—mostly Hungarians, Germans, and Rumanians—were not numerous enough to constitute a grave problem, but the Croats and the Slovenes, though brothers by race and partners under the constitution, did not easily coalesce. They joined with the Serbs in their enthusiasm for a united southern Slav state, but their respective notions of unity and of the state differed widely. Though they talked the same language, they wrote it differently. The Serbs were Orthodox, the Croats and Slovenes Catholic. The latter were more educated, more westernized, less Balkanic in their preoccupations, and accordingly disposed to think themselves more "advanced" and refined than their Serbian brethren, much to the latters' annoyance. But the root divergence between the Croats and the Serbs sprang from their conceptions of government. The former wanted and believed themselves entitled to autonomy. They conceived the new state as a federation, a sort of decentralized Austrian Empire on a smaller scale. The Serbs, on the other

hand, were strong believers in unified control. During their struggle for freedom and expansion they had built up a highly centralized system of administration, and could not imagine any other. To them Yugoslavia was to be a greater Serbia, whereas to the Croats and the Slovenes it was to be the United States of the Southern Slavs.

But for all the political strife which filled the columns of the newspapers it would be a total mistake to suppose that Yugoslavia was nothing but a geographical expression or an unrealizable ideal. In addition to the ties of race and language, the three branches of the nation found a powerful bond of union in their common dislike and distrust of most of their neighbors. When recriminations were at their loudest a menacing speech by Mussolini or D'Annunzio claiming the whole Adriatic for Italy or an article by Lord Rothermere demanding the restoration of her lost territories to Hungary would close the ranks. Though they might be Serbs and Croats and Slovenes to each other, they were Yugoslavs to the rest of the world. The whole country was behind the Little Entente, which ensured it against a recurrence of Hapsburg or Hungarian dominion, and of Italy alone it had little fear. As the older generation with their provincial outlooks gradually made way for younger men brought up to think of Yugoslavia as a nation, the sense of unity began to strengthen and bade fair to overcome the separatist tendencies which stood in the way of national consolidation.

The Czech problem was the hardest of all, because in addition to the assimilation of the other Slav elements in the population, they had also somehow to weld into the body of the state three and a half million Germans. The first task of translating the hyphenated state into a national unit was

clearly a long-range matter. It was mainly a question of bringing the Slovak standards of living and education up to the Czech level, so that the two branches of the nation might be equal partners in every sense of the word. Though kinsmen by blood and tongue, they were far apart in their ideas and their culture. Whereas the Czechs were a highly cultivated people trained in Western methods, the Slovaks, who had been systematically repressed by the Magyars, were for the most part illiterate and incapable of managing their own affairs without the help of trained Czech administrators to replace the departed Hungarian officials. However beneficial the work of the Czech bureaucracy, its presence was not welcome. It gave the Slovaks political liberty, excellent schools and hospitals, social legislation, and agrarian reform such as they had never dreamed of in the bad old Hungarian days. But benefits received at the hands of more intelligent and slightly superior relations never earn the gratitude which they deserve. Though decidedly preferring union with the Czechs rather than with the Hungarians, the country remained split between those behind Father Hlinka, who cried out for an autonomy which was politically and economically unworkable, and those who sought the development of Slovak culture in close partnership with their Czech cousins. As time went on the advocates of the Czechoslovak state gained ground at the expense of the autonomists, but progress was very slow.

Some kind of federal solution might ultimately have emerged, but for that peace and time in which to work out the solution quietly and patiently were needed. As it was, external events outstripped the slow process of political crystallization. The hour of trial came upon the new state

before its fusion had been completed, and with it all the forces of disintegration, carefully fomented by German and Hungarian activities, once more broke loose. Father Hlinka and his party disowned the Czech union. We shall some day learn how long the Slovaks took to find out their mistake.

But the fraternal bickerings between Czechs and Slovaks were not the most formidable problem of the new Republic. Throughout their history the Czechs had struggled for survival against the Teutons, and that struggle did not cease when after three hundred years of subjection they had regained their independence. The frontiers of Bohemia and Moravia, so sharply marked by their mountains and forests, were not racial frontiers. All round its fringes were large infiltrations of German settlers, often inextricably interspersed with the Czechs and constituting more than 20 per cent of the whole population. The inclusion of so large a number of Germans in the new state could no doubt be defended on grounds of history and of geography as well as on grounds of strategy, but its military advantages were seriously discounted by the internal weakness which strife between the two races would inevitably engender.

At first the Sudeten Germans were little attracted to the German Reich. The prospect of sharing the burden of reparations and inflation was not inviting, nor had Berlin ever been their spiritual home. Vienna was their economic and cultural capital, but its glory had departed, and its economic plight convinced the Sudeten that their severance from Austria was a fortunate affair. At the start, therefore, they were not indisposed to make the best of their lot as citizens of Czechoslovakia. Between the Czechs and the Sudeten there was no obstacle to co-operation arising from differences in

cultural levels or standards of life, such as stood between the Serbs and the Croats. The Czechs were as much a Western people as the Germans and had been so for centuries. Their administration could not be accused of corruption or inefficiency. In contrast with the parlous financial condition of Germany and Austria, the sound policy of Rašín secured a financial stability for Czechoslovakia without parallel in Central Europe. In Parliament the German minority was able to secure its full representation, as elections were clean, and they enjoyed all the rights and privileges which a democratic state usually accords. In matters of social legislation and organization Czechoslovakia could fairly challenge comparison with Austria or Germany or indeed any other country. The German trade unions were as free as the Czech and worked closely with them in the labor delegations attending the meetings of the International Labor Organization. But the Czechs were Slavs and the Sudetens were Teutons. The antagonism of centuries persisted. In the early years the Czechs, who had been forced to acknowledge German as the official tongue under the Hapsburgs, turned the table and refused to use German, even when they knew it well. Czechs were appointed as police, postal, and railway officials in the Sudeten areas, thereby creating a double grievance. Not only might these jobs be properly regarded as German perquisites, but the inability of their holders to speak and write the local language correctly became a source of irritation.

No doubt daily pinpricks of this kind contributed to keeping the two races apart, but little was heard of them in the first ten years of the Czechoslovak Republic, during which the initial frictions between them were slowly subsiding. The Germans had their full share of parliamentary representation

and of Cabinet posts. They had their own theaters and their own opera house subsidized by the state. No complaint was made that their educational facilities were inadequate. They had their own university and abundant schools of all grades in which German was the language of instruction. A large section of the Germans, particularly those with democratic leanings, came genuinely to appreciate the liberties which they shared equally with their Czech fellow-citizens. On President Masaryk's death many Germans paid a sincere tribute of gratitude and respect to his memory. On their side, as they became convinced of the loyalty of the Sudeten to the state, the prejudices of the Czechs against the German language softened. Great efforts were made by men like Beneš, Nečas, Czech (a German despite his name), and others to build bridges between the two races, despite the outcry of the irreconcilables of both sides. A policy of filling official vacancies in the Sudeten districts by Germans was cautiously pursued; the original tensions were becoming sensibly relaxed. With time and with growing good will reconciliation might have been very gradually accomplished, but for that two conditions were necessary—the maintenance of internal prosperity and the absence of external pressure. Unhappily neither of these conditions continued after 1929.

The slump hit Czechoslovakia as it hit every other industrial country, but for a variety of reasons, over which the Czechs had as little control as the Germans, it hit the Sudeten districts harder than any. Not only were they comparatively more industrialized, but many of their industries, such as textiles, glass, porcelain, and straw hats, were more sensitive to depression than staples like boots, beer, and armaments, which provided so much employment for the Czechs. The closure of

the German frontier against exports from Czechoslovakia fell on the Sudeten districts with particular severity, as did the restrictions placed on Germans traveling abroad. Large sections of the working population were reduced to dire distress, in which they naturally threw the blame for their troubles on the Czechs instead of on those unseen economic forces about which even the most eminent bankers professed a disquieting ignorance. The Government was accused of devoting less than the German share of the national budget to their relief, of favoring Czech as against German enterprises, of giving an unemployment benefit which would not keep body and soul together, whether they happened to be Czech or German. These and many other charges and complaints, real or imaginary, well founded or exaggerated, were embittering the relations between Czechs and Germans once more just at the time when under the Nazi impulse the doctrine of blood and soil was whipping up German racial sentiment everywhere. Under its influence the Sudeten became more clamorous and aggressive, while in self-defense the Czechs became more stubborn and suspicious. The Czech leaders had no illusions as to what was coming in Germany. When I was in Prague towards the end of 1932 I found President Masaryk and Dr. Beneš full of forebodings, though entirely devoid of fear or bitterness. The President, still upright and vigorous in his eighty-third year, was full of the tolerance and wisdom which grow rather than diminish with old age in men of his moral stature. His Foreign Secretary was equally calm and resolute in the face of the coming storm, but once the tornado of Nazi propaganda was let loose along the Sudeten, backed by the bribery and violence which its unlimited funds could command, not only was any hope of an amicable settlement ex-

tinguished but the very existence of Czechoslovakia was directly challenged.

In Czechoslovakia, then, economic prosperity was a factor contributing materially to internal stability, and its collapse the herald of grave political difficulties. The same was true of its three neighbors, but when one considers the immense political repercussions of the slump in the rest of the world, it is scarcely surprising that it bore hardly on the structures of states only ten years old. Its effects had indeed been prodigious. In Germany it precipitated a devastating counterrevolution. In France it sharpened the growing antagonism between Right and Left to the point of violent outburst. In the United States it hurled into the dustbin the long venerated principles of social and economic laissez faire and substituted for them the managed economy of the New Deal. In Britain it not only overthrew the Labour Government, but finally obliterated both free trade and the gold standard, the twin pillars of its economic policy for nearly a century. In agrarian countries like Poland, Yugoslavia, and Rumania the catastrophic fall in agricultural prices inevitably produced disastrous consequences.

Next to the rebirth of national liberties, the most revolutionary effect of the Great War in Eastern Europe had been the impetus given to the demand for the land. Though serfdom had been abolished, the condition of the peasants was pitiably poor. A large proportion owned no land at all. The holdings of most of those who did were too small for anything but the barest subsistence farming. From time to time there had been peasant revolts on a smaller or larger scale, but when the rumor that the Soviet had divided up the great estates among the peasantry began to filter across the Russian

frontier, the cry for peasant proprietorship became so insistent that revolution became the only alternative to its satisfaction. Under this pressure a drastic measure of land reform was hastily carried through the Rumanian Parliament in 1918. The estates of the boyars or great landlords were broken up ruthlessly, and the same measure was later applied in the new territories, where it did much to reconcile the alien minorities to Rumanian rule.

I remember driving one day over the rolling Moldavian plain, behind three horses yoked abreast, listening to my host's lamentation that the country had all belonged to his family as far as the eye could see, but now he had only a thousand acres or so of arable land and a substantial tract of forest left. When I reached his house, I saw three big steam tractors rusting in the yard. There was no more use for them, as agriculture had gone back from the mechanical to the manual stage. The effect on output was serious for the country, as its exportable surplus of wheat was greatly reduced, but it was the price which it had to pay for the backwardness of the peasants. Being totally uneducated, they were hardly capable of doing more than supply their own meager requirements, though the Government made great efforts to improve their methods of cultivation by organizing agricultural co-operatives and committees to stimulate production, by providing seed and breeding cattle, and by other modern devices. But when all was said and done, nothing could alter the fact that their holdings were usually so small that scientific agriculture was out of the question. Three-quarters of them were under ten acres apiece, and although millions of acres had been parceled out, half of the rural population was still landless ten years after the reforms had been in operation.

In Poland the general position was similar. There too agrarian reform was carried through, though less thoroughly and in the face of much greater opposition from the landowners. There too in spite of all that had been done in fifteen years, which was by no means inconsiderable, the great majority of the peasants lived in abject poverty. The Minister of Finance calculated that in 1934-35 their average cash income was a penny a day, that is to say, they had about thirty shillings a year to spend on the products of industry, if they could feed themselves entirely from what they were able to grow. So bad was the situation that the Social Policy Council appointed by the Primate of Poland reported about the same time that the agrarian question was so acute that it "provokes social troubles, threatens interior peace, menaces the structure of the state, and becomes an arena where every subversive action exercises an evil influence." [2]

In Yugoslavia the position was somewhat better. Land reform had been drastically applied, but the same evils—tiny holdings, poor cultivation, lack of equipment, poor education—made the living standard of the peasant hard at all times and in times of depression lamentable. If the birth rate had been low, the pressure on the means of subsistence would not have been so heavy, but in all the peasant countries it remained very high. Until the countries of the New World began to close their gates against immigration, the surplus population had sought a happier life overseas and had usually found it; but with the flow of migration reduced to a trickle the agrarian problem of Eastern Europe reached an acute phase. Even the little that the peasant produced by the sweat of his brow for a miserably small reward could barely compete with the

[2] Quoted in R. L. Buell, *Poland: Key to Europe*, Knopf, 1939, p. 191.

mass-produced crops of Canada, Argentina, and the United States. To that formidable competition was added another when France, Italy, and even England began to subsidize their farmers and protect them against foreign wheat. These measures still further aggravated the lot of the Eastern European countries. Their overpowering need was a sure outlet for their farm produce, which could only be found in the four great powers of the Continent, and of these Germany alone was willing to listen to their appeal. She needed what they had to sell and was able to supply the industrial products which they required. Dr. Schacht's barter schemes were therefore very alluring to Yugoslavia and Rumania. After the commercial treaty of 1936 Yugoslav trade with Germany increased so rapidly that in three years it had more than doubled, reaching 40 per cent of the whole. In ordinary times such an interchange would have been nothing but profitable to both parties and as such economically laudable. But it was notorious that Germany used economic relations as a means to political domination, and the Opposition in Yugoslavia roundly accused Dr. Stoyadinovitch and Monsieur Cvetkovitch of selling the national safety for a mess of pottage.

The same process was at work in Rumania. The percentage of her exports going to Germany rose from 12.5 per cent in 1932 to 26.3 per cent in 1938, while the German share of her imports jumped from 23.6 per cent to 38.2 per cent in the same period. These simple figures covered an elaborate scheme of German penetration which culminated in a kind of economic ultimatum in March, 1939. Rumania was forced to sign a new agreement, under which the control of her economic life passed largely into German hands.

How could these pressing puzzles of economic security

have been unraveled? A Danubian Customs Union would have no doubt done much to improve the position of the agricultural countries, but it may be questioned whether it would have entirely solved their problem. The Danubian area could not absorb all that its agriculture produced, still less what it was capable of producing by better methods, unless the general standard of living could be jerked rapidly up to a higher level. Failing that, foreign markets were still needed, which could only be found in Germany, with the risk of political pressure in economic disguise, or in the free markets of the world, which meant a lower cost of production and transportation than was possible for the overseas countries. But under modern conditions the small-scale peasant farming of Eastern Europe could not compete successfully with the great mechanized farmlands of the Americas. Though socially the division of the land among the peasants was an immense advance, economically it was a retrograde movement. Nor did it solve the agrarian problem in a way which promised to raise the national standard of life in any great degree. For that industrialization was necessary, which would increase the national income and with it the demand for foodstuffs. In simpler words the people did not eat enough because they could not afford it. If the millions of Eastern Europe could produce more and earn more and buy more, the value of the peasants' labor might increase, though it would not be devoted so exclusively to bread.

Partly with this end in view, the Governments of Poland, Rumania, and Yugoslavia made great efforts to expand their industries. Though severely handicapped through lack of native capital and the difficulties and dangers of procuring foreign capital, they made considerable strides; and it says much

for the spirit in which they approached their task of nation-building that in developing their industrial energy they did not neglect social standards. When Warsaw became the capital of the Polish Republic, 75 per cent of its population had never seen a dental chair. In 1923 I visited one of the first health insurance clinics, established in an old boot factory and run by a very capable young Polish doctor, who had returned from America to take his part in reconstructing his country. It was a living demonstration of what modern methods could do to improve health under the most unpromising conditions. In the same way the health organizations of Rumania had made some headway against the terrible health conditions and the infant mortality which had previously existed there. Fifteen years after the war one found not only in Bucharest but in all the towns admirable hospitals and clinics, often equipped with the latest apparatus obtained from Germany as part of the reparation payments. If this sort of payment in kind had been more generally adopted, the social benefits of the reparations chapter might to some extent have offset its economic drawbacks. In Yugoslavia too considerable progress had been made, but in all these countries social advance was practically confined to the towns. The peasantry was too poor and too scattered for any insurance scheme to reach them, except at a prohibitive price to the state. It was condemned to a lack of medical and sanitary organizations which to Western eyes seemed almost incompatible with life, but despite which sturdy men and handsome women somehow managed to survive.

Eastern Europe still presented a great economic conundrum, which it was incapable of solving by its own resources. It furnished one among many examples in Europe of the

absurdity of economic separation. Embraced in some wider scheme, under which production, marketing, and financing could be organized on a regional rather than a national basis, all the smaller countries might look forward to an assured and balanced prosperity. The Nazis claim that they are germinating such a scheme, but theirs is a scheme designed by and for the "master race." It involves keeping the greater part of Europe, including all its eastern territories, in a state of rustic squalor and ignorance, so that Germany alone shall control industry, not only as the primary source of riches, but also as the sole source of armaments with which to render her domination of Europe unassailable, however much the helot peoples may writhe under her heel. But though the German plan is fraudulent, some other plan is necessary, if the Continent is to be reconstituted on a securer basis. If each country is left once again to grope for its economic salvation in isolation, the hopes of a real political settlement are likely to prove as illusory as those of twenty years ago.

That then was the second problem with which all the new countries were wrestling. Having attained their political independence, they had to make it economically workable. Czechoslovakia, with her happy blend of industry and agriculture, succeeded under skillful financial leadership in evolving a stable currency and a sound trade position in an astonishingly short time. Poland, Rumania, and Yugoslavia, being predominantly agricultural, were struggling from the beginning against the creeping paralysis which was besetting agriculture all over the world. The result was that their budgets were seldom truly balanced, and their currencies passed through a series of devaluations. When all these things are remembered, the tenacity with which they were gradually

overcoming their difficulties is remarkable. The improvement of their roads and railways, which had been ruined by the war, went steadily forward to the progressive satisfaction of the traveler. New industries were founded. New cities like Greater Belgrade, Zlín, and Gdynia were built. Until the slump it seemed possible that in spite of the handicaps voluntarily imposed by their nationalistic economic policies, they would nevertheless procure some share in the world's recovery from the economic anemia produced by the war.

The slump, however, annihilated in a few months much that had been accomplished in the previous decade. Thereafter, too, the rumblings of the coming earthquake, which were audible throughout Europe, compelled them to direct a growing proportion of their substance from peaceful reconstruction to armaments. Czechoslovakia alone possessed the coal, the iron, and the great Skoda works at Pilsen which made her largely self-sufficient. The other three countries had the hard choice of creating heavy industries at enormous cost or remaining dependent on armaments from abroad, which in time of need might be completely cut off. But however brave their sons and however well equipped, they could not hope to stand alone against the scientific and industrial power of Germany and the new technique of warfare introduced by the airplane and the tank. Their whole policy was to make every contribution of which they were capable to consolidating a system of collective security under the League.

When Hitler quit the League and initiated a campaign of intensive rearmament, it soon became clear that France and Britain could not be relied upon to play their part in preventing the military revival of Germany. After Marshal Pilsudski's

soundings had revealed that France would not support a demand for an investigation of German rearmament by the Council of the League, he proceeded to conclude a non-aggression pact with Germany, in the hope of gaining a breathing space for the enlargement of Poland's defenses. In March, 1936, Poland offered to mobilize in order to prevent the remilitarization of the Rhineland. Czechoslovakia was ready to take similar action. But again the French will to ensure her own security and that of Europe at the risk of war failed at the critical moment, nor did London give her any encouragement to act. With the support of her two Slav allies France could have prevented the construction of the Siegfried line and put a summary stop to Hitler's dream of a European empire. Both he and the German General Staff were well aware of this, but they calculated correctly on the spinelessness of the French Government and the complacency of the British Government, without whose backing his future victims in Eastern Europe were at his mercy.

On March 7, 1936, the European system, on which the existence of the four new states rested, was virtually smashed. Their policies were thrown into complete disarray. They saw clearly enough that they had little hope of active aid from the West, once the great military barrier on the Rhine was completed. In Poland there was no successor to that shrewd, rugged, old patriot, Marshal Pilsudski. Colonel Beck attempted an impossible tightrope walk between Germany and Russia without even attempting to heal the quarrel with Czechoslovakia. Dr. Beneš, realizing the canker which was corroding the strength of France, turned to Russia for assistance, thereby alienating some of the strongest supporters of the Little Entente in Belgrade and Bucharest. King Carol suc-

cessfully imitated the suicidal tactics of Dollfuss by fighting the Iron Guard, the stalking horse of Germany, with one hand and the old political parties, who were its most resolute adversaries, with the other. Threatened by Italy in the west and Germany in the north, Yugoslavia fell into a desperate quandary after the seizure of Austria. Monsieur Cvetkovitch kept all his friends and neighbors at arm's length in the fond hope that by some miracle of inconsistency the dictators might somehow forget to apply their doctrines of force and aggrandizement to Yugoslavia alone, if only she kept up an attitude of appeasement. In the end all four countries were swallowed piecemeal and successively. Standing tightly together they might possibly have survived. In isolation they were foredoomed to perish as soon as European security collapsed with the failure of the League, the decay of France, and the indifference of Britain.

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE LOST PEACE

But why should we dwell reproachfully upon the past except in the interest of the present?

THUCYDIDES

AND so the peace was lost. Europe plunged into a new war like a team of timid swimmers diving from a high springboard into very cold water. For the curious fact which prefaced the most scientific and indiscriminate slaughter that has so far been seen is that the hatred and dread of war had never been so general or so genuine as they were in 1939. Even the Germans, whose national organization was inspired by the requirements of war, who had welcomed conscription with rapture and had been nurtured on dreams of German mastery in Europe, even they somehow hoped and believed that their ambitions could be achieved without war. With characteristic mysticism and lack of political common sense, they had persuaded themselves that Hitler was literally capable of working miracles. When the walls of Austria and Czechoslovakia fell down before him, they became more than ever convinced that all Europe could be conquered piecemeal by German guile and German threats without ever dropping a German bomb. The Nazis printed their map showing the progressive stages by which the whole Continent was to become a satrapy of the Reich by 1948, but it was all to be happily accomplished without war, certainly without a major war. Even in the last days of August, 1939, so blind was their faith in the

legend of Hitler, the magician of bloodless victory, that the great mass of the people and probably the majority of the leaders themselves scouted the notion of war. Britain and France would slip out of their obligations to Poland at the last minute, when they realized that Germany was in earnest and immensely strong, and then the Poles would have nothing left but to capitulate without a struggle. Nothing contributed more to the worship of the Führer than the belief that come what might he would always remain the Peace Chancellor.

When Britain and France declared war the bulk of the German people was dumbfounded. The younger generation, bred on the pure milk of the Nazi creed of violence, was full of fierce enthusiasm, but it was not shared by the great majority who remembered the horrors and privations of the Great War and its aftermath. In 1937 I got into conversation with a porter at a small Bavarian junction, where a battery of artillery was unloading on a siding. He drew me up the platform out of earshot and asked me anxiously if I thought there would be war. I replied that that depended on Germany. "Ah!" he replied, pointing to the gunners, "as far as we are concerned, only those young fools want war, because they don't know what it means. I did five years of it in the Guard and know what it is. All we older folk detest and dread another war." The poor fellow expressed the sentiments of his generation accurately enough. When the troops marched past Hitler down the Wilhelm-Strasse on their way to Prague, they passed through vast and apprehensive crowds who watched in stony silence. There were none of the waving flags, the roars of cheering, the rains of flowers which had sped the German legions on their way to the front in 1914.

The frantic enthusiasm of the populace was absent in 1939 as was the complete confidence in victory. The memories of long sufferings and final defeat were too fresh in too many minds.

When the Kaiser led his people to battle, they had the tradition of four victorious campaigns in their marrow. For fifty years the country had prospered. It was richer, better fed, better housed, than it had ever been in its history. Men, women, and children alike were sturdy and confident. Another war would mean another walkover for the invincible German army, and a further expansion of German wealth and power. The outlook of Hitler's people was very different. They had passed through a succession of nightmares in the last twenty years. After a vast expenditure of blood and treasure the German army had tasted the humiliation of defeat, and the German people had cracked under terrible privations. But even then their tribulations were not over. Even when fighting ceased and the blockade was finally lifted by the Allies, semistarvation continued for many months. Underfeeding started hundreds of thousands of children in life with physical weaknesses from which they could never wholly recover. The efforts of the country to restore something of its normal existence had to contend against the rising tide of inflation sweeping their capital into the wastepaper basket as fast as it accumulated. This inevitable consequence of the ruin of the war was aggravated by the stoppage of the industrial heart of the country by the occupation of the Ruhr. Again unemployment and undernourishment drained the vitality of the people. That nightmare too ended, but after five brief years of recovery another descended upon them. Under the impact of the slump millions were again thrown in the streets,

the small savings still left to the middle classes were again wiped out. In despair the Berlin mob shouted "*Retten Sie uns*" (*Save us*) to Monsieur Laval, as he stood on the balcony of his hotel in Unter den Linden. And then came Hitler who promised and gave them employment, but at a high price—long hours of work, fixed wages with small purchasing power, iron discipline, concentration camps for the lazy or rebellious. Still they were better off than they had been. Everyone was sure of work and bread, and had not Hitler assured them time after time that the guns, to which they were forced to sacrifice their butter, would never go off? The masses clung fearfully to the hope of peace, but they knew well enough that they were at the mercy of the élite, wielding absolute power over them through the young dervishes of the Party in the *Schutzstaffel* (Black Guards), the Gestapo, and the Storm Troops. When the last promise to them was broken, it was a nerve-wracked people that Hitler once more hounded into war, which in their hearts they feared and hated almost as much as their enemies. But they were helpless, bound in chains too strong for them to break, the strongest of which was their own spiritless docility.

To most Englishmen and many Continentals who visited Germany during these years the strength of their bondage was not understood. The habit of taking their holidays abroad had made many foreigners acquainted with Germany. Thousands of British men and women wandered about the country by car, by train, or on foot. They met Germans of their own age in youth hostels, winter-sports hotels, on the roads or in the mountains. They were received always with studied courtesy, sometimes with genuine warmth, and they were told on all hands that Germany was not seeking war. So when they

got home, they told their friends that all the trouble on the Continent would blow over, because the Germans did not want to fight. These travelers' impressions made a substantial contribution to British complacency and encouraged the belief that all the alarms and excursions in the press were nothing but a big game of bluff. What the average tourist in Germany did not understand was that the question whether they would fight or not would not be decided by the German people, but by Hitler, the army, and the Party leaders, who knew that whatever they might choose to do they could count on the passive obedience and helplessness of the masses.

If there was aversion to war in Germany, in the rest of Europe it was much stronger. Indeed, the devotion to peace of all the other countries was so notorious that it became one of the primary causes of war. Hitler and Mussolini, who knew little of other countries and particularly of Britain, made a series of experiments which convinced them that the democracies would not fight, or if they fought at all, they would fight feebly and too late. Time after time they saw all the combinations against their projects dissolve into thin air at the first rattle of the saber. The barriers erected by Locarno, by the pact of nonintervention, by the League of Nations, crumbled into dust at the first hint of war. Peoples and governments alike refused to credit the evidence of their eyes and ears, but clung to the fetish of appeasement, which had no single instance of success to its account. To this general rule Poland and Greece were exceptions. They gave every indication that they would resist aggression under any circumstances and allied themselves openly with the adversaries of Germany. The Poles fought with unquenchable valor against the whole armored might of the German army. That the

Greek people should have maintained their attitude unswervingly after the fall of France is one of the heroic episodes of history. In General Metaxas they were fortunate in possessing a leader of strong will and clear vision. He had rekindled the sacred fires of the Hellenic race. Under his inspiration it showed that a proud and ancient tradition of freedom stands inviolable above the fear of death or of material ruin. When the final balance of the present struggle is cast up, no people will have such a record of untarnished chivalry as the Greeks.

The general paralysis which afflicted most of Europe was not a matter of fear, for when their hour struck every country attacked defended itself with courage in the face of heavy odds. It was rather due to the deep-seated repugnance for the hideous barbarism which all war entails. The dictators were hampered by no such scruples. They gloried in the savagery of primitive man and had systematically instilled its lusts into their youth. The passionate devotion to peace of the rest of the world was their greatest asset in their bid for world-power. The temptation to take advantage of it was so irresistible to men of their temperament that war became inevitable, whereas the formation of a common front with some show of resolution would almost certainly have averted it.

That was the first and most obvious reason why the peace was lost. But there were other contributory causes, which lay further below the surface. Chief among them was the general failure to measure the extent to which the conditions both of peace and war had been revolutionized by the technical progress of the age. For the vast majority of people everywhere the world was still the world of the nineteenth century. It consisted of separate states each capable of leading an individual existence with nothing more than commercial rela-

tions with its neighbors and an occasional alliance when common interest made it expedient. It was true that these relations had been enormously expanded and intensified by the improvement of communications, but the political and economic consequences had not been clearly understood. The economists claimed to have discovered the "trade cycle," which apparently inflicted alternative periods of prosperity and depression on the world as a whole, but their science had not succeeded in defining the manner of its operation. Though the evidence of some such universal movement was steadily accumulating, it was easier to dismiss it with a comfortable skepticism than to face its revolutionary implications. For if it were true, it meant that nations were no longer masters of their own economic houses. If their trade and finance were so closely interwoven that they constituted a single system, then there could be no such thing as economic independence. This was a hard doctrine. It meant that national policies could no longer be framed in the light of purely national interests, but must be largely determined by reference to the economic behavior of other countries, which was unpredictable and uncontrollable.

As long as international finance and commerce had been centered in London, some degree of co-ordination had been achieved, which prevented the world's economy falling into complete disorder. But since the war it had become centrifugal instead of centripetal. Not only had Wall Street become the rival of the City, but new industries and new channels of trade had sprung up all over the world without any sort of order or method.

Modern machinery brought within the reach of everybody processes which had been the monopoly of the old manufac-

turing countries. Textile production, so long the preserve of Great Britain, France, Germany, and the United States, spread all over the globe. The art of the spinner and the weaver had been so simplified by mechanical contrivance that under capable management any kind of labor could be taught to produce thread and cloth in a short space of time. The same was true in many other branches of manufacture. Japan had become a great industrial power, and there were few countries in which the beginnings of industrial development could not be seen on a larger or smaller scale. As a result competition in the world's markets had become extraordinarily varied and complex. There were few of the old safe lines of business left. At any moment some new, enterprising, and unexpected rival might spring into the field with lower wages, novel methods, or better salesmanship. The tempo of business was growing more hectic, while the stability of profits was growing more precarious.

By the aid of science and machinery agriculture had also been revolutionized. Crops could be so abundantly produced that the growth of the world's population and its purchasing power could not keep pace with it. The prices of wheat, tea, coffee, tobacco, and other staple commodities became subject to violent fluctuations, which made the livelihood of the farmer and the planter increasingly hazardous. American cotton was challenged by the cotton of India, Brazil, Egypt, and other African territories, where labor was cheap and the soil fertile. Although the use of rubber expanded by leaps and bounds with the motor industry, the application of science enabled Malaya and the Netherlands Indies to outstrip consumption so rapidly that they threatened to beggar each other. In order to meet the practical necessities of the situation at-

tempts at international control were made in the case of wheat, rubber, tea, coffee, sugar, and other commodities, with varying degrees of success. These efforts implied recognition of the economic unification of the world, which was inevitably taking place under the pressure of technical progress, but there was a general reluctance to face its political consequences.

Indeed, just when economic integration was becoming irresistible, political fragmentation was continuing. Not only had the Austro-Hungarian Empire been divided into four new countries, but within them the Croats, the Slovaks, the Ruthenians, and the Ukrainians were crying out for further subdivision. Finland and the three Baltic countries had secured their independence and were struggling to make good their claim to nationhood. Iraq, Trans-Jordan, and Saudi Arabia were in a similar position. Iceland asserted her nationality against Denmark. The British Isles contained three parliaments instead of one. Claims for autonomy were being pushed by nationalist parties in Catalonia, the Basque country, Brittany, and even in Scotland. Old language forms were being revived in Ireland, Norway, the Romansch parts of Switzerland, and elsewhere. These movements, though often of small importance in themselves, were all symptomatic of the trend of the times and added to the general sense of instability. At the moment when nationalism was becoming out of date and unworkable in the economic field, it was flourishing with unprecedented luxuriance in the political field.

This deep-seated contradiction in society was a cause of confusion and unrest in many parts of the world, but nowhere so acutely as in Europe. The war had hastened the trend towards political division and subdivision which had been ini-

tiated by the nationalist movement of the nineteenth century, and from it had sprung the endeavor to translate nationalism into economic terms at a time when it could only be achieved by flying in the face of the overwhelming forces making for economic internationalism. The result of the struggle could be seen on every side. Tariff walls rose steadily higher, and the more successful they were in barring off markets, the louder became the cry for self-sufficiency in the hope of securing an economic independence which would conform to the demands of national sentiment. But these isolationist efforts were so incompatible with the dictates of economic necessity that alongside them sprang up a jungle of commercial treaties and agreements aimed at mitigating some of their more pernicious consequences. In the monetary field the same contradictions were operating. As the gold standard became untenable, country after country resorted to a currency "managed" in the light of national requirements. But in practice the interchange of goods and services between nations was so indispensable to their economic life that some common monetary standards had to be found. The dollar and the pound sterling became measuring rods for large groups of countries according to their economic needs and affinities. The American, British, and French Governments agreed on co-operative action to restore some degree of monetary stability. By these measures something was done to arrest the economic disintegration which the slump and political isolationism were producing, but all of them were tentative and empirical, gropings towards some new formula which would reconcile the psychological urge towards national autonomy with the material fact that the world could no longer be

divided into self-dependent spheres except at a colossal economic sacrifice.

These political and economic crosscurrents so bewildered the public mind as to make their successful navigation an almost impossible task of statesmanship. The history of the League is a faithful mirror of the world's perplexity. On the one hand, its principles ran counter to the prevalent political instinct in favor of more intense and exclusive nationalism. Yet in one respect it paradoxically recognized and encouraged this instinct by fostering the racial sentiments and demands of minorities, not only in countries where they were granted a legal status by the Treaties, but in others where no special position had been granted and in the past had never been demanded. On the other hand, there was a strong underlying feeling that some international organization was none the less necessary. The Geneva platform was the battleground of these conflicting tendencies. Statesmen, bankers, industrialists, economists, and trade-union leaders came together to proclaim their faith in co-operation between nations, and the great majority of them believed what they said. Intellectually they were mostly convinced that the only sensible and profitable course was to smooth out the differences which divided them and to devise common policies in the light not of their own particular good but of the general good, of which they formed a part. But when it came to converting such general principles into practical steps, they were confronted with manifold obstacles. The power of sectional considerations was so great that it was the lowest, not the highest, common denominator which generally won the day. Having honestly set out to achieve important results, delegates usually went home with a very small bag. They often saw clearly enough

what needed to be done in order to bring back the world towards economic balance, but to commit their peoples and parliaments to action which would disturb existing national arrangements or run counter to popular misconceptions or injure strongly entrenched domestic interests was beyond their power.

While public opinion, the press, and the parliaments everywhere were grappling with these half-understood forces, which were working against each other to obscure the path of national conduct, there were yet other forces derived from the progress of science and industry which had uprooted the military assumptions on which the political equilibrium of Europe depended. Perhaps only a very few soldiers and airmen in any country had truly grasped the revolutionary effect on warfare of the armored vehicle and the airplane. Probably 80 per cent of them and 99 per cent of civilians postulated the conditions of defense in terms of 1918, with slight modifications—impregnable concrete lines and fortresses on the Maginot model against which men and machines would batter bloodily but in vain. It was generally assumed until the devastating break-through of the German armored divisions into France that the defense was relatively even stronger than it had been during the war of stagnation from 1914-18, and this assumption further contributed to the belief that safety could still be found in isolation. The British felt quite sure that invasion was impossible as long as they possessed an overwhelming naval superiority. They were told by military and naval experts that they would never have to send a great expeditionary force overseas again. The French thought that in spite of their inferior numbers they could hold their ramparts on the Rhine indefinitely. Even Belgium with an

improved army and a fortified zone of defense felt strong enough to maintain her own neutrality. King Leopold almost welcomed the overthrow of the Locarno system and proclaimed that the reoccupation of the Rhineland had placed Belgium again in the same international position as before the Great War. His view was shared by a large proportion of his subjects. As Emile Cammaerts wrote, Belgium "was ready to play again the part which she had played in the nineteenth century. . . . If the Powers undertook not to violate her frontiers [a pledge which of course Germany did not fail to give in June, 1937], she was determined to maintain sufficient defences to remove the temptation of invading her territory from the mind of a possible aggressor." [1] The belief that Belgium was capable of defending herself was proved by the tragic event to be a total misconception of military realities. The technique of warfare had completely changed, not only since the nineteenth century but within the space of the past twenty years, and with it had changed the strategical foundations of politics.

War was no longer an affair of men and guns; it was primarily an affair of elaborate and costly equipment, which could only be procured by a first-class industrial power. There were indeed only four powers in the world capable of producing the battleships, submarines, tanks, airplanes, guns, explosives, and scientific apparatus without which total warfare could not be waged. For the manufacture of these manifold instruments of destruction immense industrial capacity and enormous wealth were needed. Even manufacturing plants and scientific laboratories of every kind and in great

[1] *The Keystone of Europe*, London, 1939, p. 361.

numbers were not enough. To feed them required prodigious quantities of aluminium, iron, copper, nickel, tin, and other metals, of coal, rubber, wool, wood, and above all oil, which could only be obtained by countries with bottomless purses. In fact, of the sixty-odd countries in the world, only the British Empire, Germany, the United States, and the U.S.S.R. could hope to defend themselves by their own resources, and if any of them could succeed in expanding its industrial power sufficiently by conquest, it could threaten the existence of any of the other three.

In the light of what has happened these things are now clear, but they were not realized in the thirties. Indeed nothing but actual experience could have made the revolution of modern warfare credible. Until it became a patent fact, it was natural enough that the political revolution which it foreshadowed could not be grasped either. As it was, the Belgian illusion was shared by most of the "neutral" countries in Europe. Nearly all of them spent on armaments sums which they could ill afford in the brave determination of defending themselves and in the mistaken belief that they could do it with success, coupled of course with the secret hope that whatever other country might be assailed by Germany, they would still be spared. All these calculations were destined to be rudely upset, but they are partly responsible for the failure of the nations of Europe to organize themselves in a common league of defense. Could the conditions of total war have been foreseen, there would no doubt have been a clearer perception of the fact that separately the smaller countries were doomed as soon as Germany unleashed her mechanical Juggernaut on land and in the air. The obliteration of Guernica gave a hint of what command of the air would mean. Some

governments added a few squadrons to their air forces in consequence, but they did not draw the conclusion that only their collective air forces would be strong enough to save them. Either the General Staffs failed to read the portents or they failed to impress the meaning of them on their Cabinets in a form sufficiently alarming to shake the civilian mind out of its hazy but complacent notions of military strategy. In most countries the penchant of ministers for believing that facts support their preference for the line of least resistance must have made the task of convincing them extremely difficult. In any case few of them were convinced, with the result that their military miscalculations reinforced their reluctance to depart from the isolationist ruts of political thinking.

The technical development which was proceeding so rapidly had, by producing a revolution in the realms of both economics and strategy, initiated a political revolution as well. Neither economically nor militarily could the smaller states hope to enjoy the fruits of peace or to escape the evils of war if they continued to organize their commerce and their defense on the old isolationist lines. To a lesser though growing extent the same was true of Britain and France, Germany and Japan, and would shortly become true even of national units so vast as the United States and the U.S.S.R. Germany chose to attempt the solution of the problem by forcible expansion. If by conquest she could weld Europe into a single whole under German direction, she would have secured a *Lebensraum* sufficiently large to ensure both her economic and her military security. Indeed, with the scientific and industrial resources together with the man power of the whole Continent at her disposal, it would be comparatively easy to over-

throw Russia and Britain, and then to open the way to the world domination of which so many of her poets and thinkers had dreamed.

For those who were unwilling or unable to pursue the path of conquest there was only one alternative solution—to secure their economic prosperity and their national existence by collective action, in other words, to make the League or something like it a powerful and effective instrument. But that solution, as I have tried to suggest, was rendered impossible by the intense nationalism which still colored the economic and political outlook of the great majority of people everywhere, and by their failure to understand the real conditions under which they were living. Conservatism, ignorance, and nationalistic emotion were too deeply rooted to admit either the existence or the implications of the vast revolution which was taking place in human affairs. So much indeed was this the case that in Britain, France, and America most politicians, who as the elected of the people might be supposed to be endowed with knowledge and intelligence above the average, regarded the notion of co-operating with other nations for defense as something laughable. To quote a single but striking example, Mr. Churchill pleaded with the House of Commons for collective action after the seizure of Austria. He urged the Government "to proclaim a renewed, revivified, unflinching adherence to the Covenant." He besought his audience to "Laugh, but listen," because he knew that his plea would be greeted with a laughter which may still be echoing rather hollowly round the shattered walls of the Palace of Westminster. To his own question, "What is there ridiculous about collective security?" he gave the conclusive answer, "The

only thing that is ridiculous about it is that we have not got it." [2]

In this struggle between the ideas of the past and the future it is curious to reflect that those who were reluctant to break away from outworn traditions and to face the new facts of life prided themselves on being "realistic" and thought that they had finally laughed their opponents out of court when they dubbed them "idealistic." As events have shown, these terms ought to have been transposed. To imagine that a single state could hold its own either economically or militarily in the modern world was a delusion, though as an ideal it had many attractions. Not only we but every other nation would probably prefer to live in comfortable isolation in our own backyards without having to bother about the economic or political needs and ambitions of our neighbors. The differences of language, education, and psychology always make intercourse between nations irritating and uneasy. In themselves they breed an attitude of instinctive doubt and mistrust. We all think ourselves more "honest" than foreigners, because we understand our ethics of conduct better than we understand theirs. There is a sense of warmth and intimacy within a nation as within a family, which draws it together against the outside world. It treasures its folklore, its poetry, its scenery, and its traditions as gifts which God has bestowed upon it alone and denied to the rest of mankind. These national sentiments and prides are good things. From them has sprung the inspiration which has produced so much of what is best in the literature, the art, and the action which have built up our present civilization. Without them the world would be a poor anemic place. The destruction of the na-

[2] Winston S. Churchill, *While England Slept*, Putnam's, 1938, p. 391.

tional ideal would be nothing less than a calamity. But to suppose that under modern conditions the life of a nation can be directed by reference to its own ideas and interests alone is an impracticable rule of conduct, an anachronism harking back to a tribal state of society. The immensely complex system of production and exchange, the compression of distance by rapid communication, the overleaping of land and sea frontiers by aircraft, the increased speed and terror of the technique of warfare, have combined to relegate isolationism to the museum of obsolete policies. It has become the dead hand of a bygone age, possibly of a golden age, which we cannot recall, however much we may regret its passing.

The reality of today is a much harder and more complicated affair. It involves the attempt to organize the economic and therefore the political life of the world on broader, more international lines. Such an organization does not demand the sacrifice of national sentiment or national peculiarities. On the contrary, it can only be effected by harnessing the national sources of energy and genius in all their diversity to the promotion of the better civilization, to which all countries aspire but which in isolation they cannot hope to attain. The "realists" are those who recognize these difficult necessities of the new era upon which we are now embarked. Those who still cling to the old, narrow maxims of exclusive nationalism have become worshipers of an ancient creed no longer compatible with the conditions of reality.

But there was yet another potent factor which increased the confusion of the public mind and divided the counsel of statesmen. Much of the dissension which prevented the organization of political and economic security was traceable to the conflict between fascism and communism. Both were

symptoms of the volcanic period upon which Europe entered in 1914. The ideas of communism were as old as Plato, and throughout the centuries they had always exercised a fascination on men who were in revolt against the inequalities inherent in any society not composed of robots. In times of trouble they had more than once become sufficiently numerous to form a revolutionary minority, but until the Russian Revolution they had never been able to command a majority desiring a total reorganization of society on communist lines. The Russian experiment naturally attracted the elements of revolt in every country, and by its missionary efforts the Soviet Government did something to stimulate and organize them during the earlier years when its efforts were devoted more to foreign propaganda than to national reconstruction. The force of its appeal was proportionate to the extent of social discontent, and accordingly varied widely from country to country. In Switzerland and the Scandinavian countries it made little headway. They were the homes of a strong democratic tradition and of a strong independent peasantry. Their socialist parties had been active in maintaining the claim of the working man to his share of the national well-being, and in consequence his standard of life had slowly but steadily risen. Great wealth was as rare as grinding poverty. In Spain, on the other hand, where comparatively little had been done to better the lot of the peasant or the industrial worker, the cry for a new dispensation had become strident. The country was poor, and the share of the great landowners and the Church in the national income was disproportionate to that of the rest of the population. The Spanish Revolution when it came was not therefore a purely proletarian revolution, but was led by men of the middle class like Azaña, De

los Rios, Alvarez del Vayo, and Negrin, and moderate labor leaders like Caballero. Though there were extremists who looked to Moscow, the ideal of the communist state obtained little hold on the great mass of Republicans. The only country except Russia where a real communist revolution took place was Hungary in the first chaotic months after the Armistice. There the land by which the majority of the people lived was still mainly divided among the feudal estates. That revolt was crushed by foreign bayonets, but similar upheavals might well have occurred in Czechoslovakia, Poland, Rumania, and Yugoslavia, had their new national governments not proceeded rapidly with the distribution of the land.

In the industrial countries the lure of communism varied largely with the standard of living and the pace of social progress. In Britain and the United States it made little impression. Their trade-union movements were strong enough industrially and politically to secure such constant improvements that the skilled workmen became assimilated to the middle class, while the progressive taxation of the rich for social purposes was closing the gap between the wealthier and poorer sections of the community. Among the masses the propaganda of the communist parties fell on deaf ears, as was shown by their total failure to secure more than an infinitesimal share of political representation. It was therefore all the more surprising that the wealthier classes should have conceived such a mistrust of the soundness of their national institutions and of the sanity of their own people as to believe that Russia constituted a real danger to their stability. In Germany and Austria too the process of closing the gap had also been at work under the Republics. In both, the working class was highly organized and used its political and industrial

power to better its condition so far as the general economy allowed. Though their communist parties were vocal and at times fairly numerous, in neither country was there any danger of an uprising of the proletariat.

In France, however, social advance had not kept pace with industrialization, with the result that communism acquired considerable vogue with the workpeople in the great cities. It was, however, offset by the conservatism of the peasants and the *petite bourgeoisie*, whose political power was strong enough to discount any danger of violent revolution. Nevertheless the fear of it was very great among the propertied classes and led to the profound division of the country which has already been described. A fascist movement—or rather, several of them—sprang up to oppose the advance of the working classes under the banner of the *Front populaire*, but in comparison with the German and Italian movements they were very weak in numbers and ideology. They had little nationalist character. They did not put forward extravagant claims at the expense of other countries or complaints that France was a poverty-stricken, unsatisfied land, because few Frenchmen would have listened to them. The great majority of them lived pretty well, and they certainly did not want to fight to obtain more living space or a better place in the sun. Fascism could not draw upon the discontent of a ruined middle class or of a landless peasantry, for though weakened by inflation the middle class had not been ruined by it and the peasants though they grumbled still had the land. French fascism was, then, not a nationalist movement or a socialist movement. It was in the main a purely reactionary movement financed partly by the big industrialists and partly by Germany and Italy as a means of undermining French unity.

In so far as it had a positive aim, it was a protest against the corruption and inefficiency of the parliamentary system, for which the *Banque de France* and the Two Hundred Families were not a little responsible. Generally speaking, it was a procapitalist movement, the antithesis of communism, whereas in their origins both Italian Fascism and German National Socialism had contained strong ingredients of anticapitalism, which drew many communists into their ranks.

Both in Italy and in Germany fascism began as a revolt of the youth of the lower middle class against the miseries and ruin of the war and its aftermath. They saw no future before them. Their families had usually lost their savings, the professions were overcrowded, opportunities of economic advancement were too limited to give them a prospect of marrying and earning a decent income. When they were offered not only jobs but an ideal, the moral and material rehabilitation of their country, many of the best young men felt that they had found something worth living for, something more inspiring than mere money-grubbing, a dazzling chance of unlimited national service. In Germany such an appeal was particularly powerful coming in a moment of defeat and despair to a people nurtured on dreams of victory and expansion. In both countries the rank and file and many of the leaders of the totalitarian party were recruited from the hooligans, the ne'er-do-wells, and the adventurers who saw in it the chance of obtaining money and power, which they could not hope to acquire in a well-ordered society. Neither in Germany nor in Italy, however, would the appeal have been so effective, had it not contained the promise that the power of big business should be curbed by the state and that the country should be run for the benefit of the whole

people, regardless of the privileges of capital and labor alike.

How far these promises were kept is another matter. To say that nothing was done to check the hold of the moneyed interests on the state would not be true either of Germany or Italy, but in both cases the social objectives which figured so prominently in the earlier programs were quietly thrust into the background and replaced by nothing but the most blatant imperialism. As a means to securing its ends, however, aggressive fascism made cunning use of its old professions. Its propaganda abroad was constantly portraying the dangers of communism in the most lurid colors. It succeeded not merely in frightening the rich, for they were frightened already, but in making many of them believe that there was no salvation for them but to join in the fight against democracy which they were invited to identify with communism. For as their nationalist appetites took precedence over any social aims which they may have entertained, Hitler and Mussolini perfected their technique of disruption. While on the one side they kept up a steady barrage against communism to maintain the capitalist world in the state of alarm necessary to ensure its support and its subscriptions, on the other they launched a frontal attack on "pluto-democracy." In other words they preached the destruction of democracy to the rich because it was a menace to capitalism, and to the poor because it was the mainstay of capitalism. And yet so insidious are the workings of propaganda on an uncritical public that the self-contradiction of these appeals did not prevent large numbers of recruits swelling the fascist ranks. The smoke and noise of this battle of words and ideas actually distracted the national mind of some countries from the perception of external dangers. In all of them it obscured the

issues of policy to a greater or lesser extent, and thus played into the hands of the dictators. Few statesmen retained the complete clarity of vision necessary to enable them to pick their way unscratched among the "ideological bramble-bushes," to borrow Mr. Raymond Gram Swing's picturesque metaphor.

Looking back on it all and trying to distinguish the essentials from the inessentials, one is tempted to select two points as of permanent significance. The first is that the youth of most countries were looking for some new thing. The old gods no longer provided the idealism which they needed to fire their imaginations and call forth their energies. This was conspicuously the case where the social balance had been deranged by the prevailing economic disorders, where the future seemed to offer little promise of advance towards a better kind of living. The idea that they were to build up a new and better society attracted some of the better elements among the youth of Germany and Italy to the false standards of Hitler and Mussolini, and called forth tremendous enthusiasm in the young generation in Russia.

But there was more to it than that. In many countries there was profound dissatisfaction with the working of government. In most Continental countries the machinery of democracy had often failed to produce a stable and orderly political system. Multiplicity of parties, rigged elections, uncertain working majorities, weak and ever-changing Cabinets, were common features of European parliamentarism, sometimes aggravated as in Germany by the perverse consequences of proportional representation. Only in the Netherlands, the Scandinavian countries, Switzerland, and Czechoslovakia can it be said that the problem of reconciling strong executive

action with the free play of popular representation had been satisfactorily solved. In Italy, France, and elsewhere the legislative power overshadowed the executive to such an extent that the state was largely reduced to impotence. This perhaps more than anything else was the cause which gave rise to dictatorial and semidictatorial regimes in countries such as Portugal, Greece, Yugoslavia, and Poland, where there was little inclination to accept the tenets either of fascism or of communism. Where the political machine functioned so cumbersomely, corruptly, or ineffectively as to frustrate the active and progressive forces in the community, constitutional revolt was inevitable, and what was in fact only an attempt to find some more efficient form of democratic government often became confused with the opposition to democracy itself as preached by the fascists. The public mind became still further bewildered in consequence. Despairing of seeing its existing institutions provide a machinery of government which could be counted on to operate with reasonable efficiency and precision, it was tempted to turn away from representative government altogether.

This problem of finding the types of constitutional democracy suited to different national temperaments and circumstances will remain one of the major problems of the future. To suppose, however, that democracy and parliamentarism are synonymous is to misconceive the problem altogether. The essentials of democracy are the sacredness of the liberty of the individual, the equality of all men before the law, and the public discussion of public affairs. There was a great deal of genuine democracy in countries where the powers of the legislative assembly had been severely curtailed by the Crown or by a prime minister with semidictatorial attributes. We are

sometimes apt to think that variations from the British method of adjusting the relations between the legislative and the executive imply a renunciation of democratic principle, but this is by no means necessarily the case. The British system with its two parties, its unwritten law and custom derived from long experience and tradition, its subtle and elaborate checks and balances, is not always a suitable article for exportation. Without considerable modification it cannot be transplanted and adapted to countries where the peculiar psychological and historical conditions that have gone to build up the British Constitution cannot be reproduced. There are other modes of democratic government, such as the American, with its rigid separation of legislative and executive powers, or the Swiss, with its permanent executive and the check of the referendum, from which constitutional guidance may also be sought. In order to fit them to the diverse needs and conditions of modern states in very different stages of political development, the forms of democracy will require constant revision, rejuvenation, readaptation. There is no single pattern. The constitutional expression of democracy, like any other living institution, is a dynamic process, not an invariable formula. Each country has to work out its own salvation in the light of its own conditions, but those which come new to the task are entitled to benefit by all the trials and errors of which the older democracies have had such abundant experience.

The second point is that no democratic constitution, however wisely and cunningly contrived, will live, unless it rests upon a basis of economic and social security. Political troubles alone would not have brought about the upheavals in Russia, Italy, Germany, or Spain, unless they had been exacerbated

by chronic economic evils. Some of them were old and indigenous, others were the effect of the war and the slump. But nowadays, whatever their origins, it is no longer politically possible to leave economic diseases to work themselves out as best they may, regardless of the sum of human misery which may be involved in the process. In former times the vagaries of nature and the vicissitudes of human affairs were borne with resignation because they were believed to be afflictions ordained by an all-knowing divinity or the workings of some law of nature beyond the control of man. With the decay of these faiths the passive acceptance of economic misfortunes disappeared. Privations which could only be endured in silence if they were the manifestations of some unseen power became at once intolerable if they were simply the outcome of human incompetence. With the decline of economic mystification the common man began to hold his rulers accountable for his distresses. He was led to think that even the shortcomings of nature could be made good by the intelligent application of the resources of science. The earth was capable of satisfying all the needs of its children. The only question to be solved was that of organizing production and distribution in such a way as to ensure the general well-being. From this interpretation of the economic process rose a new conception of rights that it was the duty of society to guarantee —a right to adequate food, a right to health, to education, to a decent dwelling, a right to leisure, and above all a right to work, by which all these things might be earned. The priority between economics and social welfare was thus reversed. Instead of meekly accepting such benefits as the economic system might vouchsafe, men claimed that the economic system should be so ordered as to provide the benefits to

which they were entitled. So firm became this belief that the economic system could be controlled and directed that when catastrophic breakdowns occurred they gave rise to violent political reactions, in the United States, Great Britain, Germany, and elsewhere.

This too was one of the underlying causes of the unrest which permeated Europe and of the cataclysm which it finally produced. It was a natural phenomenon of a materialistic age, of an age which had lost faith in ultimate values. And yet it may be doubted whether it was susceptible of a purely material cure. Though few people would deny that poverty, disease, and misery are absolute evils, which have to be combated by all the resources of society, the ideals of comfort and prosperity are not in themselves enough. A civilization whose final aim is a pleasurable existence is not likely to endure. The human mind is so constituted that it is always reaching out beyond itself toward some impersonal good, some higher incentive which will sanctify its activities by enlisting them in the service of some spiritual cause. The search for such a motive of conduct is another characteristic of this transitional period and another source of its disquiet. As Walter Lippmann put it, "What most distinguishes the generation who have approached maturity since the debacle of idealism at the end of the War is not their rebellion against the religion and the moral code of their parents, but their disillusionment with their own rebellion." [3] He was writing of America, but his remark is hardly less true of all the countries of Western Europe. This decay of faith and purpose was not just a sign of war weariness, for it was not confined to the war-weary countries. It was rather the sign of a moral and

[3] *A Preface to Morals*, Macmillan, 1929, p. 17.

intellectual anarchy, of the bankruptcy of the old beliefs whether in science or religion. In the absence of any better object in life, there was a general relapse towards its purely material aims—creature comforts, craving for amusement, sensual satisfaction, money worship. Politicians became cynical and self-seeking, policies were generally framed on a close calculation of self-interest, principles were usually left to the cranks and the highbrows. But these things could not inspire the enthusiasm of the young, and they left a sour taste in the mouths of the old. This atmosphere of aimlessness and disillusionment contributed to the general sense of restlessness and insecurity. Hedonism was not enough. Peace will not be finally regained until men are again the servants of a new purpose capable of satisfying their spiritual instincts and of directing them to some new adventure in the quest of higher things.

CHAPTER EIGHT: QUESTIONS FOR TOMORROW

God has not brought us hither where we are but to consider the work we may do in the world as well as at home.

OLIVER CROMWELL

WHILE the world is still in the paroxysms of mortal combat, it is foolish to attempt any prediction of its future. The present conflict is even more revolutionary than that of twenty years ago. Its moral issues are as much greater as its physical destruction. When it ends, the task of reconstruction will indeed be formidable. One thing at least is certain, however, that those who undertake it will have two great advantages over their predecessors of the last generation. They will approach their task with a more exact consciousness of its magnitude and difficulty and with the guidance of the hard experience gleaned from previous failure. They will have behind them publics who have learned the tragic consequences of that failure by the bitterest personal experience of war and of Germanism. It may be hoped that they will be sustained not only by a determination in all Europe to make sure that it never happens again, but by an understanding of the radical change in outlook and practice which is necessary to secure that end.

There is one other certainty. Reconstruction can only begin where the war leaves off. Its business will be not to invent a new heaven and a new earth, but to fashion out of the cir-

cumstances and ideas of the time a new peace and a new order which will ensure stability. It can only take people as they will be then, not as they may be in some more enlightened future. It will not be a rapid discovery of Utopia, but an empirical affair, building patiently stone by stone from the bottom upwards. That means that it should extend over a considerable time, and not make an attempt to settle all the problems of a new Europe in six months, as was done on the last occasion. If a period of transition lasting several years had been allowed before the final settlement was made, and if in the meanwhile a series of international bodies had been steadily engaged in working out all its different phases, many mistakes would have been avoided. No doubt the demand for quick decisions in order to avoid prolonged uncertainty will often be strong and sometimes irresistible, but the more time that can be gained to allow passions to cool, nerves to be restored, and careful thought to be taken before the final balance is struck, the more likely that balance is to be just, workable, and therefore lasting.

That the will to prevent the recrudescence of war will be very strong may be taken for granted. As has been pointed out, the aversion to the carnage and devastation of modern warfare was never so real as two years ago. Once more the effort to secure a durable peace will be swept forward on a flood of passionate sentiment, but in itself that will be no guarantee of success. It will not suffice to will the end, unless the appropriate means are chosen to reconcile a number of stubborn and conflicting realities.

A certain number of these realities seem to suggest themselves from the facts which have been so summarily sketched in the foregoing chapters.

The first point is that the world will still continue to be organized in a number of separate nations. The violence of the reaction against Nazism was due more to its attempt to stamp out national freedom and individuality than to anything else. To suppose that nations which have made unprecedented sacrifices in order to preserve their national identity are going to surrender it once they have regained it is surely contrary to common sense. To remake their national lives will be the first and dearest wish of all of them, even the smallest, and their right to do so is implicit in the conception of democracy. The national ideal is still the source from which the vitality, the culture, and the rich diversity of our civilization will be drawn.

At the same time isolationism is dead. The mechanization of warfare has made it impossible for any single nation to be certainly capable of ensuring its own defense. Until peace has become as axiomatic as breathing—and that will not be for a long time—its preservation will depend on the existence of groups of nations strong enough and united enough to crush any breaker of the peace by superior force. The League of Nations was framed with that intention, but it failed, because the world was not really convinced that peace could only be kept by international organization. All the countries which wanted peace did not join it, and those that did were by no means unanimous within their own ranks in preferring it as an instrument of national security to their old trust in isolationism. Events have shown that trust to have been illusory. Some new form of international organization is seen to be indispensable, if war is really to be banished.

In the economic field too it has become clear that isolationist policies are out of date. Every country is enmeshed in the

close web of financial and commercial intercourse which covers the whole world. The prosperity of one's neighbors is no longer their concern alone. To promote it is not a work of generous altruism, but a dictate of self-interest. Weakness in any part of the economic organism, whether it be in industry or agriculture, in Europe, America, or Asia, poisons the whole system and reduces its stamina. Stock Exchange and market prices respond like the needles of a seismograph to the slightest shock to confidence in any part of the globe. Their oscillations cannot be controlled by parliaments or dictators. They are automatic indicators registering the fluctuations of the world's economic system. That system is now one and indivisible.

By the state of the world's economic health its political tranquillity is largely determined. Depression produces feverish unrest, which may degenerate into grave disorder. Social equilibrium is the first requisite of political stability. An ill-balanced society is exposed to the maladies of fascism and communism; it may become the prey of internal gangrene endangering the whole constitution of the state. Political disturbances are frequently traceable to social discontents, which are usually the fruits of economic maladjustments. In the last analysis, however, the political, economic, and social security of individual nations depends not so much on their own policies as on the extent to which the conjugation of those policies is calculated to prevent international disorder and to secure economic stability.

Nevertheless economic conditions have altered so radically since the days of the Manchester school that no return to the old laissez-faire principle is conceivable. The division of the world into countries producing food and raw materials and

countries producing manufactured articles has not proved as beneficent to all of them as was supposed and has already been largely abandoned. Industry cannot be kept as the special preserve of a few countries. In many of the agricultural communities the population problem is insoluble on that hypothesis. Their living standards can only be raised and their birth rates lowered by drawing off their surplus land-workers into new industries, as is being done in Russia. Conversely the old industrial countries cannot afford to see their countrysides progressively denuded. A reasonable balance between town and country is a primary requirement of national sanity. At first sight this requirement seems to conflict absolutely with the tendency towards a closer-knit economic world, but if both national and international needs are kept consciously and simultaneously in view, the method of their reconciliation should not prove impossible to discover.

If these five general conclusions are sound, as is suggested by what has happened in the last twenty years, it may be asked, How is it possible to apply them? It is easier to begin from the economic side, for there it is not difficult to foresee some of the data from which reconstruction will start. It may be safely assumed that when the war ends, Europe will be in a state of economic exhaustion and political confusion at least as great as in 1919. The first cry will be for simple necessary things like food, clothes, and shelter. The whole of the European continent will be half starved or at the best considerably underfed. The production of textiles will have been so reduced during the past years that there will be a big gap to fill in its wardrobes. A large number of its cities will have been partially destroyed, so that there will be an acute shortage of housing accommodation in all the countries which have been

subjected to heavy air bombardment. A larger or smaller proportion of its industrial plants will have been so damaged as to be unusable for a considerable time, if not forever. The normal means of employing many of the men who will return to civil life from the armed forces will therefore not be available for some time to come.

In countries which have not been actually invaded these first needs will be met with less difficulty than in those which have been under the German heel, but even the former will require a good deal of international organization to help them. If Britain is not suffering from worse devastation than heavy air attack can produce, she will still have to overcome great obstacles in purchasing and shipping the supplies which she will require if left to her own resources. If, however, the international machinery which has been set up for financing and transporting her war imports is maintained and developed, it should be comparatively easy to ensure the flow of food, raw materials, and everything else necessary to restart her national life. The organization established to supply the munitions, food, and other necessities of war from the Dominions, the United States, and other countries, while the seas were infested by German raiders and submarines, should be capable of functioning rapidly and smoothly under peace conditions. But for most of the Continental countries, which will be much less able to cope with their plight unaided, no such machinery exists. Large areas of Poland, France, Greece, and Russia, and perhaps of other countries, will have been laid waste. Every territory occupied by the German armies will have been stripped as if by a flight of locusts. Their systems of currency and foreign exchange will require complete reconditioning before they can resume buying abroad, and even

when that has been done, the means of purchasing foreign goods will in most cases be nonexistent, until they are again able to till their fields and set the wheels of their machines turning in order to revive their export trade. Even when the production of food and manufactured goods has been resumed, distribution will be difficult until the damage to railways and shipping has been to some extent made good.

The restarting of Europe will therefore present a huge economic problem, which the Continent will be unable to solve by itself, but unless it is solved, the consequences may be disastrous. Unimaginable chaos might ensue if the greater part of its population were starving, if its cities were full of unemployed workers and demobilized soldiers desperately seeking the elementary requirements of life. To reprovision the whole Continent, to restart its industries and its agriculture, to furnish the machinery, the raw materials, and the fertilizers which they will need, to reorganize the finances of one ruined country after another, will be a task of unexampled magnitude. It is difficult to see how it can be discharged except by a collective effort of corresponding magnitude under the auspices of Britain and America. With their turnover from war to peace on their hands they may well feel disinclined to shoulder such a gigantic burden of leadership, yet in their own interests they will be driven to assume it. They will have small prospect of seeing their own factories humming again until the purchasing power of the ravaged Continent is restored. For upon that will largely depend the rise of the barometer of world prosperity, of which their own is such a considerable part.

Between them the British Empire and the United States control the greater part of the foodstuffs, the raw materials,

the shipping, the industrial capacity, and the financial power of which Europe will be in urgent need and without which it cannot hope to recover in any short space of time. Joint arrangements have been worked out and tested by long practice for exercising that control for war purposes. To meet the pressing emergencies of peace the present Anglo-American war organization is no doubt capable of expansion and adaptation. By its success or failure much of the world's immediate future would be determined. If it failed, a large measure not only of economic but also of social and political disturbance might be expected to follow with nations and groups of nations scrambling incoherently to recover a minimum of well-being and stability. Fresh outbreaks of war might even occur in their frenzied efforts to clutch from each other the bare means of subsistence. If on the other hand a combined effort at orderly restoration succeeded, the value of economic co-operation might become so self-evident as to convert an emergency organization into some permanent shape. Economic expedients and groupings born of the needs of a critical situation might tend to become habits under whose influence a crystallization might gradually take place, based not on the haphazard methods of 1919, but on a more or less rational attempt to put the economy of Europe on a sound footing.

This may seem nothing but a visionary forecast. Perhaps it is, and yet it is hard to see what alternative there can be to some such effort of constructive organization but the chaotic collapse of Europe. Institutions, whether local, national, or international, only come into being at the call of some felt necessity. The imperative need for some international economic organization will certainly exist. Whatever organiza-

tion is created to guide the transition from war to peace can scarcely fail to encounter some of the chronic economic troubles which have beset the Continent—the poverty of Spain and the Eastern countries, their need for credits with which to improve their agricultural equipment, their communications, and their industries, the relations of the countries of the Danube basin to Germany, to Western Europe, and to each other. These old problems will have become further complicated by the destruction of the normal organization of all these countries and of many others, by their incorporation in the Nazi system centered in Berlin. The permanent problems therefore cannot be altogether evaded even in the first phase of recovery, and whatever measures are taken during that initial period are bound to have some long-range consequences. If they are devised not simply to meet the immediate emergency but also to pave the way to the rationalization of European economy, they may have far-reaching political effects and may go a long way towards laying the foundations of future peace. Any machinery which proves its value by meeting successfully the economic crisis which will confront the world at the end of the war can hardly fail to become the embryo of a new economic society of nations.

Whether the old economic machinery of the League will be found suitable to this purpose is perhaps doubtful. It was so closely linked with the League's political structure that it could hardly be resuscitated, unless the latter were also restored. In any event, however, the Economic Section of the Secretariat still exists, whose knowledge and experience could hardly be dispensed with in the planning and execution of any new scheme of economic reconstruction. It has also to be

remembered that a number of international bodies are still in existence for the control of many of the basic commodities which will be most needed for reconstruction. The difficulties of the producers of wheat, sugar, rubber, coffee, tea, and so on did not vanish with the war. On the contrary they have been accentuated by the effects of the blockade, the shortage of shipping, and the reduced purchasing power of the belligerents. Though there will be great gaps to be filled, there will also be great accumulated stocks waiting to fill them. Each separate commodity will present its own special problem, which will have to be viewed as part of the general problem of economic recovery. For this purpose the various controlling agencies will have to be integrated in some general scheme of organization, and it may be found necessary to extend the principle of international control to other fields.

It seems therefore that the production and distribution of foodstuffs and raw materials, the allocation of shipping, and the regulation of credit and currencies will inevitably demand a large measure of planning and organization on an international basis during the early postwar years. Without it the world's economy will fall into a deepening confusion. The responsibility of the English-speaking countries in this operation will be considerable. If they assume it in a bold and broad spirit they will be able to set the course not only towards economic revival but also towards a stable peace. If, however, under the pressure of their own commercial interests and individualistic philosophies they are guided more by the consideration of immediate profit and loss than of the ultimate good of the world as a whole, the result is likely to be another patched-up economic settlement containing the seeds of future war. It will be a great but fleeting opportunity. If Britain

and America are as capable of leadership in peace as they have shown themselves to be in war, they will not miss it.

A great deal will depend upon the spirit in which the whole operation is conducted. The fact that in both countries and in the Dominions there is a strong social consciousness will be a stimulant to constructive statesmanship. As has been suggested, social aims have tended to dominate economic thinking in recent years. If the general objective is proclaimed to be not only the restoration of economic stability but also the progressive improvement of standards throughout the Continent, a degree of willing co-operation will be forthcoming which can never be obtained by any political appeal. Whereas their political ideas have always kept nations apart, they are united, as the short history of the International Labor Organization has shown, in a common desire for social advance. As has been suggested, the great defect of the Treaties of 1919 was that they were purely political treaties and ignored the economic and social aspects, which are really essential to any thorough peace settlement. If the process is reversed on the next occasion and the first emphasis is laid on social reconstruction, political differences and difficulties will to some extent be subordinated to the united aim of raising the standard of civilization and well-being throughout Europe. For the Nazi conception of a Continental system for the benefit of Germany would be substituted the conception of a Continental system for the benefit of all its peoples. Instead of dwelling on their mutual antipathies they would be drawn together in a common enterprise, which under wise leadership from Britain and the United States might open a new and happier chapter of European history.

In shaping this new order the I.L.O. may well be called

upon to play an important part. Through its medium the social needs of the peoples of Europe can be better formulated than through any other medium, and it may have to set up a regional organization for the purpose. In the first instance at any rate, I hope that it will continue to work within the framework of its present constitution. Changes will in all probability have to be made as time goes on to meet the conditions of a changed world. Experience may suggest the extension of its scope to bring it into closer contact with economic problems, as their treatment on international lines develops. But if it carries on its existing tradition as far as it will go, not in a static or conservative spirit but with a constant readiness to modify it in the light of events, it can make a real contribution to the world of tomorrow.

These few suggestions towards economic reconstruction are of necessity vague and tentative. They could certainly be expanded and translated into more concrete terms by anyone thoroughly familiar with the working of the war organizations and with the economic situation which has developed during the last two years. These things are not within my knowledge. They are the secrets of Governments, which it may be hoped are being pondered over by those who will have to provide the economic general staff of the future. In any case a detailed forecast of what may be expected in the economic field is as much beyond the scope of this book as it is beyond the capacity of the author. The only object of the foregoing remarks was to make a very rough estimate of the chances of avoiding some of the economic troubles which contributed to the breakdown of the last peace. The prospect is not altogether discouraging. A good deal has been learned, some machinery exists. As the Germans have wrenched the old

economic system of Europe out of gear, a fresh start will have to be made with most of the old landmarks washed out. Given one or two statesmen of wide vision backed by a competent international staff, which could certainly be collected, the task of rebuilding the world's shattered economy may be tackled with much greater hopes of success than on the last occasion.

The success of such an enterprise would be conditional, however, on the adoption of new methods. The old diplomatic technique is hardly appropriate for approaching the problem of peace from the social or the economic angle. The old diplomacy is often unjustly criticized on the score of its secrecy. All important negotiations, whether in official, business, or private affairs, have to pass difficult points at which they would be wrecked by premature publicity. Though public discussion is often salutary, there must always be many occasions in international dealings in which discretion is necessary. To suppose that the right method of healing differences or of bringing disputants together is to proclaim the first tentative efforts on the housetops is to ignore human nature, by which political realities are fashioned. The real criticism of the old diplomatic method is that it was too narrow in its outlook. It had little understanding for anything but politics and looked at every question through political spectacles. In most countries the average diplomat was not encouraged to study the social or economic questions which now play such a prominent part in international affairs. These things were left to the consular service, the commercial attachés, or other "experts," whose sphere was regarded as being outside and beneath the sphere of high diplomacy. Moreover the average diplomat, feeling out of his depth in such matters, clung the

more closely to his political preserve and tended to surround it with an air of religious mystery. This odor of sanctity is now being gradually dispelled, but more needs to be done before the relative importance of political, social, and economic questions in the realm of foreign affairs is adjusted to modern conditions and a more comprehensive technique for dealing with them can be developed.

The same is true as regards the use of publicity. Although diplomacy must always remain to some extent secret, publicity has now become one of its most powerful weapons. The success of German diplomacy in bullying and bamboozling its victims owes much to the tremendous orchestra of propaganda instruments of which it made such cunning use. The efforts of the French and ourselves to counter them were feeble and ill directed in comparison, even when every allowance is made for the salutary limitations imposed by a free press and free speech. To be successful propaganda does not have to be mendacious; for in the long run truth is more telling than fiction, but it does require to be coherent and persistent. After all, these are the characteristics of good education at least as much as of false education. If people are to realize the conditions needed for a real peace, they must be educated in them. They cannot learn them by the light of nature. The facts must be explained to them, the issues must be candidly stated. The aim of well-directed propaganda is not to follow the German method of stifling discussion, but to promote the discussion of the real problems by every available means of publicity. It should not be more difficult to convince people that isolationism is out of date than it was to convince them that the abandonment of the gold standard was beneficial in spite of the previous belief that it would be

disastrous. The failure of the League was partly due to lack of such educational propaganda. The need for collective security and its implications in terms of national policy were not made clear to the public by the national leaders of most countries. If a second failure to found a peace system is to be avoided, all the arts of education will need to be enlisted in its service.

But what about the political settlement? How can the most perfect economic planning or the most persuasive publicity overcome the national hatreds and rivalries which prevented any real consolidation of Europe after the last peace? Will not the same passions make any economic planning whatever chimerical? That may well be, and in advance no one can say what is possible or impossible. At the present stage it is a matter of posing questions rather than of propounding answers.

In the first place the success or failure of the effort to deal with the social and economic problem will make the setting in which the solution of the political problem has to be attempted. In so far as that effort meets with success, a more favorable atmosphere will be created than that which surrounded the deliberations in Paris. That is in itself an argument for postponing any final political settlement until the foundations of economic recovery have been laid. The general approach will also be affected by the far-reaching changes in the political situation since 1919. Of these the most decisive is the demonstration that no smaller country is safe. One after another, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Norway, Denmark, Belgium, Holland, Yugoslavia, Greece, Lithuania, Latvia, and Esthonia have temporarily disappeared from the map. The independence of Bulgaria and Rumania, Hungary

and Finland is nominal. If Sweden, Switzerland, Spain, and Portugal manage to preserve their frontiers inviolate to the end, it will be more through good fortune than through their intrinsic strength. In the past there have been examples of strong and grasping powers overrunning weaker neighbors, but now the possibilities of unlimited aggression which the new technique of warfare has introduced are so vast that neutrality no longer affords any protection. As in former ages tribes, barons, and towns were forced to band together for purposes of self-defense, so now there is no safety for nations except in close association.

If there is no future security except collective security, how is it to be attained? On the general assumption that national sovereignty cannot be reconciled with collective action, various schemes have been propounded for federal groupings, in which nations will no longer be free to make their own decisions but will bind themselves to accept the majority vote of some multinational assembly, in which each of them has only a minority representation. It has been suggested that the peace-loving nations or the democratic nations or the European nations should be grouped together in such a federation. Federal union may be an ultimate ideal, but it is still a long way off. It is inconsistent with the facts of national life as they exist. In the British Commonwealth the notion of federation is probably more remote than it was thirty years ago. As the Dominions have grown to full national stature, they have become less rather than more inclined to merge their identity in a British federation. Though the economic and military organization of the British Empire has been greatly extended, there has been no similar tendency towards its political integration, but rather the reverse. In fact, the pecul-

iar value of the British experience has been to show that specific arrangements for defense and economic co-operation do not require the creation of any new constitutional bond. It may therefore be inferred that countries which owe no allegiance to a single Throne, which have no common ties of blood or language or which have never been accustomed to work together, are even less ripe for federation than the British Empire. It may be remarked in passing that the war has for the time being at any rate dissolved the sense of community which brought the countries of Scandinavia and the Balkans into association before the war. Sweden and Norway are more deeply divided than they were two years ago. Greece and Yugoslavia are further apart not only from Bulgaria but also from Turkey and Rumania than they were then. Though the war has drawn some countries nearer together, it has thrust others violently away from each other. Even a partial federation of Europe is beyond the horizon of practical politics.

As for a complete European federation, that is still further off. Until there is evidence that Germany has finally abandoned her old ambitions of conquest and domination, none of her victims or adversaries is likely to accept her as an associate. Through the thick veil which shrouds the Continent, we get only occasional glints of light upon what the Germans are doing in Poland, Yugoslavia, Greece, Czechoslovakia, and other prostrate countries. But through the diaries of German prisoners, through smuggled photographs and accounts of escaped eye-witnesses, we see flashes of horror which show that the German army has often acted on the lowest principles of Nazi barbarity and that the German name will accordingly stink throughout most of Europe for two gen-

erations. These things will not be forgotten by the invaded peoples, however quickly they may be overlooked here or in America, where we have had no first-hand experience of what German invasion really means. To suppose that the nations which have had the German claw at their throats are likely to send representatives to sit cheek by jowl with German delegates in a federal parliament is to imagine a vain thing. Before that can happen, the revolution of the German soul, which Heine prescribed, must take place. From that may come not merely a change of regime, but the firm establishment of a government controlled not by the army but by the people, the dethronement of the old national gods and the breeding of a new generation bent on peace instead of war. These things are not impossible. The present war may mark the crisis of Germany's nationalistic fever, but time alone can expel it altogether from her system. Humane and Christian ideals may regain their ascendency and gradually drive out the worship of force and aggrandizement, but the process is likely to be as long as it will be painful. What is true of Germany is in a lesser degree true of Italy. The lust for power was never ingrained in the Italian mind. Fascism was a more superficial phenomenon, a less natural expression of the national character than National Socialism, a perversion rather than a consummation of Italian psychology. To revert to her old civilized outlook will not be very difficult, for Italy was a Western and a Christian country in a sense that Germany never was. But for Italy too time will be needed before confidence is restored.

On what basis then can the beginnings of a collective peace system be sought? How are nations to become associated for mutual defense? The pivots of such associations can only be

the countries which command sufficient wealth, industrial strength, and man power to be capable of enforcing peace and which are firmly resolved to prevent war at any price. If Germany is again defeated and disarmed, only the United States, the British Empire, and the U.S.S.R. will belong to this category. The immediate future will therefore rest upon the determination of the British and American peoples to use their power to ensure peace, and it may be hoped that they will be able to secure the single-minded co-operation of Russia in the enterprise. As they are all pacifically inclined, they may become the three pillars of a stable world society. Round them may gather groups of states which share their desire for peace and which are drawn to them by geographical, racial, or other affinities. The outline of these groups already exists. In the Pan American Union all the countries of Latin America are bound together with the United States by ties of economic interest and mutual defense. London is now the seat of the governments of Poland, Norway, the Netherlands, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia, drawn together in an alliance with the British Commonwealth which peace is not likely wholly to dissolve. The British Commonwealth and the United States have become so closely associated in their common war effort that they are now bound together by more than their common language. Russia as the mother of the Slav race has never ceased to exercise an attraction for the other Slavonic countries of Europe. Its treaties with Czechoslovakia and Poland are of good augury, but for Russian influence for peace to become really effective, it will be as necessary that the U.S.S.R. should be prepared to tolerate societies which are not founded on the Marxist dogma as it will for other countries to admit that Russia is entitled to

work out her own institutions in her own way. A fortunate opportunity has now been given for dissipating the ideological miasma which has done much to poison international relations in the last twenty years. Few people outside Russia knew anything of the real effects of the revolution. For the most part they were fed with lurid stories of its earlier and violent phases to the exclusion of any account of its later constructive achievements. They were therefore astonished to find that the Russian army was efficient, that it had been well equipped by a vast new Russian industry, and that it fought with convinced patriotism in defense of the country. Similarly few people inside Russia knew anything of the rest of the world. They believed that the capitalist world was an outer darkness of oppression and were surprised that the democracies should fight so tenaciously for their freedom. It may be hoped that association in a common struggle may breed a mutual tolerance, and foster the idea that peoples can live side by side in concord under different social systems, as Catholics and Protestants learned to live amicably together after the wars of religion. In that case Russia may become not only the base of the Slavonic peoples in Europe but a powerful factor in the maintenance of world peace.

It may be doubted, however, whether either Britain or Russia will ever become really European. The British people have indeed learned that they are fatally linked with the Continent. They are now fighting to free Europe as well as to preserve their own freedom, because an enslaved Europe must always be a menace to the freedom of Britain. They will no doubt take a leading part in laying the new foundations of European liberty and of watching over its maintenance more vigilantly than they have done in the recent past.

But when all that has been said, their outlook and their interests will never become totally or even mainly Continental. Their eyes and their ships have been too long accustomed to roam westward and southward over the seas. Their kinsmen are not in Europe, but in North America, Australia, South Africa, New Zealand, and a thousand outposts of British trade and culture all over the other four continents. English is less the language of Europe than of any other part of the world. A hundred letters from relations and friends are posted from overseas to the British Isles every week for each one that comes from Europe. The call of the British pioneers from distant places to Britain is as strong as the call of their Western pioneers to the American people in the last century. The magnetism of these blood ties is too strong to be neutralized even by the dangers of the Continent.

At the same time Britain will always have roots in Europe. She has never been severed from the influence of Continental ideas and culture as radically as the United States and the Dominions. To imagine, as some Americans do, that Britain will become a sort of advanced naval and air base for the protection of the Western hemisphere against European aggression is a misconception of the role for which history has cast the British Isles, as mistaken as the belief of some Europeans that they constitute a European country in the same sense as France or Germany. Despite our overseas connections all sorts of strands, literary, artistic, scientific, financial, and commercial still reach out over the Channel and the North Sea to the Continental homes of our ancestors and beyond. We cannot throw off our associations with the European brotherhood, which have gone to make up the texture of our national life from the Roman conquest to the

present day. We are still members of the European community and as such will always be intimately linked with its destinies, quite apart from any preoccupations of defense.

Ours then is a double role, and somehow we shall have to face the task of extending our relations both with the European peoples and with the English-speaking peoples beyond the oceans. It will be our duty as well as our interest to buttress the peace of Europe when it is restored, perhaps by furnishing the nucleus of a group of western and northern states voluntarily associated for purposes of defense, reinforced by certain economic ties. One principal contribution is likely to be the maintenance of naval and air forces strong enough to make our influence for peace decisive in any threatened quarrel. The British Commonwealth may also feel it wise to maintain something more than a small professional army for some time to come, but Britain alone will hardly be able to sustain land armaments on the Continental scale, and having no foothold in Europe she will not be greatly tempted to do so.

At the other end of Europe some similar association for defense may possibly emerge based on the Slav races, but Russia too has never been wholly European. Since the Revolution its center of gravity has tended to shift eastwards. Its vast resources in East Russia and Siberia are for the most part awaiting exploitation, which will occupy the energies of the country for a hundred years. The Russian mind has never been westernized and is much more likely to develop along lines of its own than to adopt either European or American modes of thought. But like ourselves the Russians too have roots in Europe and cannot ensure their national safety without remaining deeply concerned with its political vicissitudes.

In fact, for at least one hundred and fifty years the balance of Europe has in the last resort been regulated by Britain and Russia. On the three occasions when the Continent has been convulsed by a major war the combined weights of these two semi-European powers has been thrown into the scale in order to restore equilibrium. In 1812, in 1914, and now in 1941, Britain and Russia have found themselves driven by circumstances into unexpected alliance to save Europe from subjugation, in spite of the wide divergences of their political and social ideas at the time. This recurring partnership is not a historical accident, but the automatic reaction of both countries to the threat which the domination of the Continent implies to their own security. The fact that Napoleon, Wilhelm II, and Hitler were drawn into war with both Britain and Russia is also no accident. Until their potentially decisive influence on European affairs was destroyed, the dream of Continental hegemony could not be realized. That the peace of Europe should rest on Britain as its western pivot and on Russia as its eastern pivot would therefore be little more than the recognition of a historical fact, which comes spontaneously to light in times of extreme European emergency.

The first step towards rebuilding Europe on a secure political foundation might then be the formation of a Western and an Eastern bloc for the insurance of peace. They would probably be bound together by more or less definite engagements, such as those which are emerging on the American continent —common air bases, uniform equipment, and the other technical requirements of effective co-operation. But the two blocs could hardly remain entirely separate. Not only the common association of their war for freedom, but the social and economic co-operation which would be indispensable to

their recovery would weave innumerable ties between them. The need for some kind of European organization might become so apparent that it would gradually but automatically come into existence. It is much more likely, however, to develop on permanent lines, if the process is not hastened. The joys of victory and the abasements of defeat do not produce the tolerance, the mutual comprehension, and the calm thinking necessary to the framing of wise policies. If it is practically possible, a transitional period devoted mainly to social and economic reconstruction might profitably precede the final political settlement. During that time the framework of an European organization might be carefully worked out and the task of educating public opinion to its necessity undertaken. No European system is likely to be willingly accepted and wholeheartedly supported, unless the great mass of Europeans are convinced that it is necessary for their national existence and their individual well-being. The war itself may be expected to have provided a part of the educational process, but it will still have to be completed under peace conditions, before any sense of European solidarity develops upon which some permanent organization can be built.

It is easy to imagine a system much short of federation which would go far to secure European peace. It could readily adapt much of the machinery of the League and of the International Court of Justice, but in the first instance at any rate a European organization would not seek to perform all the functions assigned to the League. The allotment of a special status to minorities, for instance, was not a successful experiment. To accord them rights against their own governments, including the right of an appeal over their heads to an

international tribunal, meant keeping the flame of old animosities alive and constantly feeding it with fresh fuel. The minorities were thus encouraged to reject any overtures from the majorities, while the majorities were in a state of perpetual exasperation at the non-co-operation of the minorities, which might in time of danger be converted overnight into a fifth column in their midst. As a method of applying the principle of self-determination the minority regime was a failure. A better method, perhaps the only method likely to prevent racial antagonisms becoming endemic, is that of exchanging populations adopted by the Turks and the Greeks. If frontiers were drawn in as close conformity with ethnical divisions as is compatible with geographical and economic necessities, the nationals of the contiguous countries could choose freely on which side of the line they preferred to live. They would become the subjects of the country of their choice with all the privileges of full citizenship, but with no special rights as to language, schools, or the appointment of officials to those enjoyed by the rest of their fellows. The process of interchange would be difficult and often painful, but experience has shown it to be practicable. Nearly four hundred thousand Turks who had dwelt for generations in Europe were uprooted and transferred across the Bosporus, while a large number of Greeks whose forefathers had for long lived in Asia Minor were brought back to Hellas. Their absorption took time and money. I saw some of the Greeks in Euboea and the Peiraeus, where they were beginning to make a new life under very hard conditions. But they were no longer surrounded by alien and often hostile neighbors, and by degrees they found their niche in Greek national life. In the long run they and their children would come to enjoy greater

happiness and security among their own people. A source of endless friction between the two races had been cut out by a drastic but salutary surgical operation. If the same method had been applied in Silesia, Transylvania, the Sudetenland, and elsewhere, the boundaries would have been drawn with greater ethnical justice and the perennial minority question would have been evaded. The Germans followed this principle of avoiding racial conflict by forcibly removing their compatriots from the Baltic states. What they did brutally and ruthlessly can be done with much greater success by friendly agreement under international auspices. The segregation of races with strong mutual antipathies is one of the conditions of peace in eastern and southeastern Europe.

Any future international organization that may be initiated should also be left free from any mandatory mission to bring about disarmament. The League was apt to be judged by its success or failure to deal with this most difficult of all problems irrespective of the political realities which governed its solution. No country wants to impose an unnecessary burden of armaments on its tax-payers, but as long as there is any danger of war, no country will agree to diminish its own factor of safety. Disarmament is the consequence rather than the cause of political tranquillity. The strength of a police force is in ratio to the criminal statistics. In Sweden, where crime is very rare, I had the honor of meeting a constable who with a single colleague maintained law and order without difficulty in a town of 20,000 inhabitants. The further a city or a province is from having attained the Swedish standard of innocence, the more policemen it requires. Similarly countries or groups of countries which believe themselves to be exposed to outbreaks of international lawlessness on the part of their

neighbors will feel the need of armed force to overawe possible law-breakers. Left to themselves Canada and the United States were so certain of preserving perpetual amity that they could afford to reduce their armies to ludicrously small proportions in relation to their size and population. There is no reason why other parts of the world should not in time reach the same degree of mutual confidence as North America. That kind of mutual confidence is the only practical basis of disarmament. The Disarmament Conference of 1932 failed because such confidence did not exist in Europe or in the Far East. There are signs, however, that other areas of confidence may appear besides North America. The lease of British and Mexican bases to the United States implies that the British Empire and Mexico cannot conceive themselves ever going to war again with the American people. South America, though indulging in occasional armed quarrels, has never felt it necessary to bear a weight of armaments on the European scale. In time these examples may spread to other continents, but for that the rule of law and the general respect for it must first be firmly established. When in Europe or in Asia every country can place complete reliance upon the peaceful intentions of all its neighbors, there will be no more need for arms; disarmament will then came about as naturally as the practice of carrying firearms disappeared in all civilized countries. But until that degree of confidence exists, no attempt to force disarmament will succeed. To evade it is too easy and to enforce it is too difficult. It can only be carried out voluntarily by peoples who are no longer afraid of each other.

To these questions one more may be added. On the assumption that some form of European organization is set up to preserve the peace in Europe, will that be enough? If peace

is really indivisible, will not some world organization resembling the League of Nations still be necessary? The desirable answer is no doubt in the affirmative, but one cannot yet say that it is an immediately practicable answer. It is too often forgotten that the League was designed for the whole world, not for parts of it. Its internal balance required that all the seven "great powers" should be members. In fact, at no time were more than five of them members. Its proper functioning required that the maintenance of general peace should be adopted as the paramount aim of their national policies by all of them or at least by the majority of them. In fact, this condition also was never realized. The history of the League has shown very clearly that without the fulfillment of these two conditions, it was condemned to impotence in one crisis after another.

Are these two conditions more likely to be fulfilled at the end of the present conflict than at the end of the last war? If there is any truth in the foregoing analysis, a number of factors exists which contain the promise of a more rational world. The general desire for a lasting peace, the recoil from the horrors of mass war, the inescapable necessity of some international organization to promote economic recovery, the possibility that that organization might become the germ of a rationalized Europe and a better balanced world economy, the bankruptcy of isolationism as a principle of national defense, all make for the closer co-operation which has now become necessary for the preservation of peace. It does not follow, however, that the world as a whole will at once be ready for a new League of Nations. To attempt its creation before the foundations of a new order have set might mean that it would once again be given a false start. If nations such

as Germany, Italy, and Japan were excluded because their peaceful intentions could not be guaranteed, the League would again be a partial and not an universal League. If these nations were included before their national outlooks had undergone a radical change, they might be expected to clog the machinery at every suitable opportunity as they did after 1932. We do not even know whether the American people and other peoples would be prepared to accept world-wide obligations such as those prescribed by the Covenant. Prudence might therefore counsel the postponement of a fresh attempt to create a world organization until some measure of economic and political stability had been restored by reorganizing Europe and Asia on a regional basis. But even if this more tentative method were adopted, the need for consultation between the continents would probably arise. As it arose, some machinery appropriate to the purpose might be expected to develop, less detailed and formal than that provided by the Covenant, but sufficient to take cognizance of the essential unity of the world's political and economic structure. From this a new and more solidly constructed League of Nations might in time evolve.

But for the translation of any of these possibilities into realities enlightened and broad-visioned leadership is the primary condition. In the main it must come from the two great democratic formations, the British Empire and the United States, without whose combined resolution and power there would now be a totalitarian universe under German overlordship. Fortunately for themselves and for the world at large they found two great men in their hour of need, who both before and during the war understood the issues at stake and the right methods of meeting them more clearly than the

vast majority of their fellow-countrymen. As their predictions and their actions have been progressively justified by events, they have obtained an ascendency over the minds of their peoples which is rarely given to democratic statesmen. The authority of Mr. Churchill and Mr. Roosevelt is such that where they lead, the mass of the English-speaking races will follow.

The shaping of a better world lies largely in their hands. But limits are set to their action by the degree of understanding which can be fostered between the British and American peoples. During recent years it has made considerable strides. Every time that I have visited America over the last twenty years, I have noticed a growing inclination towards the British people. The spectacle of the Stars and Stripes flying half-mast in American cities after the death of King George V, the adjournment of the Senate in tribute to his memory, and the spontaneous sympathy of all sorts of men and women who had never seen England were signs of the change. The warm welcome given to the King and Queen by the American people was a further milestone on the road. The old antipathies and suspicion were dying in the United States, though they were not altogether dead. In this country the old superciliousness and dislike for American manners and customs, which were so pronounced thirty or forty years ago, were on the decline, though still too common in superior circles. Since the war Americans have come to understand the stubborn steadfastness of the British character in adversity, its humanity and kindliness under the worst stress of war, the deep-rooted hatred of brutality and oppression which steels the heart of the ordinary men and women of these islands and which has lent them a moral strength

that they hardly thought themselves to possess. On our side we have come to appreciate the forthrightness of American speech, the warmhearted hospitality shown to our children, the generous spirit prompting countless gifts and services which flowed in from thousands of American homes large and small, the impulsive pugnacity with which Americans can throw themselves into any cause which touches their sense of justice and fair play. There is certainly a closer and more genuine friendship between the two peoples than at any previous time. There is a streak of common honesty and decency running through both of them. It can be found in the villages of Oxfordshire, or Berkshire, or Argyll or Cardigan, in the textile and mining towns of Lancashire and Yorkshire, in the dark alleys of East London, indeed, all over England, Scotland, and Wales. Just the same qualities can be found all over the United States. I have met them at every turn in the quiet townships of New England, in the backwoods of Maine, in the great industrial cities of Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, and Michigan, on the great plains of the West, and in the summery land of California. Between the common British and American folk there is strong similarity in their ways of thought and feeling which does not always find expression through their political representation. They say what they think with the same downrightness, though with a different idiom. They are not jealous or mean spirited; they are full of hard horse sense. If they knew each other better, they could not help liking each other.

Among the more sophisticated classes on both sides of the Atlantic there is not the same communion of sentiment. In judging each other they are apt to rely more on the evidence of intellect than of character. On a little knowledge they

construct the strangest delusions. Indeed, their ignorance of each other's habits, history, and institutions is appalling. English people are too much inclined to think of American life as a glorious or sinister film, in which the characters are mostly bloated millionaires, jazz-loving cocktail-drinkers, or murderous gangsters. They naturally do not realize how small a part these things play in the hard, workaday lives of the great mass of the one hundred and thirty millions of Americans or how easy it is to spend months in their country without ever personally coming across these extravagances, however prominently they may figure in the newspapers or on the screen. The stupendous effort of taming and settling the great continent which has been shared by the Canadians and Americans is as much a closed book to most Englishmen as is the equally astonishing effort of the peopling and colonizing of Australia, New Zealand, and much of Africa to most Americans. The latter have as little notion of the problems of India and the Colonies as we have of the problems of the South or of the causes and consequences of the New Deal. The average American does not realize that the strength of the British instinct for personal independence is as strong as his own despite all the curious stratifications of English society and the English dislike of articulation. To educated Americans the workings of Crown and Parliament are as a rule not less mysterious than the relations of President and Congress to educated Englishmen. On these mutual ignorances all sorts of prejudices and misconceptions have been nurtured, which have blurred their understanding and their sympathy for each other.

To overcome these invisible barriers is mainly a matter of closer intercourse. We are fortunate in having intermediaries

in the peoples of Canada and Australia, who understand the temperament of Britain better than the average American and the temperament of America better than the average Englishman can hope to do. The Canadian or the Australian by the conquest of a huge wild territory and the founding of a new nation has been given a natural insight into the American outlook and achievement. The influence of climate and the demands of a pioneering life have modified the British character when transplanted to the Dominions, as it did in the old days when it was transplanted to New England and Virginia. Sunlight, space, and the struggle with nature evoke different qualities of body and mind from the soft humidity, the tightness, and the close-ordered organization of the British Isles. Common conditions and experiences have brought Canadians and Australians nearer to the American view of life than we islanders are likely to get. At the same time their old ties with friends and relations at home and their associations with us in all the problems of a world-wide Commonwealth give them a more intimate knowledge of British temper and of the British approach to the world's political and economic problems than Americans can readily acquire. As the Dominions have now won complete nationhood and shown their capacity to bear its full weight in war as in peace, they will automatically come to play an even greater part in the decisions of the future. In any co-operative effort for peace they will be the bridge between Britain and the United States as Britain will be the bridge between the English-speaking world and Europe.

The forms which their co-operation may take cannot be foretold, nor is it wise to attempt to define them. As yet no union between the United States and the British peoples is

within the range of practical politics. It is both the British and the American habit to make specific arrangements to meet specific situations. During the past two years they have made a number of such arrangements, of which the lease of American bases in British territories and the Lease Lend Act are the most conspicuous. Though their possible implications may be far-reaching, each such arrangement amounts to nothing more than its own provisions. As their number and scope develop these partial agreements may gradually come to constitute a practical system of close co-operation, but this co-operation, if it is achieved, will probably continue to exist as a fact for many years before any attempt is made to give it organic form. Some such empirical method is far more consonant with the British and American mentalities than a single leap towards some type of federal or other political association embodied in legal and constitutional terms. The British and American peoples will go further and faster along the road together if they keep their national identities than if they were to try to merge them in a common government, which would not be palatable to either.

If they continue to work together as they have during the war, they can be strong enough and sensible enough to solve all the formidable problems which are looming ahead. Neither in Asia nor in Europe is there any threat to peace which they could not dissipate overnight by the mere show of unity and resolution. As they covet no territory and have outgrown the lust of conquest, they are fit to undertake the heavy trusteeship which will fall upon them. As long as they hold to the liberal faith, which gave birth to the British and American commonwealths alike and which has made them the symbols of freedom everywhere, they will be worthy to take the lead,

without which the world cannot recover from its present anarchy. But the task cannot be discharged by power and organization alone. Even peace and prosperity are not in themselves a sufficient end in life. For the success of a new order some higher aim, which can only be reached by labor and self-denial, is required, some new call which will inspire the coming generations with the same enthusiasm and the same spirit of sacrifice in peace as the defense of freedom has evoked in the youth of so many lands in war. There is enough to be done in the world to harness all the devotion and idealism of its best men and women, if they are shown the way. Though we are aghast at the Nazi revolt against the Christian doctrines of love and charity, they are still far from being common motives of action in international affairs. In the long run they are the only foundations upon which a real civilization can be built. A world of self-seeking nations is bound to be as unstable as a society of self-seeking individuals devoid of any generosity to each other or of any attachment to the public good. More than for any other reason the peace was lost because the policies of nations were empty of charity towards each other, dictated by nothing nobler than a close-fisted calculation of self-interest. Only when the notion of service is expanded beyond national boundaries, when Oliver Cromwell's maxim becomes the guide of foreign policy everywhere, will a real and lasting peace be finally within the grasp of the world, which has groped and fumbled for it so long and so tragically.

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