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THE NINETEEN-TWENTIES

MARCHING WITH THE TIMES

1931-1946

by

DOUGLAS GOLDRING

"Always be ready to speak your mind,
and a base man will avoid you"
William Blake



NICHOLSON & WATSON
LONDON BRUSSELS

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In loving memory of

Rfn Brendan Hugh McBride Goldring 2 K.R.R.C.

Born September 20 1918

Died of wounds in the Western Desert, July 9, 1942

"I honestly believe he was the coolest man in an emergency I have ever met, and the best possible man to have beside one in action"

"O soldats que la mort a semés, noble amante,
Pour les régénerer dans tous les vieux sillons,
Vous dont le sang lavait toute grandeur salie . . ."

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PREFACE

I

THIS book, like my previous book. *The Nineteen Twenties,* is adressed to fellow members of the "floating electorate" who, having been twice betrayed by rival groups of politicians, are perturbed about the future of their country and sufficiently unbiased to examine, with an open mind, the facts and arguments put before them. It takes the form of a running commentary on some of the events of the past fifteen years, and claims to be no no more, and no less, than a record of an average, non-party, anti-Fascist Englishman's reactions to the policies pursued by the rulers of his country during the period it covers. Readers whose opinions are securely fixed in the Conservative mould had better not embark upon it: it will increase their blood pressure to no purpose. It will be found equally irritating to those Socialists, particularly recent converts, who at the Party Conference at Bournemouth, at Whitsun 1946, almost unanimously endorsed the Bevin-Churchill programme of hostility to our Russian allies, subservience to Wall Street, restoration of the Fascist monarchy in Greece, non-intervention in Spain and diplomatic pressure, in the interests of Anglo-American capital, on all the newly-liberated countries of Europe and Asia. It was, however, not the well-organised minority of "workers", whose muzzled delegates gave the Platform their Bournemouth triumph, who were responsible, in July 1945, for the defeat of Mr Churchill. Of the twelve million electors who voted for a change of Government, in the belief that it would result in a radical change in British foreign policy, less than a third can be claimed by the Labour Party and the Communists combined. Of this third only a small proportion of intellectuals know or care "what Engels wrote in 1856". The

cause of the landslide of 1945, like the similar landslide ten years previously, was the simple fact that the majority of British parents have not brought children into the world with any intention of allowing politicians to blow them out of it.

II

At the Imperial Press Conference held in June 1946, Sir Roderick Jones observed that the end of the war found us "in a worse position regarding the freedom of news and opinion than he had known in his lifetime". At their meeting at Liverpool, on Good Friday 1946, the National Union of Journalists adopted a resolution, by an overwhelming majority, urging the Government to appoint a Royal Commission on the press of Great Britain. Mr R. A. Smith, who moved it, said that journalists were keen and anxious to serve the country better, but this could not be done "unless the nation as a whole takes this important matter in hand". Mr Preston Benson, the seconder, remarked that "if food was as adulterated and contaminated as news is, there would be a public outcry from one end of the country to the other".

All this is incontestably true. But it is pertinent to ask how "the nation as a whole", or even a majority of thinking people, can take *any* matter in hand, when politicians cannot be induced to honour their election pledges and the newspapers either smother or distort opinion? It cannot be done. Without the means of enforcing our will through the ballot-box or of expressing our views in print, we are as helpless as sheep. In 1935 the "nation as a whole" took in hand the supremely important matter of preventing an avoidable war. They gave the Conservatives a mandate to pursue a strong League of Nations policy, to stand up to the Dictators, and to preserve the peace by means of Collective Security, and returned them, with an enormous majority, to carry it out. The Conservatives, once in power, immediately repudiated their pledges to the electors. In deference to public fury Sir Samuel Hoare was temporarily dislodged from his position, but he was soon restored to office when the clamour subsided. The

permanent officials at the Foreign Office, directed by the Money Power, undermined the League and carried on their "anti-Bolshevik" manoeuvres undisturbed. Churchill's open war of 1919, against the Soviet Union, was continued with unabated energy, by diplomatic means. Hitler, Mussolini and General Franco were financed, supported and appeased and, with Russia alienated, war broke out four years after the "nation as a whole" had taken all the action in its power to prevent it. Throughout this period, the big circulation newspapers "adulterated and contaminated" the news, Parliamentary Opposition was negligible, and not a single voter in the country could lift a finger to avert his children's doom.

Precisely the same thing happened again in 1945. Within a few weeks of the Labour Party's victory, there were strong grounds for suspicion that the three Labour bosses who had collaborated with Mr Churchill during the war had come to a private understanding with their nominal opponents. The Conservatives had been smashingly defeated at the polls by "the nation as a whole" but Messrs Attlee, Bevin and Morrison allowed them to remain in undisturbed control of foreign affairs. When Mr Bevin made his "continuity" speech in the Autumn of 1945, a speech as staggering in its effect on the "floating electorate" as the Hoare-Laval disclosure ten years previously, few could doubt that the briefs for it had been prepared by the same permanent officials who briefed Mr R. A. Butler for Non-Intervention and steered Neville Chamberlain through Munich. The final shock came when Mr Bevin tacitly endorsed Mr Churchill's Fulton Oration and allowed it to be officially disseminated.

The position of the Labour M.P.'s, who could hardly help remembering their election speeches, was an embarrassing one, particularly when they heard the Tory cheers and gazed at the delighted faces on the Opposition benches. A little more than a hundred of them, who had taken a strong line over Mr Churchill's intervention in favour of the Greek fascists, passed a resolution of protest against this particular example of "continuity". Mr Bevin proceeded, privately, to address the recalcitrants, and only

six had sufficient honesty and moral courage to stick to their guns. The remainder at least for the time-being let themselves * be steam-rollered by the Party Machine. At a secret conference of the Parliamentary Labour Party, held in March 1946, over three hundred Labour members endorsed their Party's policy.

Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose! The lesson to be learnt from this, and similar incidents, is that our Parliamentary system has now become so corrupt that it matters very little how we vote or what group of professional politicians are in or out. The real power, the power which means life or death for the ordinary citizen, remains always in the same hands. To-day, those who have sufficient intelligence to realise that "Bevinism" means war in the fifties, if not earlier, just as surely as "Munichism" and "Non-Intervention" meant war in the thirties, find themselves without leaders, without spokesmen, without the smallest influence over their own destiny. There is nothing they can do to make themselves heard. The conspiracy of silence maintained by the newspapers, which have long since given up any attempt to find out what their readers are thinking and saying, is just as effective an "iron curtain" as those of which Mr Bevin complains.

Mr Churchill's war against the Soviet Union, which began at the moment when the threat to Free Enterprise, implicit in the Revolution, looked like succeeding, went underground for some months, after June 1941, but showed its head again after Pearl Harbour, when the vast resources of the United States were thrown into the struggle. Chamberlain had been anxious to ally Great Britain with the Axis powers, in an effort to save International Finance from being driven out of business. He was astute enough to realize that the Russian object lesson had proved to the world that a planned Socialist economy could operate successfully. With the same purpose in view, Mr Churchill privily attached his preoccupied compatriots to the Wall Street chariot wheels. Labour accepted this situation and obediently carried on his policy.

In two wars, in which America preserved a long and profitable

* In November 1946 over a hundred Labour Members abstained from voting against Mr. Crossman's amendment . . .

neutrality, before she consented to fight in her own defence as much as ours, this country and France have borne the first shocks of the encounter. Must we, for the third time, be the victims, and can we hope to survive it, if we are? Could we not contrive at least to remain neutral or are we now so hopelessly bound to America that even this way of escape is denied to us? It is astonishing that while the nitwits were applauding Mr Bevin for "standing up to Molotov", when Molotov had the temerity to stand up to Wall Street, not a single national newspaper, not one M.P., uttered a word of warning. Our innocent, underfed masses found no one, in Press or Parliament, to stand up for them. At the U.N. Conference in June 1946 Sir Alexander Cadogan—the man who helped Chamberlain through Munich when Lord Vansittart proved recalcitrant, and represented us at the obsequies of the League of Nations—fought for non-intervention in Spain, with the ultimate aim, it was believed, of expelling the Soviet Union and turning the new organisation, like its predecessor, into an anti-Russian confederation dominated by Wall Street and its British satellites. The eloquence and tenacity of the Soviet delegates fortunately checkmated this manoeuvre.

It would be an error—though it is one into which they appear to have fallen—for either Labour M.P.'s or the Socialist press to suppose that recently demobbed soldiers and ordinary middle-class civilians are all too stupid to realise the dangers ahead of them. In May 1946 I amused myself by listening in to what "the man in the local" and his pals were discussing over their diminished number of pints. I condensed what I had overheard into a letter which I sent to the *New Statesman and Nation*. As the Editor did not accept it for publication I give it here, although the topics of conversation will have been superseded by others, before it can be read. It may, however, serve to illustrate the enormous difference between "what the papers say" and what the people think. The indiscretion of the young staff officer, whose words are quoted, was rightly taken as indicative of the views of his superiors and carried more weight with his audience than any of Mr Bevin's speeches.

Cross-Talk at the Local.

To the Editor, *The New Statesman and Nation.*

Sir, As I never see American newspapers I have no idea what messages about British public opinion their correspondents cable over, from their Mayfair observation posts. If they were to drop in at the locals in some of our provincial towns, their impressions might be as confused as my own.

The following snatches of dialogue are quoted without comment.

A) (Retired schoolmaster). "It beats me how they can pretend to be applying the 'ethnic principle' to Southern Tirol. I used to visit Bolsano and Merano when they were Botzen and Meran. The people there are about as much like Italians as the Danes are like the Portugese.

B) (Group-Captain R.A.F.). "As it's quite evident we're going to have a war with Russia I should personally like to get it over *now.* The Americans will supply us with all the atom bombs we need".

C) (Common man. "Floating Elector" Type). "Everyone keeps talking about this war with Russia. What I want to know is what is it supposed to be *about.* What's the *object* of it? What are they supposed to have *done?*"

B) "The Russian point of view is totally different from ours, and always will be".

C) "If that's the case, I can't see how doing the Yanks' dirty work, by dropping atom bombs on our former allies, is going to alter it".

B) (With a rapt expression). "Besides, I'm looking to the future. I'm thinking of my son".

D) (Coal-miner). "Look here, chum, if you chaps start your atomic war, your son—and mine—*haven't got* a future. They 've had it".

E) ("Sea lawyer"). "If you ask me, the only people—apart from Fascists—that we've got any quarrel with are the Yanks. We didn't fight two years longer than they did just to see

Bevin, Morrison and Attlee cringing to a bunch of double-crossing, grain-hoarding, Wall-Street gorillas . . ."

F) (Silent drinker. "Mr Padge" type). "That's right . . ."

E) "If this loan goes through, it won't be because Ernie Bevin keeps on saying 'Yes' to Mr Byrnes for fear of 'offending America', but because the Yanks see it's to their advantage more than ours. It sticks out a mile that it's a device for selling us their unemployment problem and taking the whole bleeding British Empire in exchange".

G) (Demobbed soldier). "Whatever we may have owed the Yanks we settled for in blood and guts. Same as last time. The *real* debt is what we owe to Russia. Without the Russians, we *and* the Yanks would have had it".

F) "That's right . . ."

H) (Hearty). "Well, what about another . . .?"

I) (Second "Floating Elector"). "We never thought we should be sold like this, when we voted Labour last July. The whole idea was to turn the old gang out. All that's happened is that they've been given a free hand . . ."

J) (Third ditto). "Same as before. Continuity! Foreign Office, Service chiefs, B.B.C., the whole boiling. If Churchill had got back he'd never have had the nerve to let Franco open a propaganda shop in Eaton Square. And how the Opposition would have roasted him over Greece and Indonesia!"

K) (Disillusioned Idealist). "Opposition? Under Attlee's leadership? My dear good friend, have you forgotten Munich and Non-Intervention? Attlee and his pals never really opposed. They *appeased*. If Hitler had come over here, only the Communists, the Left-wing Socialists and a sprinkling of honest old Tories would have resisted. Same as France."

F) "That's right . . . you've said it".

III

No individual writer can pretend that he expresses only what the inarticulate masses of his compatriots would think if the

facts were put in front of them. As Bertrand Russell once observed "millions would rather die than think: millions do". On the other hand it is possible to make certain basic generalisations about the feelings and the instincts of the majority of Englishmen which no one is likely to challenge. Most of us, for example, have a strong sense of the difference between "decency" and "caddishness", justice and injustice, honesty and hypocrisy. We are aware at least of a nursery-taught distinction between right and wrong. In war, we feel a sense of solidarity with those who fight tenaciously on our side, no matter whether well-paid civilians, the employers and organized workers in protected industries, choose to call them "Communists" or "Bolshies". After all, Ernie Bevin, Herbert Morrison and their pals didn't fight in North Africa, Italy, France and Burma so they wouldn't know. The average Englishmen, when his country is threatened by internal or external enemies, is by nature a partisan and a resister. He expects politicians, of all parties, and members of the ruling and official classes, to put the country first and act in accordance with the elementary principles of loyalty and honour. Loyalty, in a war against Nazi-Fascism, means sticking to your anti-Fascist pals, regardless of their colour, their religion or their socialist theories. The deep-seated patriotism of the British people does not take the form of aggressive nationalism or flag-wagging imperialism. It is more a quasi-religious emotion, based on pride in a great tradition and a belief that England can only be "herself" if she remains true to it. When her representatives abroad incur the contempt of the democratic, anti-fascist world, it is in keeping with our tradition that the patriot should be the first to feel a sense of uneasiness and shame and the first to give tongue to it.

The following anecdote, which may or may not be true, will serve to elucidate my point. In the spring of 1942 a story appeared in the press to the effect that six Spanish Republican soldiers escaped from a Portugese concentration camp with the intention of offering their services to General de Gaulle. These men were burning with zeal to continue the fight against our common enemy—Fascism. They made their way, stealthily, to the

home of the nearest British consular official, naturally believing that he would approve of their project and assist them to escape from Portugal. Our "country", in the person of His Britannic Majesty's representative, promptly handed the men over to the Portugese police, who delivered them to General Franco, by whom they were immediately shot. Even if this particular example is inaccurate,—it was neither corroborated nor denied—a whole book could be filled with similar stories about our "country's" actions in the Balkans, in Italy, in Poland, indeed throughout Europe and the Middle East, for which there is only too ample confirmation.

Now different sorts of people will react to the Portugese incident narrated above in different ways. The consul's action would undoubtedly have been approved by his Foreign Office superiors. Ninety per cent of the British press, if they had commented on the matter at all, would have supported the Foreign Office standpoint. In doing so, it is my submission that they would have failed completely to interpret the views, or feelings, of the average Englishman. In nine cases out of ten it is my humble contention that the man in the 'local', if the facts were put before him, would consider that consul a dirty cad and traitor who deserved to be shot himself. In coming to this conclusion he would not be influenced by leader writers or political spokesman but merely by his own instinct, intuition, 'sporting' sense or natural "decency". He would not consider it the right way to treat your pals, especially in the middle of a war not yet won.

IV

Most of the journalists who earn their living from the millionaire press, being honest and decent men themselves, would be glad enough to interpret the views of the majority of their compatriots if the conditions of their employment made it possible for them to do so. It is something approaching a national disaster, as the National Union of Journalists has realised, that they do not. Any writer who has the temerity to try to express what

ordinary decent people think, on political events which affect the lives of everyone alike, must give up all hope of earning a living wage by the exercise of his profession. In addition he must run the risk of vilification in the press of all parties—including, if he has one, his own. In spite of these drawbacks the mental relief, spiritual compensation—call it what you will—of exercising the Democratic right of free speech, more than make up for its financial disadvantages.

The methods which our "Anglo-Americans" adopt to calumniate the unhyphenated commentator, who writes as one of the floating electorate, are so crude that one might suppose that no one of intelligence could possibly be taken in by them. Unfortunately, it is a national failing, particularly prevalent among the professional middle-class, the naval and military officer caste and the faithful adherents of the T.U.C., to be hypnotized by words and phrases to which their newspapers have given a pejorative significance. The co-operative movement would never have made the headway it has done in this country if it had adopted the term "anarchist-communism" by which it is known to Continental economists. "Anarchist!" "Communist!" the very words strike terror to the ignorant, the romantic and the prejudiced. Peers of the realm who might be glad enough to share the platform with a "co-operator" at a village festival would stalk from the hall rather than breathe the same air as an "anarchist-communist". Anyone who, in pre-Franco days, took the trouble to visit an "anarchist-communist" fishing village in Mallorca or Catalonia, would have found himself in a simple, honest, law-abiding community of fishermen-co-operators, with no more harm in them than is to be found in any fishing village on the coasts of England.

Only the older people among us will be able to recall the concentrated savagery which used to be aroused in upper-class bosoms by the term 'pro-Boer'. All adults, on the other hand, can remember the days when the term 'Bolshevik' superseded 'dirty Jew' as the supreme insult permissible by law. All can also remember the unimpeded stream of vilification of Soviet Russia indulged in by the Conservative press until, after Stalingrad, there

was, almost overnight, a switch-over to journalistic enthusiasm for "Russian glory". Most of us remember the pronouncement of our military "experts" that the *Wehrmacht* would get to Moscow in six weeks and the corresponding relief felt by the public when it became evident that almost everything the big circulation newspapers had told them about Russia, during the previous twenty years, was a whopping lie. One might have imagined that, after four years of "Russian glory", bought at the price of inconceivable devastation and the loss of at least seven million lives, the Bevin-Churchill-Vandenberg attempt to stoke up the fires of hatred and suspicion against our allies, even though now backed by most of the Left wing press, would prove a flop. Among the "other ranks" in the fighting Services, who knew what the war was about, I think it has done. But in a section of our civilian population, who are incapable of learning from the past, the infection seems to have spread like Fascism, anti-Semitism, V.D. or any similar disease produced by the abnormal conditions in which we have all lived since 1931. Mr Herbert Morrison's description of the Communist Party as a 'conspiracy', and the accompanying flood of vituperation from Transport House, also fails to impress the soldier who thinks of "C.P. members" merely as comrades-in-arms. Everyone who did any "actual fighting" is aware that, without the much-abused "Communists", we should to-day be living under Nazi domination, with a tame Government of the "Vichy" type in which, as in other subjugated countries, some at least of our "Social democrats" would have collaborated. What is a "Communist" anyway? In current controversy it includes any progressive Liberal, any opponent of capitalism, any anti-Fascist resister in any country. Messrs Bevin and Byrnes are to-day applying diplomatic and financial pressure on those of the liberated states which are attempting, with popular support, to carry into practice the sort of planned Socialist economy for which Great Britain voted in 1945. At the same time they are supporting every Fascist régime still in existence and, aided by the Vatican, every Fascist minority in "democratic" countries plotting to sabotage the people's "forward march".

If any normally honest, patriotic and "progressive" member of our floating electorate has the temerity to object to his son's grave being spat upon by the boanergic Bevin and his "Socialist" accomplices, then immediately there arises a howl that he is either a "Communist" or a "crypto-Communist". Much as I respect the courage, sincerity and enthusiasm of individual members of our tiny communist Party I think it is altogether too much to credit them with a monopoly of common sense and decent feeling. It is true that, at the moment, as the last Election proved, the Communists are the only Party in Great Britain not under "ruling class" domination. But there are millions of us, opposed to "Bevinism", if only through the instinct of self-preservation, who would gladly enough support a revived Liberal Party if it were led by Radicals like Mr Tom Horabin and Miss Honor Balfour. But unless the Liberal hierarchy can modernise their outlook on economic planning and produce a foreign policy which is the reverse of Mr Bevin's, they must remain extinct as a political force. At the moment, Liberals are either Conservatives with a social conscience or else Socialists without the courage of their convictions. Thus the 'floating electorate', betrayed by the only Opposition Party it was able to vote for, remains—floating.

The position of an independent "Left-wing" writer, who declines to be muzzled, to toe Party lines or accept "directives" is an unenviable one, as I soon discovered them the reviews of my book, *The Nineteen-Twenties* began to flow in. The attacks from the Right were anticipated and therefore discounted in advance. It was the attacks from the Left which, I must confess, I found disconcerting. When I first became a professional writer, nearly forty years ago, reviews were more outspoken than they are to-day, but in reputable journalism a code of what was then regarded as "gentlemanlike" conduct was strictly observed. If you wanted to slate a book you slated it, giving chapter and verse for your opinion by means of quotations. If you wanted to demolish an argument, or question a fact, you let your reader know what argument you were demolishing and specified the alleged fact of which you queried the validity. But the code made it obligatory

to review the *book*, not your personal or hearsay impressions of the author, his income, or his private life. I was made painfully aware of the extent to which literary manners have changed, after two wars, when I read the affable notice of my book which appeared in our leading Socialist weekly. The critic who had, it seemed, rarely glanced at the political columns of his own paper, attributed my carefully-documented analysis of what happened after the Four Years War, to an attack of "jaundice", induced by personal misfortunes. It would be as sensible to state that the criticisms of our policy in Athens, uttered by visiting M.P.'s on their return to England, were due to the fact that they had indigestion or suffered from toothache. "An unhappy marriage", the critic wrote, "an uncertain income, some disappointed ambitions, have filled the cup to overflowing. And it has overflowed into a bitter-tasting book". As the book contained a reference to my very happy second marriage, which took place in 1927, my wife was reduced almost to tears by this suggestion that in 1944 I was still "embittered" by a half-forgotten trial trip. It seemed to both of us a pretty poor reward for twenty years of love and loyalty; nor could we either of us understand what my "uncertain income" or my alleged "disappointed ambitions" had to do with such matters as the troubles in Ireland, Mr Churchill's Archangel campaign, Amritsar or the message of E. D. Morel. Even more astonishing was the critic's assertion that "his championship of Soviet Rusia seems to me based less upon preference for an extremely systematic form of government than upon natural rebelliousness." As I am not a Soviet citizen, what business is it of mine to prefer or not prefer the systematic form of government which so many millions of Russians died heroically to defend? I have a dislike of concentration camps, and but for "Russian glory" I should probably now be inside one. That seems to me a strong enough reason for "championing" the Allies who "tore the guts out of the *Wehrmacht*", and made victory possible.

In a monthly magazine credited with advanced Socialist views a novelist-critic, who achieved a success in the 'thirties, similarly took upon himself to review his impressions of the author instead

of reviewing the book. "The inconsistency of Goldring's book, written in 1944...", he observes, "lies in the fact that he tries to impose upon his earlier experiences a social consciousness which he did not gain till much later". As most of my literary contemporaries connect me with a novel called "The Fortune" which first appeared as long ago as 1917, when it was roundly attacked because of its "social consciousness", this observation amused me as much as it amused my friends. Later on, the reviewer, assuming without any justification that my book had been written for recent Socialist converts like himself, remarked that "the Goldring of 1944 has learnt the lessons which we have all learnt; but to me he is not a teacher, but a fellow-pupil. I feel slightly embarrassed by his political diatribes..." The "diatribes" in question were largely based on Lord Cecil's autobiography, "A Great Experiment", Hansard and similar official or semi-official sources. The term "diatribe" flows easily from the pen and has always provided the Right with a facile excuse for discrediting arguments without examining them. This amiable saboteur concluded his review with a fancy picture of me as a 'lovable' old buffer, looking back on past good times in a straitened sadder age. Well, we are all straitened, all sadder and we all grow older. But my object in looking back was to warn the younger generation, by showing them "what happened last time", against mistakes which, if repeated, will endanger their present and deprive them of a future.

I shouldn't, myself, have thought this a tedious theme, but our leading literary journal, which at least has inpeccable manners, began by saying that "seldom is a book so neatly divided between tedium and interest". In the same issue it devoted a good deal of space to reviewing a volume of political comment, written from the Catholic point of view. The same book, was, of course, very prominently noticed in the highbrow Socialist press. Is it surprising that in the struggle for the mind of the educated young, Catholic political propaganda, which is often brilliantly written, is making such rapid headway? Already the great causes for which the Left has fought for so long are dismissed as

"tedious", while journalists of the Left delight in advancing Left Unity by heaving bricks at their own side, imploring us to leave politics alone and describing as "diatribes" facts which they themselves have never risked their livelihood by openly stating. The argument put forward by Right Wing Socialist intellectuals for maintaining strict "impartiality"—by abusing writers of the Left and misrepresenting books written from the anti-Fascist standpoint, while paying serious and respectful attention to Catholic "crypto-Fascist" comment—is superficially attractive. After all, as democrats, we believe in free speech, in tolerance, in liberty, and in civilisation. Therefore, so the argument runs, reviewers should be as "non-political" as our generals and Foreign Office mandarins are supposed to be. But as some of the delegates to the International P.E.N. Congress, held at Stockholm in June 1946, seem to have realised, there is a catch in this contention because all forms of Fascism, whether concealed or open, whether cloaked in the trappings of religion or nakedly materialistic, deny the first principles which are accepted by anti-Fascists everywhere. The world's experience of Fascism in action has proved that it is the enemy of civilisation as we understand it, and incompatible with the pursuit of any of the arts. It cannot exist without the suppression of 'free speech' for the simple reason that, as Hitler admitted in *Mein Kampf*, it bases its hold on the masses on the promulgation of colossal lies which it dare not permit any writer to expose. In the Catholic Fascist state whose Caudillo has received repeated Apostolic Benedictions from the present Pope, one of the first actions taken by the University of Salamanca was to make a bonfire of dangerous books, including the works of Voltaire, Remarque and H. G. Wells. An unfortunate Republican intellectual was even imprisoned for having on his shelves a book by Ramsay MacDonald! Are European writers, confronted daily by the graveyards and the rubble heaps which remain as eloquent witnesses of what any form of Nazi-Fascism must lead to, to tolerate the free promulgation of what they must regard as treason to the soul of Man? Mr Olaf Stapledon, one of the British delegates, reports that a Dutch delegate "demanded a blacklist

of writers who had been condemned in their own countries as collaborators, and who were now writing and lecturing abroad." To many uncompromising champions of liberty this proposal seemed outrageous. The P.E.N., they insisted, was a non-political body, a forum where persons of all persuasions could meet for friendly discussion. The other side clamoured for the exclusion of tainted writers, "lest we should unwittingly shake hands with Nazis". Thus, over the blacklist the Americans and many British opposed discipline in the name of liberty... Throughout the discussions, the cleavage was mainly between those who had suffered under tyranny and those who had not". Summing up the arguments, Mr Stapledon says that in the main, the representatives of the more fortunate countries (which include Great Britain and the United States) were "anxious to keep the P.E.N. out of politics, while the former victims of oppression insisted that to stand aside was treason. The P.E.N., they declared, was at the parting of the ways. If it intended to be a real power in the world, it must clarify and revise its principles in the light of Europe's recent tragedy. And it must have the courage of its new-found convictions. In this mood the Congress passed a Catalan resolution condemning Franco's régime for suppressing the Catalan language and culture and killing writers who spoke for freedom. Most of the delegates from the Continent regarded this protest as a plain duty. The Americans and some British considered it unwise. The P.E.N.'s authority, they said, depended on its remaining strictly detached from politics." There, succinctly stated, is the dilemma, and the reader must make up his own mind about it. All I can tell him is that, under existing conditions of "non-political" impartiality, the scales, in this country, are heavily weighted against writers who speak for freedom and in favour of those "Anglo-American" and Irish Catholic propagandists who are anxious to reward us for our victory by once again loading us with chains.

V

Undeterred by the cross-fire from both sides of the arena, I

have, during the whole of my professional life, insisted on maintaining such independence of thought and utterance as I am capable of. It is no use for anyone to try to tie a label round my neck, ticket me and dispose of me as a "crypto-Communist". I am not even an "atheist" and should any reviewer try to suggest that I am, in the religious sense, "anti-Catholic", I shall, as a cradle "Anglo-Catholic", proceed against him for libel. I have no concealed cards to lay on the table. We all, of course, get our "ideas" from somewhere, even if we resolutely use our own brains to work them out. I will therefore gladly admit that I probably should not look at things in the way I do look at them had it not been for the impact, in my Victorian childhood, of our towering English genius, Charles Dickens. Dickens was not what is called a "practical politician". He was, of course, Radical and humanitarian in general tendency, but did not much trouble his head, or the heads of his readers, with political theory. It was his mission, whether he consciously realised it or not is immaterial, to affect a "change of heart" among the swarming millions of his lower middle-class compatriots, in the age of Victorian expansion. My grandfather and his brother, both Radical lawyers, were swept off their feet by Dickens, used to rush out of their offices to buy the new monthly instalments of his novels as soon as they appeared and eventually came to know his works almost by heart. There was a queer sort of Dickens "religion" among prosperous Londoners in the mid-Victorian epoch, and there is little doubt that, although I myself have never been a great Dickens reader, my childhood was steeped in it. There are millions of Englishmen who are like me in this respect, and it is to them and their children that I address this book. We believe in Progress; we believe in Justice; we believe that the general "decency" of our compatriots will see us through if the politicians give us a chance. In view of the squalid exhibition of bad faith, avarice and aggression, given by the Anglo-American representatives at the Peace Conference, many English and American citizens must now realize that they must assert themselves if they are to survive. If they fail to do so while there is still time, the end of

the human race may be much the same as that of the 4800 "specially treated" pigs, goats and rats which, as I write, are about to be sacrificed at Bikini Atoll. If I suggest that the martyrdom of these innocent animals, at the moment when the world is struggling for a Peace consistent with the Four Freedoms, reflects little credit on the Power responsible for it, no doubt the reviewer in the Astor-owned *Observer* who accused me of "Americophobia" will say that I am heading for another outbreak. On the other hand, some readers may agree with my contention that the whole 'experiment' constitutes a more cold-blooded atrocity against the Soul of Man than any alleged "democracy" has so far perpetrated. One step further, after Bikini, and the human race will be over the edge of the abyss. God will have washed his hands of his creation. I cannot bring myself to believe that the millions of liberal Americans, whose views have been concealed from us for so many years by the iron curtain imposed by the Press, will tamely allow Wall Street to make either New York or London the doomed city spoken of in the Book of Revelation. The martyrdom of the pigs and goats may prove our salvation; in the nick of time.

In the spirit, therefore, of "say not the struggle naught availeth" I offer this book to survivors of the recent war in the belief that they will not submit to being blown to perdition without going into things, without enquiry, without making some effort to find out what is really happening and "whodunit".

CHAPTER ONE

Back in London

WHEN I look back on the years intervening between my return to London, in March 1930, and the outbreak of the Second World War, I can easily see how many mistakes I made. I had been away from England (first in Sweden and afterwards in France,) for the best part of five years, and my wife, whose Swedish common sense would normally have saved me from major misjudgements, was handicapped by the fact that she had never been in England before. We were both, in short, abysmally inexperienced in the London way of living, and there was no one at hand to show us the ropes or to give us any sensible advice. Of my friends of the 'twenties' some had gone under and some had got on, some had got jobs, and a few contrived a down-at-heel existence on such remnants of their patrimony as, sobered by the Wall Street crash, they had managed to preserve. If I had had any sense I should have followed the lead of other literary folk, cut out London altogether and looked for a cottage in some agreeable provincial town. There were plenty to be had in those days at nominal rents, and if I had played for safety in accordance with the warning of Mr Micawber I might have avoided some of his more painful experiences. The provinces, moreover, provide plenty of scope for the activities, albeit on a minor and restricted scale, of those who, like myself, are driven by the urge to do their share of unpaid work for "causes". In 1937 I reached what, for Englishmen of my particular make-up, is the dangerous age of fifty. At fifty—here I speak for a type, not as an individual—we find ourselves sitting on Committees, addressing letters to the press and,

unless incapacited by aphasia, speaking at public meetings. All these harmless, indeed necessary, pursuits, can be carried on in the country with much less disastrous effects on the family budget than they can in London. As for writing, by the time he nears fifty an author should no longer require the stimulus of metropolitan contacts. He ought to have enough material stored in his own head, or available to him in newspapers he has learnt how to read, or in standard works of reference, to last him for the rest of his active life. The student of foreign affairs, for example, can often arrive at far more accurate conclusions by analysing motives, exploring the financial columns of the press and using his powers of imagination with intelligence, than from encounters, in Fleet Street taverns, with colleagues alleged to be "in close touch".

My stars, which have always been a peculiar combination of the lucky and the unlucky, did not allow me to pursue what I now appreciate would have been the course of wisdom, the line of prudence. I hung on in London until the long-anticipated balloon ascent, by abruptly depriving my wife and myself of our chief sources of income, decanted us into an isolated cottage in a Hampshire village.

Mr Cyril Connolly, in his excellent magazine *Horizon*, has given a moving description of the financial insecurity of men of letters during the years of transition and painted, in agonizing terms, the indignities and "squalid frustrations" to which they are so often subjected. What he wrote is undoubtedly true, but not, perhaps, the whole truth. It is the comfortably off, the reasonably secure, the self-centred, who are most afflicted by the dread of poverty and most unnerved by reflecting on its consequences. Those of us who are alert to current events and absorbed in activities connected with them, or who endeavour to live by some form of social service, are naturally worried when financial difficulties distract our attention from the work on which we are engaged. But our finances, although often desperate, are seldom in our own minds, which is all that matters, serious. I suppose I can say that I have, at intervals, been financially 'embarrassed'

through the greater part of my life, but I have never felt poor, nor has my heart ever been broken by such trials as those of the immortal Bantocks.

In the 'thirties I should have enjoyed the profits, still more the respect and kudos, which fell to the lot of prosperous colleagues. For a month or two in 1935, when my autobiography, "Odd Man Out", secured a reception in the press which astonished me at the time and has never been achieved by any of my subsequent efforts, I thought that, at last, I was really going to have what Americans call "a break". The sales, much to my chagrin, were almost farcical. I doubt if any book has appeared in London in the past twenty years which has received so much flattering publicity and sold so few copies. At first I was much cast down, blamed my publishers and thought I had been very badly treated. But I soon realized that even the outwardly successful have their misfortunes. A colleague made so much money out of a novel, published shortly after my own effort had flopped, that Harley Street got to hear of it. Before the poor wretch had time to spend his earnings, he was cut up and lodged in a Nursing Home at fifteen guineas a week, from which he emerged, alive indeed, but almost penniless. Another moneymaking author of my acquaintance, after years of domestic affliction, was plunged into Divorce Court proceedings which had a similar effect upon his bank balance. Luck and ill-luck are so closely blended in the lives of nearly all of us that pity should be proffered with caution. I have at least been fortunate throughout what is already a long life in enjoying remarkably good health and, thanks to a no doubt undeserved share of domestic felicity, I have probably known more contentment and real happiness than many of the reviewers who, whenever I publish a book, hasten to tell their readers about my "disappointed ambitions". Very few of us secure *all* the prizes that life has to offer. The most miserable literary men I know are among the very few who have achieved everything which they set out in early life, with ruthless determination, to accomplish. Their wives go sour on them, their children exploit them, their mistresses laugh at them behind

their backs, the critics are envious of their popularity, and even fame becomes a curse. There is no material want, from a Phantom Rolls to a Georgian country house, which they cannot immediately gratify. They do not have to wait for anything. They never have laboriously to scrape up a fiver to buy some small object they happen to covet, nor do they know the thrill of pleasure which accompanies its acquisition. They do not have to toil and save, to plot and plan, in order to visit the dream cities they have set their hearts on seeing. They can travel wherever they please, whenever they like, though few are sufficiently strong-minded to avoid the snares set for the wealthy by the foreign hotelier. And once they are caught in *that* profiteers' racket, joy flies out of the window and little is left for them except the "American way of life", the sole advantage of which is to make death a relief. When Mr George Eastman, the American philanthropist, committed suicide, he said in his valedictory note "My work is done. Why wait?"

In the literary world, where great importance must be attached to the clinical value of experience, it is not subconscious envy but a sense of real values which makes so many of us inclined to pity the poor rich. How nice to be "Mr Puffington", if I may borrow this well-observed type from its anonymous inventor, and to qualify for a decoration by spending six years of war, chairborne, in a well-paid Government job in a well-carpeted office. How nice to be Mr Puffington at the microphone, exposing (in accordance with Foreign Office directives) the manifold errors and general wrongheadedness of Mr Molotov. How nice to be Vernon Puffington, the influential critic and literary panjandrum, famous for his "delicious middles". Yes. But then, how nice *not* to be.

In the 'thirties I certainly had my share of mixed experiences, and very interesting some of them were. Though "lucky in love" I cannot say that I have been lucky in some of my acquaintances. My clerical Uncle Arthur, whose death a few years after my return to London caused me genuine regret, once surprised me by saying that a man could not look for really intimate friends

outside the ranks of his own profession. This reversal of the familiar adage about "two of a trade" stuck in my mind and, not long after, I was forced to agree with him. There is all the difference in the world, when it comes down to brass tacks, between the people who, for some reason or other, usually propinquity or habit, you "see a lot of", and those whom you really regard as friends. Finding myself at a loose end, in a London that seemed very much changed for the worse, I resumed association with several old acquaintances whom I used to meet at the unending parties thrown by the Bright Young People five years earlier. The consequences, through painful, were instructive.

My restless energy in starting societies to preserve national amenities or defend public rights brought me in contact, during the second half of the decade, with an assorted collection of members of our ruling class, who continued my political education. Some were peers of the realm, others high-up Civil Servants, millionaires, property owners and ambitious "Mayfair men." I had come very little into contact with such people since 1914, when the "ball-room floor" collapsed under me and took my white ties, tails and toppers with it. The specimens of this particular world which, after 1919, I encountered at London cocktail parties, or met on the Riviera, had all, in various ways, become *déclassés*. They had either turned Bohemian and taken to drink or the arts, or escaped to the Dominions or the United States, and all had lost their money.

The examples of the ruling class which I now encountered were of a totally different kind. They had lost nothing and gained much. They were the types who really run the country, occupy "key positions", adorn the diplomatic corps and have Old Etonian connections, of long standing, with really important Permanent Officials. They were the sort of people, enormously capable, highly-trained, cultured and in a few cases incredibly arrogant, who, after September 3rd 1939, used blandly to assert that "Of course, we were all wrong". Two years earlier, when I, a to them curious visitant from the vast unknown jungle swarming with outsiders, appeared among them, it was quickly made evi-

dent that as it was the right thing to be all wrong, it was very much the wrong thing to be proved right. Although our deliberations were of a non-political character, one of my colleagues, on a private occasion, smelling heresy as only Fascists can, treated me to a long tirade, in the best Foreign Office manner, on the virtues of General Franco. He got his own back; and the atmosphere, at subsequent Committee meetings, became glacial. No one who has not felt its impact, can have the least idea of the social discomforts, if one strays into exalted circles, of being regarded as a "Red". What interested me most, however, was the manner of address adopted by a newly fledged peer who had spent some time as a minor attaché in the Diplomatic Service. I had not imagined that, since the Regency, when duelling went out of fashion, anyone nowadays permitted himself this "tone of voice", even when addressing a servant. The effect it had on me was, at first, to arouse an instinctive reaction of which the normal result, had the restraints of civilisation been removed, would have been to land him a sock in the jaw. Professional curiosity, however, and the detached observation which goes with it, came to my rescue, and I contented myself with trying to imagine how I should feel, supposing I were an American citizen, a patriotic Greek Professor, or a Czech politician of sturdy yeoman origin, if His Britannic Majesty's Representative high-hatted me in this fashion. Since these encounters I have made a special effort to find out from friends and acquaintances who have served abroad or visited America during the war years, whether what I imagined was borne out by the reality. Without any exception they all agreed that the dislike which is now felt for the British all over the world is due as much to the incredible arrogance and ill manners of some of our minor diplomatic attachés and other official representatives as to the policies pursued by Mr Bevin.

It is a curious reflection that at least ninety-nine per cent of English people must go through their lives without ever coming into personal contact with any members of the tiny group who control their destinies, behind the scenes, and represent them

abroad. Professional politicians, of all classes and parties, are of course the exceptions. If the public studied political form as closely as they study form in race horses and greyhounds, they would be struck by the fact that the "high-ups" always seem to show more favour, to extend a heartier social welcome, to politicians of working-class origin than to those from the ranks of the professions. Ramsay MacDonald, after he had betrayed his Party, boasted that "tomorrow every duchess in London will want to kiss me". Mr Bevin, while shaving himself on the morning of his "continuity" speech, might well have studied his features in the mirror and echoed his remark. It is one of the advantages of arrogance, as a cultivated manner, that it lends, in the eyes of carefully selected inferiors, an extraordinary value to condescension. It is the MacDonalds, Bevins and Morrisons of the Labour Party who can most easily be manipulated by the social experience and carefully graduated flattery of the Mandarin class. The Daltons, the Lansburys and Crippses are made of less malleable material. That perhaps explains why all the revolutions in world history, in thought or politics, have been led by men of middle, or lower-middle, class origin.

As it is essential for any would-be student of the complexities of modern politics, carried on as they are behind an iron curtain of secrecy and deliberate misrepresentation, to have some first-hand knowledge of the sort of V.I.P.'s whom we still allow to steer the ship of state, I look back on the years when I occupied a sort of observation post in their midst as having been well spent. They convinced me of the truth of much which the innocent majority of my compatriots still find it hard to believe. The way in which the high-ups in the Services and the Mandarins of the Foreign Office have led the Labour Government by the nose, is exactly what I anticipated after watching specimens of them in action, during the palmy days of Neville Chamberlain's dictatorship.

If I were still a practising novelist, I could get a great deal of comic material out of my experiences in a Bloomsbury flat, my submersion in the damp dungeons of Maida Vale, my rise

to the surface in Earl's Court, my brief experience of *confort moderne* in Dolphin Square, followed, after the declaration of war, by my confinement in one of those picturesque labourer's cottages, with roses round the door but no gas and electric light, water or sanitation. As a picture of what two industrious, instinctively patriotic and, for a variety of reasons, perhaps more than normally alert people had to contend with during the Chamberlain era, such a story would have a documentary value, apart from its inescapable element of farce. A bald narration of the author's comings and goings, frequentations, frustrations, amusements and occasional Continental escapes, which is all that the scope of this work permits, would be boring to read and still more boring to write.

CHAPTER TWO

Documentary Evidence

THE evening before I sat down to write this chapter I found myself involved in a discussion with a distinguished citizen of my home town. In the course of it, I casually referred to the alleged proposal made to Dr Wohltat in 1939, through Mr R. S. Hudson, that Great Britain should lend Nazi Germany a thousand million pounds. I had supposed this incident was a matter of common knowledge, so fierce, at the time it leaked out, was the controversy which it aroused. Greatly to my surprise, my friend was frankly incredulous. Too polite to call me a liar to my face, he demanded that I should produce my "authority", for making so preposterous a statement. As I am not in the habit of consuming my social pint with my pockets stuffed with Hansards and cuttings from back numbers of *The Times*, I was naturally in no position, on the spur of the moment, to produce any documentary evidence for my assertion. The episode, however, convinced me of the astonishing ignorance, or forgetfulness, of the average man in regard to those salient events in contemporary history which have had such violent repercussions on the lives and fortunes of himself and his compatriots. If an Englishman's child is run over in the street, he expects a coroner's inquest to be held, and would be rightly indignant if it were not. Why is it, then, that when his entire country is involved in perils, and for a time almost overwhelmed, his curiosity as to the cause of the disaster should so quickly evaporate? "Let's forget the past" is his attitude, the moment the danger is over. In this he resembles the drunken motorist whose unsteady hand on the

wheel has blotted out a useful life. "It's done now. The child got in the way. I'm very sorry. Let's forget it and have no hard feelings". The main object of an inquest, however, is, by careful investigation, to prevent the recurrence of similar calamities.

One of the first actions of the Socialist Government, after its return to power in July 1945, should have been to set up a Royal Commission of Inquiry into the causes and conduct of the long struggle from which we had just emerged. Instead, it poured a bucket of whitewash over the past, put no quislings in the witness box, withheld the list of names of Hitler's friends in this country which the Allied Military investigators had discovered in Berlin, and carried on, without intermission, the disastrous "anti-Soviet" policy of its predecessors. The electors had made one of their rare efforts at revolt, but Conservative Labour quickly smothered it. Apathy and cynicism have been the inevitable, and probably foreseen, result. Even the explosion at Bikini does not resound in the ears of the bread queues, or strike a spark of interest in the minds of displaced "regulars" looking for their beer. The four-page "national" dailies have forgotten the time when they were supposed to be newspapers. Padded out with 'magazine' features, with garbled speeches by disingenuous ministers only anxious to conceal what should be made plain, and with Foreign Office hand-outs, they merely conduce to the prevalent mental inertia.

In 1936 I was fortunate enough to secure a contract for a weekly literary causerie, which was "syndicated" (if that is the correct term) among various Empire newspapers. I had about twelve hundred words at my disposal and was expected to review not less than half-a-dozen books a week. The choice was left to myself and I made it my business to get hold of, study and recommend all the books which set out to enlighten the public as to what was really happening. For the next five years, that is to say until the outbreak of war caused most of the overseas papers which had used my column to stop doing so, I read, considered and made copious extracts from these sources of contemporary history, many, but by no means all, of which bore

the imprint of Victor Gollancz. With the personal opinions expressed in the past year or two by this courageous and, in the best sense, patriotic publisher, I have found myself occasionally in conflict. But the present seems a suitable occasion for calling attention to the fact that the publications of the Left Book Club during the crucial years before the outbreak of war, formed almost the only sources of reliable information available to the average man, about foreign affairs. The big circulation newspapers consistently concealed what it was essential for the citizen to realise, as they are doing to-day. In Parliament, the statements of Ministers were habitually framed with the object of deceiving not only the more gullible members of the House of Commons, but also the general public. As they still are. It is unfortunate that Mr. Attlee, by keeping in their jobs the same permanent officials who drew up the briefs from which Conservative Ministers made their misleading speeches, has maintained the continuity of this old and evil tradition. Had it not been for the Left Book Club publications, and for a number of volumes of *reportage*, issued by other firms, written by foreign correspondents who declined to be muzzled by the papers which employed them, public opinion would have been rendered inoperative through sheer ignorance.

From the bulging note-books which I compiled between 1936 and 1941, I have selected some passages which throw light on certain matters which to-day are still agitating the public mind. Memories are short, and many people are unable to associate current news with events in the past of which they have forgotten the details. In June 1946 Senor Jose Giral, head of the Spanish Republican Government in exile, made the disclosure that Vickers-Armstrong had entered into a contract to build two new battle-ships for Franco, through their Spanish subsidiaries. The average Labour supporter, who saw this announcement, was considerably startled. He had supposed that "Iron and Steel", including the munition makers, were safely under Government control and were soon to be nationalized. If there is one form of nationalizition to which the entire Labour movement is

irrevocably committed it is surely that of armaments. In the eyes of the more naive rank-and-file Socialists, the election of a Labour Government automatically ended the influence of pressure groups, composed of the "merchants of death", on British foreign policy, in spite of the fact that Mr Bevin's "continuity" speech was a clear indication that it had done nothing of the sort. Since Vickers is once again in the news, it is worth while reminding ourselves of the pre-war record of this gigantic international organization. Some important facts about it are set out in that indispensable work of reference, "Tory M.P.", by Simon Haxey, published by Victor Gollancz in 1939.

The armaments work of Vickers is done in the main by its subsidiary Vickers-Armstrong, which was described by the Chairman of Vickers at the Annual General Meeting in 1931 as "the largest armaments firm in the world". Its influence in the House of Commons, prior to 1945, can be gathered from the number of its directors and shareholders who were Members of Parliament. These included Sir John Anderson, who was on the board of directors before his elevation to the Cabinet.

In 1931 and 1932 there was a burning hope throughout the world that the League of Nations would succeed in freeing the harrassed taxpayers from the burden of armaments. This hope was certainly not shared by Vickers. At the Annual General Meeting in 1932 ("Tory M.P.", page 63) the Chairman complained that:

"The general world trade depression and the reduction of armaments under the influence of public opinion, both in this and in other countries have affected adversely your Company's trading results".

As the author observes, there was no real cause for alarm. "The disarmament Conference failed; the League of Nations, a 'fancy convention' and a 'troublesome organisation' as the Chairman of Vickers called it" (in a letter dated September 10th 1930, read at the Nye Commission) "was deserted and the world plunged into the biggest arms race in history".

The pace was set by Hitler, who came to power in Germany

at the beginning of 1933. Nobody alive in England in 1946 will require to have it explained to him that it was the business of the British Government, and of patriotic British industrialists, to see to it that no aid of any kind was given by this country to its only potential enemies. To assist in, or permit assistance in, the re-arming of Hitler, so that Germany could renew her bid for world domination, was, if not technically a crime for which the politicians concerned could be made responsible, the equivalent of High Treason in the eyes of those who subsequently paid the price of their unwisdom.

It would be nice to think that the late Sir Charles Craven, Chairman of Vickers and a former naval officer, put the safety of the realm and the lives of his compatriots before the interests of his shareholders. Unfortunately the testimony of Ambassador Dodd, recorded in "Ambassador Dodd's Diary. 1933-1938. Edited by William E. Dodd Jr. and Martha Dodd" (Gollancz 1941) does not support this wishful-thinking. Dodd was a shrewd Noncomformist Professor of History, and his appointment to Berlin was one of the most successful ever made by Roosevelt. Dodd quickly perceived the shape of things to come, and his diary does not spare his own compatriots any more than the British. For example he records a warning given by the Dutch Minister, Limburg-Stirum, in January 1934 that Holland's possessions in the Far East, also the Philipines, would soon fall into Japanese hands" if the United States did not strongly resist, and especially if England continued to give underhand support to Japanese aggression. Later he notes that he has recently learnt of the "German purchase of a hundred aeroplanes from American manufacturers per month," paid for in gold, while other American creditors were left unpaid. In August 1934 he confides to his diary: "Why American bankers induced their hundreds of thousands of clients to buy billions of German bonds or why they granted her huge short-term credits between 1924 and 1930, I cannot understand on any other grounds than that they were willing to risk their people's savings in order to make huge profits themselves". A British Ambassador, had we possessed one

of Dodd's calibre, might have made a similar comment on the actions of British bankers, especially as the safety of Britain was directly threatened by a re-arming Germany while that of the United States was threatened only indirectly.

In November 1934, rumours about the Berlin activities of Vickers begin to disturb the Ambassador's peace of mind. He notes, "I had also asked him" (the British Ambassador, Sir Eric Phipps) "whether the Armstrong-Vickers concern, closely linked to the British Government, had sold war materials to Germany just before the arrival of the British Committee to negotiate Lancaster debts". Sir Eric denied this transaction, but Dodd adds "I am convinced the Armstrong people sold war material for gold at the very moment when the Lancaster cotton people were being told they could not be paid". On December 5th, 1934, Norman Ebbutt, Berlin correspondent of the London *Times*, called to give the Ambassador a report on the effects of the London protest to Hitler about re-arming, a protest, as Dodd notes "made after England and the United States have sold millions of dollars worth of arms to Germany".

Here indeed is "documentary evidence" in support of the repeated assertions of Left Wing observers as to the dual nature of British foreign policy, which "continuity" has maintained unimpaired. One policy is put forward by the Foreign Secretary and his deputy in the House of Commons, while another policy, usually the reverse of the first, is the one which is actually carried out. Mr Bevin, for example, tells the House of Commons that he hates the Franco régime in Spain at the moment when he is, in fact, aided by Vickers, doing everything in his power to give it "underhand support".

On December 10th 1934, Ebbutt "confirmed the report of mid-October that a British woman, connected with Hitler's inner group, was here just before the British negotiations on Lancaster debts, to sell war equipment for Armstrong-Vickers". Dodd says that, according to previous conversations, Sir Eric Phipps had not known about it, but adds "I am sure now the British staff members did know". In Dodd's view, confirmed

by others, Sir Eric was "generous-minded and in my judgment, frank and open", so that it was necessary for his staff, when dirty work was afoot, to deceive him—an odious example of the sort of Fifth Column intrigue which the Socialists in the present House of Commons have now, apparently, accepted as inevitable.

The personality of the British woman "connected with Hitler's inner group" was much discussed in London, when this revelation first appeared. The name most frequently mentioned was that of the late Lady Chamberlain, widow of Sir Austen, close friend of Mussolini and persona grata with General Franco. Perhaps, if justice and patriotism are not overwhelmed by the Fascist revival, an inquest will be held and the name of this lady, who may have been completely innocent of the activities of which she was suspected, will be cleared.

It is pleasant to find, in this diary of an honest man, surrounded by the blackest treachery and witness of the vilest criminal conspiracy against the human race, this affirmation of faith. "To me", he writes, "the actual teachings of the simple, direct-minded Jesus were exceedingly important and early Christianity really democratic. Now neither the Catholics nor the Protestants believe in nor practise Christian or democratic principles." By January IIth 1937, Dodd had almost given up hope of British democracy. "Sir Eric Phipps", he writes, "was as discreet as ever, but he revealed more sympathy for the Fascist crowd in Spain than I had noted before. I believe now he is almost a Fascist, as I think are Baldwin and Eden".

We have seen something, through Dodd's eyes, of Vickers' activities in Berlin in helping Hitler to re-arm. How did the shareholders fare, when Baldwin's lips became unsealed, and the British taxpayer set out to re-arm against the Nazi re-armament which Vickers and the British Government had facilitated?

"As public expenditure on arms increased", says Simon Haxey, "Vickers' dividends rose from 4 % in 1935 to 10 % in 1936 and 10 % in 1937". By March 1938 the trading profit of the parent firm and its *subsidiaries* had increased by about 25 %. Mention of subsidiaries brings Franco Spain into the picture. At the Royal

Commission on the Private Manufacture and Trade in Arms, held in 1936, Vickers gave evidence that they held 21 % of the capital of La Sociedad Espanola de Construccion Naval in Spain, engaged mainly in armament and shipbuilding work, to which Vickers-Armstrong, jointly with John Brown & Co., act as technical advisers. They also controlled Placencia de las Armas, which hold 22 % of the capital of Experiencia Industriales S.A., a company engaged in armaments and other work. In 1934 a reactionary Government, described to Dodd by his friend Luis Zulueta as "a combination of Fascists and Catholic reactionaries with the support of Mussolini and the Pope", was in power, and it is interesting to note how Sir Charles Craven regarded them. In a letter written in 1934, read to the Nye Commission, Sir Charles observed to his American correspondent that "of course, things look very stormy in Spain at present, and I sincerely hope nothing will be done to check the swing to the Right which has recently taken place, because the present Government look as if they were going to be most sympathetic to the Sociedad and give us a modest Naval programme, which I can assure you is very sorely needed to keep the place going". The modest programme included "impregnable" fortifications of the strategic island of Minorca, which was later induced to surrender to Franco by the action of the British Government, and the immensely strong coastal defences of Bilbao. In view of the intimate connection between Vickers and the British Admiralty, the apparent ignorance of Admiral Sir Dudley Pound, then in command of H.M.S. Hood, about the position and range of the shore batteries protecting Bilbao harbour, reflects credit on the discretion observed by Vickers regarding their clients' secrets. What was the position of British Naval Intelligence in this matter remains a mystery. The information that General Franco was determined to make the blockade of Bilbao effective—although he had no means whatever of doing so—was conveyed to our gullible Ambassador, Sir Henry Chilton, then in retreat at Hendaye, by Franco's naval attaché, Commandante Troncoso. Troncoso uttered dire threats to British shipping and all this impudent nonsense was swallowed

by Chilton and promptly transmitted to Whitehall. Accordingly, acting on this information, "received through the usual channels", the British Cabinet decided to keep British ships out of Bilbao, which of course meant handing over the Basque capital to Franco. On April 6th the commander of the destroyer flotilla at St. Jean de Luz reported that in his view Franco's blockade was effective. On what evidence he based this view, or whether he had had a friendly chat with Troncoso, was never revealed. The Admiralty, in any case, reported that Bilbao was mined and Mr Baldwin told the House of Commons, by way of embroidery, that it was "mined by both sides". On April 21st, Sir Samuel Hoare, then adorning the Admiralty, said that "in quite recent days we have received further information. There is no doubt that General Franco has mined there". Hoare further declared that his information was that Franco's ships had been frequently within the three-mile limit, that they had not been fired on by the shore guns and that they themselves had fired on the shore fortifications".

While this tissue of lies was being poured out in Parliament, President Aguirre was telling the world, by means of the radio, not only that there were no mines within his territorial waters, but that the power and range of his shore batteries, installed by Vickers, put any attempt by Franco to blockade the port effectively, out of the question. As Great Britain had a Consul at Bilbao, and the chief of the port was well-known to, and held in high esteem by, all Welsh captains engaged in the North Spanish trade, it seemed odd that, even if etiquette forbade the Admiralty to ring up Vickers and ask for the facts no attempt was made to get confirmation of the President's statements from these officials. Naval Intelligence, apparently, could not countenance such unorthodox methods, so that although the real situation at Bilbao was known throughout Europe and the United States, it was presumably concealed from Admiral Sir Dudley Pound. While all this was going on, a number of British food ships were waiting impatiently at St Jean de Luz for permission to proceed to their port of destination.

The story of what happened was told by an eye-witness, Mr

Noel Monks of the *Daily Express*, and is included in a volume called "Nothing But Danger", edited by Frank C. Hanighen. "The tiny harbour of St Jean-de-Luz", says Mr Monks, "was crowded with the rusty hulls of half a dozen British tramp steamers. They had been there for several days, bluffed by a report of Franco's that the entrance to Bilbao, where women and children were starving, was mined. Even the ships of the Royal Navy swallowed that yarn. It wasn't true. I myself went out in a Basque fishing-boat and searched for two days and never saw a mine. Anyhow, the Royal Navy had warned the British food ships not to try to enter Bilbao, and shepherded them back to St Jean."

The skippers held a meeting and drafted a message to the Admiral, informing him that they, the five masters of the British ships held up at St Jean, were trading legitimately with Spain, that they carried no arms, only food for starving people. They asked for the protection of the Royal Navy. The Admiral's reply was "Don't leave St Jean". Captain Still, master of the S.S. Hammersley, then told Monks that he was leading the four other ships into Bilbao, Royal Navy or no Royal Navy. The Admiral was informed of the plans. Later, as Monks puts it, "Someone must have found his heart in Whitehall, because the Admiral got instructions to escort the ships to within three miles of Bilbao".

The blockade runners were received with wild enthusiasm by the hungry people, given "the freedom of the Basque country" and taken to the front via Guernica. Later, after the discharge of his cargo, Captain Still said to Monks, on board his ship, "There's something about this war that gives me the creeps. Could you ever meet a finer lot of people in the world than these Basques—home-loving, industrious, religious? And they're being wiped out with the blessing of the Pope. It makes me afraid for humanity."

The British Government, the Tory party and the Permanent Officials, had quite different "interests" from those of humanity. Sentimental regard for the justice of a cause, or even for the safety of their country and the preservation of the British Empire,

has never prevented them from putting these "interests" first.

As Mr Neville Chamberlain, on June 23rd 1938, in reply to a suggestion that an embargo should be imposed on the shipping of General Franco in Britain, said that this might endanger the £40,000,000 of British capital invested in Franco Spain, some significance attaches to the political personalities associated with the companies concerned. "The Rio Tinto Company", says that unchallenged authority, Simon Haxey, "owns 32,000 acres of freehold copper and sulphur-mining property in Huelva, Southern Spain. Among its directors is the Earl of Bessborough, who is related to Viscount Wimborne (Guest) who has two brothers and one son among Conservative M.P.'s. Another director, the Hon. R.M. Preston is brother-in-law of Captain A. H. M. Ramsay (Conservative M.P. for Peebles)." Captain Ramsay, it will be remembered, was detained during the war under 18b. He had been associated with the American spy, Tyler Kent, and at the time of his arrest a volume was discovered containing a list of some four hundred members of an organisation known as the Right Club, of which he was founder and of which a former Duke of Wellington had acted as Chairman. Mr Herbert Morrison, then Home Secretary, who subsequently showed so much consideration for Sir Oswald Mosley's phlebitis, was responsible for hushing up the names of these public enemies. Many of them, we may hazard a guess, still occupy important positions, thanks to Mr Bevin's policy of "continuity".

Rio Tinto, of which it has just been announced (June 1946) that Mr Anthony Eden, the originator of "Non-Intervention", has been rewarded by a directorship, according to Mr Haxey, owned, in 1939, European Pyrites Corporation Ltd, jointly with the Nazi firm Metallgesellschaft A.G. A London director of Metallgesellschaft A.G. was Captain Oliver Lyttelton, the highly-paid Managing Director of the British Metal Corporation, who is related by marriage to Viscount Wimborne and to Col. Hon. Henry Guest (Conservative M.P. for Drake). Mr. Lyttelton, it will be remembered, was made Minister of Production in Mr Churchill's Cabinet and readily accepted as a colleague by Messrs

Attlee, Bevin and Morrison. At the General Election of 1945 the Labour Party did not put up a Candidate for the Aldershot constituency and, in spite of a spirited campaign by Mr Tom Wintringham on behalf of Common Wealth, Mr Lyttelton was again returned to Parliament.

The details given above, of Vickers' pre-war activities in Berlin and Spain, are matched by their pre-war interests and policies in Japan. "Vickers and associated companies still (1939) have considerable 'holdings' in two Japanese arms firms", Haxey records, "25 % of the capital of Kabushiki Kwaisha Nihon Seikosho, (Japanese steel works) engaged in manufacture of ordnance, machinery etc, connected with the Mitsui concern, the great Japanese combine; and 20 % of the capital of another company, now mainly a holding company." During one of the meetings at the Royal Commission on the Private Manufacture and Trade in Arms, Sir Philip Gibbs asked Sir Herbert Lawrence: "But you would actually get some advantage from a very big naval policy in Japan?" Sir Herbert Lawrence, "Certainly".

Lest there should be the slightest doubt in the reader's mind that Sir Herbert Lawrence was well aware that the Japanese armaments firms with which Vickers was associated, were producing weapons to be used against our Chinese allies and our own innocent sons, the famous Tanaka memorial, said to have been presented as early as July 25th 1927 to General McArthur's protégé, the Emperor Hirohito, may be recalled.

"In a certain sense", Baron Tanaka observed, "Manchuria and Mongolia are key positions, by holding which we can seize the wealth of the whole of China. After this, we shall subjugate India, the South Seas, Asia Minor and Central Asia, and finally Europe". This programme now appears to have been taken over, to a considerable extent, by General Douglas McArthur and the American dollar imperialists who have succeeded Hirohito. "Operation Crossroads", July 1st 1946 had, clearly, so little scientific interest that it can be regarded only as a childishly bombastic (if the adjective may be excused) method of warning the world of the advisability of surrendering to American domination. Great

Britain is regarded as having already surrendered, the Attlee Government, even if they had had the courage to resist, having had the ground cut under them by Mr Churchill's commitments. Apparently believing that all who are not citizens of the Great Pure Republic are ipso facto "suckers", Mr. Forestal, U.S. Navy Secretary, visiting representatives of the nations on the Security Council's Atomic Energy Commission on their boat just before Bomb 4 was released, specially requested them not to interpret it as "an aggressive U.S. gesture to the rest of the world". It seems that, after all, it was only a contribution to the greatest of President Roosevelt's "four freedoms"—freedom from fear.

I conclude this chapter with another extract from the diary of Ambassador Dodd, written on June 4th 1937.

> "Governments which claim to be democratic, that is, claim to be acting always for the good of their people, often abuse their opportunities. But this is only a mild criticism of what has taken place in all greater countries since the end of the world war. I can't forget the published reports that American and British Arms manufacturers defeated the League of Nations' peace efforts more than once. Soon after coming here, I learned the French munition makers had helped Hitler to power. Is it possible for mankind to be just and fair? Is it possible for Governments and powerful Corporations to act in the interests of the masses of men?"

The answer of the British Labour Government—a somewhat dusty one in the eyes of Greek patriots, Spanish democrats, Jews all over the world, Yugoslavian heroes, Soviet 'resisters', liberal Chinese and our real allies in Poland, France and Czechoslovakia —is "continuity".

CHAPTER THREE

Christianity versus the Vatican

THE conflict between "Christian" ethics, as understood by all non-Catholic Christians (as well as by 'humanists' of every country in the world, regardless of their religious background) and those of political Catholicism is, in essence, indistinguishable from that between Democracy and Fascism. The Catholic authorities are necessarily sympathetic to Fascism, in every country where they can exert an influence, in obedience to the Pope's orders in the encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931) which approves what is called the Corporative State. Moreover the new version of the Canon Law, issued by the Vatican in 1918, contains many features, particularly in regard to propaganda, which coincide with the practices of Hitler and Mussolini. A Catholic, for example, must not read any criticism of his religion or his clergy without the permission of a priest (clause 1399), while he incurs eternal damnation if he enters upon a private discussion with a critic (clause 1325). The doctrine of "mental reservation", which means making a statement to deceive the hearer, but on which you put a different interpretation in your own mind, is defended even in the "enlightened" *Catholic Encyclopaedia*, in which the Jesuit Father Joyce observes: "Those who hear them (your words) may understand them in a sense that is not true, but self-deception may be permitted by the speaker for a good reason". This at once places "Catholic Truth" in a different category from any other kind of "truth" and lends to Catholic propaganda the freedom from normal intellectual restraints so ably exercised by Dr Göbbels (and his Irish Catholic coadjutor "Lord Haw-Haw").

The Law of the Church, unchanged since the days of Torquemada, still gives the Pope coercive power over his "subjects", even to the extent of the death-sentence, and still coincides with the teaching of Thomas Aquinas that "heretics and all apostates may, absolutely by common law, be visited with corporal punishment, and even death, for deserting the faith, and may be compelled to resume it". "A subject of the Pope" is defined by Catholic theologians as every man, woman or child who has ever been validly baptised. Although there are certainly many millions of baptized Catholics throughout the world who have, for reasons of conscience, seceded from the church, the Church of Rome still claims "the right of the sword" in regard to them. In practice, in countries like Spain and Portugal, it is sufficient for the Church to label anyone whom it considers obnoxious as a "Communist" or "Anarchist" in order to justify his summary execution. In Dublin during "the troubles" a story went the rounds about a Sinn Feiner who was distressed at the thought of having taken life. "Father", he said to the Priest, in great agitation, "I have killed a man".

"What sort of a man was this, now?"

"An Englishman."

"Och, don't waste me time. Get on with your confession".

In 1946, this story is not quite so funny as it seemed a quarter of a century earlier. That only an infinitesimal minority of Catholics, even among the literate, have any clear conception of the real implications of Roman Canon Law, may be taken for granted. That many religious Catholics, in "democratic" countries like England and the United States, are shocked, both as patriots and democrats, by the present worldwide activities of political Catholicism—the Catholic Fascist International—is equally true. The Catholic world is, in fact, no less divided and split into factions than is the greater world of anti-Fascist Christian and non-Christian people. Its reformation, if it is to be brought about, can only be accomplished from within. Only when its hierarchy is forced to accept the standard of ethics which binds together all men of good will, and like Lord Acton, brings its conception of historical Truth within the bounds of scientific objectivity,

will it cease to promote Evil and exercise its vast potential influence for Good.

Nothing has proved more painful, or more enlightening, to a handful of ardently devout Roman Catholics than their first-hand experiences of Spanish Catholicism in action, during the Fascist invasion of Spain. It was a merciful dispensation of Providence that so many of the English and American correspondents who covered the Franco rebellion, happened to belong to the Church of Rome. Their testimony must carry far more weight with their co-religionists than the evidence of non-Catholic observers which can be dismissed as coming from "atheists" or "communists".

In his valuable book "Life and Death of the Spanish Republic" (Hamish Hamilton 1940) Mr Henry Buckley, who had lived in Spain for a number of years before the civil war broke out, gives a general picture of the condition of the Church in Spain prior to the expulsion of King Alfonso XIII. "Seven or eight hundred years of monopoly of religion in Spain had not left it (the Church) a great deal of red blood. It had a certain amount of financial power, for the seizure of the landed properties of the Church during the last century had led the clergy to invest their money in stocks and shares. Most of this was done indirectly, and always with the property registered in the name of a third party, so as to avoid expropriation and to make it almost impossible to assess the property of this or that order or of any given diocese". At the end of Primo de Rivera's dictatorship, the Church, he tells us, was an active partner in shipping companies, railways, newspapers, and broadcasting. In Madrid, Jesuit money played a part in the tram company, gas and electricity corporations and the water company.

When the Spanish Republic was established, Mr Buckley was a young man of twenty-eight. He had belonged for many years, he tells us, to a society known as "The Knights of the Blessed Sacrament" which implied the taking of Holy Communion at least once weekly. "Religion and politics had never seemed likely to clash", he says, but after what he calls "the May incidents", he felt that he must take a definite stand. "The Catholics now at-

tacked all that the Republic stood for, although they pretended to accept its outward form, and on the other hand on all sides the Church was the object of the bitterest hatred. All my sympathies were with the masses of the people". He had travelled by train through various parts of the country and had been shocked and horrified by the poverty of the peasants, the precarious way in which they lived, the brutality of the police and Civil Guards. "I could not", he says "reconcile this with religion. I welcomed the Republic as meaning a step towards better social conditions and much as I disliked the mob violence and the burning of churches I felt that the people in Spain who professed most loudly their Catholic faith were the most to blame for the existence of illiterate masses and a threadbare national economy. Perhaps my reactions were rather childish, but I felt that I could not even outwardly associate myself with Spanish Catholics by going to church." He had no desire to mix in any way in Spanish politics, he adds, but he definitely felt that in Spain the Catholic religion was being used as a pretext for the committing of great social injustice and he did not wish in any way to be even physically identified with it. In other words, in the conflict between Christian ethics and those of Catholicism as a political force, this sincerely religious man felt bound to uphold the tenets and principles of Christianity. "I felt", he writes, "and continue to feel, a strong dislike for this use of the Cross to cover up sordid material interests. And my feeling that I took a correct decision has since been strengthened by the attitude taken up by the Catholic Press of Great Britain towards the Civil War... The British Catholic enjoys many liberties, and clamours for more. The Catholic Church in Spain offered no tolerance to minorities and it was not uncommon for Protestants to be stoned".

The campaign in favour of Franco, carried on persistently by such papers as "The Tablet", "The New Weekly", "The Catholic Herald" and "The Universe" had little effect on the masses of the British people who never read the Catholic press and are scarcely aware of its existence. But Catholic newspaper correspondents, who were eye-witnesses of the scenes they described,

were disgusted at the way in which their chairborne colleagues in London asserted that their sympathy with Fascism and admiration of Franco represented "the Catholic point-of-view". A contrary point-of-view, which we may hope is also that of many millions of young Catholics who fought against Nazi-Fascism between 1939 and 1945, was well expressed by Henry Buckley, when he wrote that "although I had disapproved so intensely of the use to which the Cross was being put in the Peninsula as to have ceased attending Mass regularly while in Spain, I nevertheless always had faint hopes of a revival of what I call 'real Catholicism', that is to say of people really trying to imitate Christ and loving and helping the poor". Mr Buckley's patriotism was no less in evidence than his eminently Christian sense of common decency. He describes how the American correspondent, Jay Allen, who was at Gibraltar when the civil war broke out, went to the port to see some Italian aviators land on their way to Seville. "As he watched them coming ashore from the tender from the big Italian liner off which they had come, a policeman came up to him and told him to go away. Allen protested and showed his American passport." The authorities in Gibraltar had only to count the pilots as they drove from the port to La Linea, in order to supply the Foreign Office, "through the usual channels", with accurate information. The channels were clogged. Who clogged them, and why? All we know is that Mr R. A. Butler's repeated "lack of information" about matters of common knowledge became either a national joke, or a world-wide scandal, according to one's point of view. "Nobody can say that the playing fields of Eton to-day", Mr Buckley writes, "do not produce a courtesy of a superlative character. Here were Italian pilots coming to Spain to help a friend of their nation to defeat the legitimate Government in order that Germany and Italy, with the aid of the new-found friend, could encircle France and prepare a death blow at the French and British Empires. Yet we courteously allow these men to pass through a stronghold of our Empire, Gibraltar, and our policemen give hectoring lectures to a representative of a British newspaper who might give offence to those honoured

guests by staring at them or even asking them questions... No one, I think, can reasonably blame Germany and Italy for going joyfully ahead to secure the triumph of their protégé which would ensure them a friend at one of the most strategic points in the world and a key point as far as the British and French Empires are concerned". Mr Buckley observes later that it was "rather ironical that non-intervention, which was attacked with such fury in the Franco newspapers, was the real weapon by which the Republicans were to be slowly starved into submission and kept without the essential and most elementary supplies needed to put up an effective resistance".

Lest the reader should object that all this is ancient history, I would remind him that the policy of appeasing Franco and giving him under-cover support, for commercial, religious and political reasons, has never been abandoned by the powerful group of Roman Catholic officials and diplomats who control the Spanish Department of the Foreign Office and find a willing dupe in the Labour Foreign Secretary. The official surprisingly chosen by Mr Bevin as permanent representative of Great Britain on the Security Council of the United Nations Organization, Sir Alexander Cadogan, recently (June 1946) shocked the democratic world by opposing, on Great Britain's behalf, the efforts of the Security Council to put an end to the Franco régime. Although evidence had been produced that German scientists in Franco Spain have, for years past, been hard at work at an armaments factory, the exact position of which was mentioned, in attempts to manufacture atom bombs, none of this was allowed to percolate through "the usual channels", to the House of Commons. Elementary patriotism, loyalty to the working class, the instinct of self-preservation, the pledges given to the electorate—all made it incumbent on the Labour Government to do its best to get Franco removed. The Foreign Office, with Mr Bevin's approval, and the support of the City, has made every effort to strengthen his position. The reason for this is that Mr Bevin, Mr Morrison and Lord Citrine, like their predecessors Messrs Ramsay MacDonald, Lord Snowden and Mr J. R. Thomas, have always exerted their

power, as leaders of the Labour Party and T.U.C. bosses, to "exercise a moderating influence", or in cruder terms, to hamper and frustate the programme approved by their supporters, whenever this should be, as they would put it, in "conflict with the national interest". The "national interest", as Mr Bevin and his friends see it, is to oppose "Bolshevism" wherever, like sex, it raises its awful head. But it is not possible, in Spain, (not to mention Greece and other countries) to oppose "Bolshevism" without simultaneously supporting Fascism. Hence the ten years of Britain's under-cover aid to the Franco murder gang. At least Mr Bevin can claim that, in his present "continuity" policy, he has been consistent. It was he and Lord Citrine who, in the autumn of 1936, were chiefly responsible for persuading the T.U.C. to approve of Non-Intervention by a large majority of card votes.

Mr Noel Monks, the courageous Australian-born correspondent of the *Daily Express*, who 'broke' the story of the bombing of Guernica is, like Mr Buckley, a Catholic. As recorded in the previous chapter, he accompanied the skippers who ran the 'blockade' of Bilbao, and travelled with them over the territory still held by the Basques. At Guernica they made a stop and visited the Church, where the majority of the inhabitants were attending their Sunday masses. "Yes", says Monks, "Mass was being said in the parts of the Basque country still owned by the Basques, just as it was being said in those parts owned by the advancing Franco and his infidel and Catholic allies. I attended many masses in Bilbao before Franco came in. Some of the priests who said these Masses were taken out and shot when Franco took over. Their crime—celebrating Mass or 'Reds'." Monks observes that he had been told when he was with Franco's forces that every priest and nun on the Government side had been either murdered or imprisoned. It was therefore a surprise to hear Mass in what was called "Red Spain". "As a matter of fact", he adds, "there are no holier people in all Spain than the Basques. Certainly I've never seen more devout Catholics anywhere in the world. I'm a Roman Catholic myself and have attended Mass in many places. Priests

and nuns in any of the Basque towns were as safe as they were in the Vatican city itself—until Franco moved in, or his German allies bombed Basque churches and convents".

The Apostolic Benedictions, the glowing messages of approval repeatedly addressed to General Franco by Pope Pius XII, are painful indications of the unbridgeable abyss which separates what has been referred to as "Christian Ethics" and those of political Catholicism. Who but a veritable Satanist, the Protestant Christian may well ask himself, could extend an Apostolic Blessing to the man responsible for the slaughter of so many of his devout co-religionists?

"Not long before Guernica was wiped out", Mr. Monks records, "Germans bombed the little town of Durango, close by. Four tons of bombs were dropped on this deeply religious town one Spring Sunday morning. One bomb shot through the roof of Santa Susanna's Chapel, where twenty nuns were in prayer. Fourteen of them were killed outright. Three others lost legs and arms. Another bomb tore through the Church of the Jesuit Fathers as Father Rafael Billalageitia was consecrating the Body and Blood of Christ. In an instant human blood, instead of wine representing that of Christ, was flowing in that little church. Only one person out of fifty was left alive. Then a third bomb crashed on to the church of Santa Maria, and a hundred praying people, including their priest, were so mangled that shovels had to be used to gather their remains. If those people weren't martyrs, then there never was a Spanish martyr."

Monks was the first correspondent to reach Guernica after its destruction. This sacred city of the Basque people had not a single anti-aircraft battery, nor any military target except a small munition factory, outside the town. This was left intact. After Monks had cabled his account of this Nazi "experiment", of a kind which the United States has since imitated, in peace time, at Bikini, he received the following message from the *Daily Express*. "Berlin denies Guernica bombing. Franco says he had no planes up yesterday owing to fog. Queipo de Llano says Reds dynamited Guernica during retreat. Please check up". Monks and two other British

correspondents, one of whom was G. L. Steer, "checked and checked". No one had seen a fog for a week. Great Britain was not then as inured to atrocities as it has since become, and Franco was evidently alarmed lest some faint echo of the world-wide condemnation of the Guernica outrage might even penetrate the walls of the British Foreign Office. So he put up his radio spokesman, the obscene Queipo de Llano, to make a formal contradiction. "That Senor Monks!" he (Llano) bawled. "Don't believe what he writes of Guernica. He's a drunkard. All the time he was with Franco's forces he was helpless with drink". "I've been a teetotaller all my life", Monks comments.

Monks rounds off his moving account of his experiences by an observation which, from any decent man who had seen what he had seen, was inevitable. "As I'm writing this", he says, "the Spanish war is over, and I have the creeps. The new Pope has just thanked a delegation of Spanish soldiers to Rome for their 'gallantry in freeing their land of their enemies'. Good God! I'm thinking of those mutilated Basque priests and nuns and Catholic worshipers at Durango, killed by German and Italian bombs at the command of a Spaniard".

The cold-blooded murder of British merchant-seamen, more than a hundred of whom, sailing legitimately under the 'Control' flag, were bombed to death by the German and Italian aviation under Franco's command, had no more effect on the British Cabinet and their Conservative supporters, than the massacre of Basque priests and nuns had on the Pope. At Geneva, Lord Halifax declined to denounce the aerial attacks on undefended Spanish towns and tacitly approved the German naval bombardment of Almeria. Lord Croft, Mr A. T. Lennox-Boyd, Commander Bower and their political associates continued to regard General Franco as a "Christian gentleman", thus making clear to all their definition of "Christianity" and "gentility". The common English herd, meanwhile, said "if Franco's a gentleman, thank God I'm a cad". It is only fair to the rank-and-file of Labour to recall that they revolted against the line taken by Bevin and Citrine and reversed the previous decision to support "Non-Intervention".

When numbers of Englishmen of all classes and parties volunteered to fight for the Republic, so strong was working-class sympathy with their Spanish comrades that Mr Attlee was forced to defend his position as Opposition leader by proceeding to Madrid, where he took the salute of the British battalion of the International Brigade, which was thereupon called in his honour the "Clement Attlee Battalion". At the Victory procession on June 8th 1946 the survivors of the "Clement Attlee Battalion" were, however, conspicuous by their absence. No doubt it would have upset the Prime Minister to see these heroes "walk off with the show".

The late G. T. Garratt, in "Europe's Dance of Death", a volume filled with warnings every one of which proved to be true, pointed out that it is "dishonest and absurd to disregard the part played by the Catholic Church, and especially by Pope Pius XI, in the events immediately preceding the 1939 war." It is equally dishonest and still more absurd for any writer at the present day to disregard the part played by the Catholic influences in the British Foreign Office and the B.B.C. in promoting civil conflict in war-ravaged Europe. "The strong Catholic and pro-Italian bias of the British Foreign Office", says Garratt, "had been unimportant so long as Italy was a second-class Power and Spain an old imperial Power gone out of the business altogether." The situation became very different after 1935, when the distortion of news by the unconscious prejudices of an Ambassador could exacerbate conditions which made war inevitable. "Throughout the Abyssinian and Spanish wars", Garratt points out, "the key embassies at Paris and Rome were held by Catholics. Later, the Foreign Office sent out a Minister to Tangier who had an Italian wife, a stepson in the Italian expeditionary force in Spain and marked Fascist sympathies". (This Minister, instead of being retired, has recently been promoted by Mr Bevin to ambassadorial rank). "One Minister in Spain (during the Civil War) was a Catholic, his successor was almost childishly prejudiced against the Government. All round the Mediterranean were British representatives with strong Fascist sympathies, and the Consuls

were men whose contacts with Italians and Spaniards were of a class which would normally be anti-Liberal. Such appointments could only be justified by a policy of propitiating Italy at all costs". The Italy to be thus "propitiated" was the Italy of Mussolini and the Vatican. How closely the ethical concepts of Pius XI, like those of his successor, coincided with those of the Duce is illustrated by an episode which Garratt relates. On May 12th 1936, the day the Italians turned their machine guns on "rows of roped interpreters, servants, officials and others at Addis Ababa", Pius XI opened an exhibition of the Catholic Press, at which he said he rejoiced at the "triumphal happiness of a great and good people".

One of the chief charges brought against the British Communist Party is that it takes orders from, and pays allegiance to, an international organization which has its headquarters in Moscow. The charge, although the Comintern has been officially dissolved, may have a certain substratum of truth. The Communist Party of Great Britain, however, has less than a hundred thousand members. None of them are in key positions in any of the Services or in any of the Government Departments. They have only two Members of Parliament, and only one small newspaper. Adherence to the Party, even known sympathy with its programme, is in practice a bar to promotion in all the public services, and a handicap to any kind of career other than that of an artisan. What, by contrast, is the position of the English Catholic in regard to the Catholic-Fascist International which is centred in the Vatican and, in financial matters, largely under the control of Wall Street? (Messrs J. P. Morgan & Co were recently appointed bankers to the Holy See). Every Catholic is bound by the laws of his Church to pay allegiance to the Pope. The Catholic therefore can always justify himself in the eyes of his conscience, if he allows loyalty to his Church to take precedence over loyalty to his country and its elected Government. In English history, particularly after the Protestant Revolution which ejected the Stuarts, this divided allegiance on the part of Catholics caused them to be placed under various restraints and civil disabilities.

Very much the same situation exists to-day as it did in the time of James II, the principal difference being that the threat to our lives and liberties of the International Catholic conspiracy is far greater now than it was three centuries ago and is less clearly realized. As compared with the tiny handful of Communists, the Catholic community in Great Britain exercises a vast and far-reaching influence at the highest levels. Not only do Catholics occupy key positions in the Foreign Office, in the fighting Services, and in the B.B.C.; but their community of aims with Mr Churchill and his fellow Conservatives, with non-Catholic Fascists, with British big business and the Catholic financial group in the United States, enables them to work in close alliance with all the forces opposed to democratic progress and the implementation of the Labour Party's programme. An example of Catholic "pressure" which will occur to the minds of most reasonably intelligent people, is the recent decision to admit to this country 190,000 Catholic Fascist Poles, many of whom fought against us in the ranks of the *Wehrmacht,* while refusing admission to other Displaced Persons many of whom are Jews. The Catholic, "anti-Soviet" bias of the B.B.C. is obvious to all who choose to listen in. The words of the Pope and of Cardinal Griffin are always quoted as if they were the spokesmen of the entire "Christian" world, regardless of the fact that this is a Protestant country and that the Pope's version of "Christianity" is what our sons were engaged in fighting for six desperate years. Of the, perhaps, two million practising Roman Catholics in Great Britain, the vast majority are composed of very poor Irish immigrants or descendants of immigrants. It is undoubtedly among these working-class communities that Roman Catholicism in England and Scotland is found in its most attractive because most truly "Christian" aspect. Between these usually genial and kindly working-class people who often vote 'Labour' and rarely confuse politics with religion, and the "old Catholic families" whose offshoots stream into the Foreign Office and the Diplomatic Corps, there exists an almost unbridgeable gulf. Tacking on beneath the "Old Catholic Families", for whom many of them have a mystical veneration almost

equal to that of Mr Evelyn Waugh, are the compact body of middle-class 'converts', most of whom are members of the intelligentsia, and form-to-day, the spearhead of neo-Fascist Catholic propaganda. It is unfortunate for English letters, still more unfortunate for our political journalism, that this contingent of reactionary fanatics should contain several of our most brilliant novelists and a large number of exceedingly able and forceful publicists. Their influence in the press and in the publishing business is greater than the average easygoing "progressive" can possibly conceive. Only those of us who have painfully come in contact with their far-reaching, secret power, realize the truth. The basis of their power lies in a kind of religious freemasonry which imposes on Catholic writers the duty of pushing one another's books, while attacking, or suppressing notices of, the books of their opponents. Nothing of this kind exists among writers of the Left who, as I have earlier remarked, make a practice of throwing stones at their own side and will stick at nothing to denigrate a rival "Red".

The discussion on which, in this chapter, I have had the temerity to embark, must end, as it began, with the question of ethics. A Catholic M.P., shortly after the close of the Abyssinian war and the outbreak of the conflict in Spain, defined the issues at stake as being in simple terms a struggle between "civilization" and "the Beast". The Beast of course was Communism or, as Mr Winston Churchill used to term it, "the foul baboonery of Bolshevism". "Civilization" in the Roman Catholic sense, as specifically approved by Pius XI and later Pius XII, had meant spraying poison gas on unarmed natives and dropping bombs on priests and nuns and pious congregations engaged in Catholic worship. Here, by contrast, in the words of Constancia de la Mora,* is something of what "the Beast" meant to some of the Spaniards who were fighting for it. "We saw a new Spain, a beautiful country where justice was the rule, not the exception. We saw a backward country suddenly blossoming out into a modern state.

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* "In Place of Splendour" by Constancia de la Mora (Michael Joseph 1940).

We saw the peasants living like decent human beings. We saw men allowed freedom of conscience. We saw schools, schools for everyone. We saw an end to the decadent corruption. We saw life, instead of death, in Spain".

This is the vision, realization of which, in the name of civilization, and under the Sign of the Cross, Catholic Fascism, assisted by the Irish American Catholic Mr Byrnes, the Anglo-American Mr Churchill, and the Protestant Mr Bevin, the British Labour Government is to-day working as hard as it can to prevent. What about decency? What about Christianity? And why, before we foam at the mouth and grow scarlet at the gills, shouldn't we ask ourselves, what about Communism? Is there really the enormous difference between the teaching of Christ and the basic principles of Communism, as Pius XII and the College of Cardinals would have us believe? Are they not, in fact, identical?

Sun-Yat-Sen once wrote that "Jesus was the supreme revolutionary. In preaching the Kingdom of Heaven, He attacked imperialism and capitalism, propagated and practised Communism, and exhorted all men to love one another, even their enemies". In her book, "World Blackout", Sarah Gertrude Millin reaches similar conclusions, through clear and unbiased thinking. "In itself, "she asks, "what is Communism, what should it be, except the religion of Christ, the Sermon of the Mount? Did He not preach and practise Communism and offer it, too, through the sword and not peace? Are there not, indeed, many religious groups which call themselves communities? Are not priests and nuns actual Communists?" "All Communist systems in the West", says Spengler, "are in fact derived from Christian theological thought. If Christians properly practised Christianity they would be practising Communism... Tolstoi tried to combine, to identify the two".

CHAPTER FOUR

Facing the Odds

I think it was J. B. Priestley who, during the late 'thirties, admitted the extraordinary difficulty he found in concentrating on his routine literary tasks, owing to the menaching world situation. I suppose most writers, except the escapists and ivory-tower-dwellers, felt very much the same, during those years of almost continuous crisis. My own already acute awareness of impending war was increased by the fact that as I have mentioned. I earned my bread and butter largely by reviewing books which were written with the avowed aim of warning their readers of the inevitable consequences of Tory foreign policy. As a deliberate effort to divert my mind from disturbing speculations I plunged into a campaign for the preservation of Georgian architecture. This was a matter which had concerned me deeply since the destruction of Nash's Regent Street in 1924 and, at intervals, after that date, I had adressed letters to *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Spectator* when further needless destruction of our Georgian heritage was either threatened or accomplished. For several years, from 1936 onwards, I devoted myself, with fanatical zeal, to the work of starting an organization for the furtherance of the aims I had in view. These activities eventually had such a damaging effect on my income that I was forced, with the help of an agent, to try to secure a contract for another book. This was eventually accomplished, on the strength of the reviews of my autobiography "Odd Man Out", and I signed an agreement with Messrs Cassell & Co. to write a successor to it. As "Odd Man Out" had proved the only one of my many books which the main body of critics had

almost unanimously approved, I thought it incumbent on me to exploit the same vein. I called the new book "Facing the Odds". I had plenty of things to write about, apart from the menace of Appeasement, but try as I would, political gloom kept breaking in. Mr Raymond Mortimer, in a notice of "The Nineteen Twenties", amusingly described me as "menacing us with objurgations like Hosea and Habakkuk", and I can but admit that "objurgations" insisted on flowing from my pen in 1938 and 1939. Had the volume, which I finally completed (after many excisions) in October 1939, been commissioned by Mr Victor Gollancz and published by him in the familiar yellow dust-cover, no one would have thought its contents unusual, or the "objurgations" out of place. As one of Mr Gollancz' famous stable of prancing Left-Wing steeds, I should have been ticketed, docketed, labelled and possibly read—by the converted. But I have never, in any of my books, addressed an audience of convinced Socialists, possibly because so many of my interests, such as Georgian architecture, and modern French painting, are chiefly shared by convinced Tories. Anyhow, I prefer to continue to regard myself as a writer, in the first instance, and a "propagandist" (if such I am) purely by force of circumstances.

My agreement with Messrs Cassell & Co. made the small advance accorded me only payable on the day of publication. As I was both very much in need of the money I had worked so hard to earn, and was also well aware that the "phoney" war would end in the Spring and that the bottom would thereby be knocked out of the book trade, I began to be exceedingly anxious when there was no response from La Belle Sauvage. Finally, there came a hint that "difficulties" had arisen and I decided to go up to London to discover what they were. Mr Desmond Flower, the literary director, received me most politely but it soon became evident that his Roman Catholic sympathies and his belief in General Franco—he had recently been on a conducted tour to Guernica, designed to prove to the faithful that it was the retreating "Reds" who had blown up that sacred little town—were the real cause of his embarrassment. With a desire (for obvious

financial reasons) to be as accommodating as possible, I agreed to the deletion of three chapters, one of which is printed here. When this proved insufficient, I returned the MS to Mr Flower and asked him to use the blue pencil himself. He did so, and struck out two passages which, as the matter may be of some interest to my literary colleagues, I also append. In recording these experiences I wish to make it plain that I have no personal quarrel with Mr Flower. He thought he knew more about General Franco than I did and acted in accordance with the dictates of his conscience. In theory, publishers are supposed to allow authors, whose works they are under contract to produce, to express any views they please over their own signatures, provided the libel law be not infringed. In practice, at least during the past ten years, this rule has been subject to considerable modification, with the result that numerous "objurgations" were suppressed at the very moment when they would have proved most salutary.

The following chapter, which I recently recovered from a bottom drawer in my desk, I have re-read with some curiosity, because I had almost forgotten what people were actually saying and thinking a month before the first siren scared us into our inadequate shelters. I reproduce it here without alteration.

Chapter Fourteen
On the Eve

I begin this chapter on August Ist 1939. Is is worth while to be precise about the date, because every date during the coming weeks is likely to have acquired a certain historic significance before another year has elapsed. How do we stand, what are we discussing, what do the papers say and what do we anticipate? Obviously I can only give a very limited and personal answer to such questions. At the only club I frequent, the conversation, as a rule, is chiefly about racing, yachting, games of chance and new films. The prospects of war are not discussed, because rude references to "aggressors" might offend any young subalterns or naval officers present. Their loyalty to the dictators—against whom their country imagines it is arming—is apt to be explo-

sive. Although their manners are perfect, "Say another word against Hitler, Mussolini or General Franco and I'll bash you" is the suggestion they contrive to convey, if by any chance the unwritten rule is accidentally broken. They are jolly, chaps, however, and is is a very nice little club. I imagine its atmosphere is typical of hundreds of "West End clubs", large and small, celebrated and unknown. Is is full of "dear old boy" good-fellowship, but pervaded by a positively terrifying bogus class consciousness and teak-brained stupidity. On the other hand, whereas I cannot imagine what my own nervous reactions would be if a bomb were to demolish the house next door, I have little doubt that these divinely unrattled asses would do whatever they thought was their stuff in a "proper service manner" and with a bit of extra heroism thrown in. The situation being what it is, whenever I go to this club, I dig out, metaphorically, the best of my old school ties and adjust myself to my surroundings. I enjoy my evenings with our potential defenders. Even if they have not yet joined their own side, they will eventually—if and when the balloon goes up.

On the occasions when I rise from the depths of the "intelligentsia" to consort, at Committees, with members of our ruling class, I am filled with envy at their indestructible calm and effortless superiority. Munich may have shaken them: but that is now forgotten. The mob may get excited, the *canaille* may growl, but to-day not a ruffle of anxiety seems to disturb any high-born or plutocratic countenance. Yesterday my Committee planned, for 1940, an even grander ball than the one we organized this year. 1940? None of us ventured to suggest that public events might possibly disturb our arrangements.

Among the professional classes and the lower ranks of the "umbrella men", Britannic phlegm seems less evident, startling rumours are circulated by those "in close touch" and opinions, not always based on the leaders in *The Times* or the *Daily Telegraph*, are expressed with some freedom. I met to-day "a grand old English gentleman", of prewar vintage, who is convinced that England started morally to go to pieces when the Chamberlain

dynasty first began to exercise its fell influence, at the time of the Jameson Raid and the Boer War. He went into the matter in great detail and referred to certain financial interests in the best manner of the late Henry Labouchère, from whom he had doubtless derived his information. He thought that Austen Chamberlain, though not particularly bright, had at least the instincts of a gentleman. My pen declines to record his comments on the Chamberlain in power. Conservatives appear to love one another as little as Socialists. Only fear for the safety of their property holds them together.

At lunch, my elderly friend's chief topic of conversation was the corruption now alleged to be rampant in the higher ranks of the Civil Service. I listened with innocent wonder because the Whitehall mandarins, all of whom must be examination-passers even if many are also somebody's cousin, have hitherto been regarded as models of incorruptible honesty. If there is any truth in these rumours, it is just one more sign of the decadence of our ruling classes. What a shrewd observer the odious "Brickendrop" must have been, during his period of service at the German Embassy! One of the things which Munich made only too apparent was that Hitler had been informed by his advisers, with amazing accuracy, about the present condition of our "best people".

The display of sportsmanship, at the Eton and Harrow match, which ended in a free fight between rival Blimps and hereditary legislators, had a less indulgent press than usual, and the laughter occasioned by the following "agony column" advertisement was tinged, in some quarters, with a certain bitterness. "Eton v Harrow. Will the numerous Harrovians who, in attempting to divest a very old Etonian of his trousers, deprived him of two treasured five-shilling pieces and a gold safety-pin, please return one or all to the Army and Navy Club".

The old gentleman got back his five shilling pieces but not his safety-pin. These are the sort of "high-ups" who conduct the foreign policy of what, as recently as 1931, could reasonably have been described as the greatest European power.

Among the writers and journalists I am accustomed to meet, one of the principal topics of the past week has been the "affaire Abetz". The scandal was broken wide open by Ambassador William C. Bullitt who stated that he had in his possession information that 150 million francs had been spent on bribing the French press, prior to Munich. Of the men arrested, Poirier, who is believed to have been in a position to blow the Daladier Government, or at least Bonnet, sky-high, has mysteriously and—perhaps, for many people, conveniently—died. (Stavisky also died before he could "spill the beans"). Daladier seems to be doing his best to hush up the scandal, and it is alleged that he has received urgent requests from London to put the lid on any more dangerous disclosures. That "certain circles" in London are deeply implicated may be taken for granted, but the importance of the personalities whose names are freely mentioned, makes it improbable that they betrayed their country for actual cash payments. Some of them may have been so stupid that they were unaware of what they were doing and now regret their indiscretions. Sooner or later, no doubt, the English end of the story will come out. For obvious reasons, however, no one believes that, under the National Government, there can be any trials for High Treason. "Even if there were" a friend observed, "as all the really important men who have been engaged in influencing the press on Hitler's behalf, or in betraying State secrets to Nazi agents, belong to the 'old school tie' caste, it would be almost impossible to get evidence. They might round up a few small fry, such as Mayfair girls who got their debts paid in return for reporting conversations overheard at dinner tables or in the hunting field, but the big fish would certainly escape. When this 'National' Government is eventually cleared out, you may bet your boots they'll burn everything incriminating before they go. If a 'patriotic' Old Etonian were to catch an old school chum in the act of handing over plans of our defences to an enemy agent, would he do his duty as a citizen and denounce him? Not on your life! If he let down his class and his school for the sake of his country, he'd be cut by everyone he knew".

An astonishing number of English people—or rather people living in England, for most of them have Irish, Scotch or Welsh names—are openly and loudly proclaiming themselves British Nazis and admirers of Hitler. It would be absurd to suppose that such fanatics do not act in accordance with their convictions whenever they get an opportunity.

Two nights ago I found myself in conversation with one of these gentry, who was holding forth on the subject of the virtues of Hitler's ally General Franco.

"Supposing", I asked him, "that we had a General Election, that a Socialist Government was returned with a mandate to strengthen the Peace Bloc and resist aggression, and that a revolt was organized against it on Franco lines by the City Bankers, the aircraft racket, the big land-owners and coal-owners and Fascist elements in the Army, Navy and Air Force, would you be among the rebels?"

"You bet I should", he answered.

"And in favour of getting Hitler to send over his bombers to blow East London to blazes, and obliterate Oxford and Cambridge and a few other English cities?"

"I'd have them all bombed to hell, my boy, and you and your wife and children and all the Red scum with them".

The gentleman was slightly illuminated and, as I thought, completely mad. I should not report his drivel, or attach any importance to it, but for the extraordinary revelations of the Marquess of Donegall in the *Sunday Dispatch* for July 30th. Lord Donegall has been receiving communications from a certain Captain Gordon Berry, who describes himself as a "British Nazi". Among this officer's ideas, he tabulates the following:

1. "An Englishman is the most dangerous and unscrupulous liar on earth".

2. "Every living French creature should be wiped out, and a fine of £ 80,000,000,000 will keep England from making trouble and war for a century after she has had the biggest thrashing of her life . . ."

The reactions to the publication of these opinions was remarkable. 30 per cent of Lord Donegall's letters, he tells us, were in favour of Captain Berry, while Captain Berry stated that no less than 47 per cent of his correspondents supported him. Lord Donegall prints some points from the letters which Captain Berry claims to have received.

1. "England will get plenty of trouble without going near Hitler for it".
2. "England is the aggressor every time. If she starts a row, she will get a well-deserved licking . . ."
3. "There will be no war. There will be disarmament resulting in 6,000,000 unemployed and then the Nazi revolution. The Duke of Windsor will be the leader, with the King as the virtual head . . ."

From the letters on this subject received by himself, Lord Donegall quoted a correspondent who says he has friends in the R.A.F. and in the Army and that "almost every one of these men know of men in their units who are Nazis. Men who see that the Government they will protect in a war is not worth one drop of their blood. They have written to the German Fuehrer expressing their admiration and received Nazi badges in return". Another letter was from "a lady who works in a factory with a man who voices (loudly) the sentiments of Captain Berry. He goes about boasting that what happened in Spain will happen in England next year. These people seem to be in every large works. There is a lot of talk about this proposed revolt flying round. Have you heard anything?" A third letter, from a British major, expressed the wish that Captain Berry was Prime Minister.

Summing up in regard to these exhibitions of ferocious cretinism, Lord Donegall admirably observes that "people who will stop at nothing, whose methods are those of the Chicago gangster of yore and the *agent provocateur*—the procedure is now almost

rule of thumb—do not have to be very numerous to catch sleepy democracies unawares. It is as well that we should realise that they exist in our midst and what their aims are.

"In Germany, Italy or Japan their counterparts would be executed, or at least put into concentration camps. Just because these methods are not ours, we cannot afford to ignore these people if we want to preserve the democratic way of government.

"'Just how far democracy allows itself to be undermined before it acts has never yet been proved—except in Germany, in which case the answer is 'Until Too Late'."

Lord Donegall seems to me to have done a service to his country by this exposure. That there exists in Britain a streak of savage degeneracy, mostly in the upper and middle classes but extending down as far as the gutter, cannot be seriously denied. Between the Mayfair girls who rush across Germany heiling Hitler and the factory girls who fight on all fours for a cigarette stub, expectorated by an American film star, there is little to choose.

No great line of demarcation exists between Captain Berry and his like and the "Friends of National Spain", members of such Anglo-Nazi organizations as "The Link", the "Anglo-German Fellowship", and the "Anglo-German Kameradschaft" and the eccentrics (or worse) who believe, like Sir John Simon, that Japanese aggression in China is "morally justified" and, like Admiral Sir Barry Domvile, founder of "The Link", would be glad to see the Anglo-Japanese alliance revived. Although the percentage of Fascists in this country—if we include among them those Roman Catholics who follow the Pope in thanking "God" for "the desired Catholic victory" in Spain and in condoning the methods by which it was obtained, and the section of the criminal classes who, like the flogged "Mayfair men", specialize in violence—must be almost as large as the percentage of Germans who believed in Hitler seven years ago, their chances of ultimately dominating us are, I hope and believe, remote. Should we be involved in war, a percentage of fanatics may try to supplement the work of paid enemy agents and the I.R.A. in sabo-

taging our resistance and undermining the morale of our Army and Navy. The majority of Fascists will fight for their side and reserve their energies until the war with Germany is over, in the hope that the confusion that succeeds it will give them a chance to provoke a class war and stage a "White Terror". But for lasting success in holding down a population which is fundamentally religious, humane, tolerant and warmhearted, they hold none of the high cards which enabled Hitler and the Spanish Generals to win the game und put back the clocks in their respective countries. The English, although temporarily unconscious both of their strength and even of their racial identity, are still the most powerful influence in the British Isles. They have only once in their history accepted a dictator, and he was sufficiently an Englishman to base his authority upon the English Bible. He was a *moral* man, a demon for righteousness. No English Duce or Fuehrer stands a chance who is not equally righteous, equally on the side of the people in their struggle against aristocratic and plutocratic oppression. Our Mosleys and our Captain Berrys and our Nazi "glamour girls", like Miss Unity Mitford, have no popular appeal because they have behind them neither Christian principles nor simple patriotism. They may be"anti-Semite", but to appeal on these grounds to a people like the English who are so profoundly undisposed to racial hatreds that they are not even "anti-Scotch" or "anti-Irish", is to ensure failure. The London Celts, to-day, are in much the same position as the Jews were in Berlin before Hitler started his pogroms. The Scotch—and the Welsh and Irish—have a large measure of control over London journalism and the B.B.C., they have secured the best jobs in the legal profession, they abound in Harley Street, they are much over-represented in Parliament, in the Cabinet and in the Civil Service, they misgovern many of our Colonies, they are prominent in the Federation of British Industries and among the jerry-builders whose rapacity has recently occasioned a minor revolt. Scotch immigrants find their way into the key positions, not through merit, but through a certain hard-faced determination to get on. On the whole, the English admire them for their

pertinacity: there is little resentment, the Scotch virtues are warmly appreciated and their failings condoned.

An English White Terror or a Revolution on Franco lines might, however, prove to be a movement dominated by Scotch Catholic aristocrats, and Ulster militarists with English "old-school-ties", pre-war ideas about birth and "blood", which most intelligent Englishmen have now grown out of, and a hatred of all those liberties which the common people have struggled for so many centuries to secure. It is, fortunately, inconceivable that our fascists, although in certain circumstances, which we hope will never arise, they could probably secure some support from bankers and big industrialists, could count on the approval of the Church of England, in the same way that Franco secured the support of the Vatican and the Spanish hierarchy. The Church of England— to which I now gratefully re-affirm my loyalty—is, with all its faults, profoundly *English*. If "British Nazis" have no hold on the English Church, still less have they any hold on English Nonconformity. The only religious bodies from which they are likely to derive support, are the Roman Catholics, and the Buchmanites. But these are poor allies, when we consider that the only effective arguments of the Fascists will be those employed by Franco and Hitler—the rubber truncheon, execution or the concentration camp for patriots, Leftists and intellectuals, the kicking to death of pregnant women if proved to be married to "Red" Professors, doctors or novelists, the persecution of Dr Niemöllers and the "bumping off" of poets. Nevertheless, although I do not believe that Evil can ever do more than flourish like the green bay-tree, or that civilization will be permanently overwhelmed by sadists, gangsters and disciples of the Devil, the Fascist activities in our midst, which Lord Donegall exposed, form a far greater menace than most decent people realise. To bracket them with the Communists at the present juncture, as so many people do, would be funny it if were not so profoundly dangerous. The record of the Communists for courage and patriotism is unassailable. In every country which has been the victim of aggression, the Communists have been the

backbone of resistance, as they are to-day in China, and they have always been willing in the hour of national danger to co-operate in a popular front with other democratic loyalists. It was Mr Gallacher, not Mr Greenwood or Mr Churchill, who asked the War Minister a few days ago: "Whether he is aware that the assistant adjutant of a Territorial Unit, the Queen's Westminsters, is a prominent member of the British Union of Fascists, and participates in public demonstrations of that body; and whether he proposes to relieve this officer of his commission?" Mr Gallacher, on receiving an evasive reply, asked "whether it was desirable for a member of Hitler's Fifth Column to hold a Commission in the Army?"

The difference between the Fascists and the Communists is summed up by a writer in *Picture Post*, who reported their mass meetings at Earl's Court. Mosley got his biggest cheer for an attack on the Jews, Pollitt for this: "To all peoples, of whatever race, colour, creed or religion, the Communist Party sends its greetings."

Mr Chamberlain's manifest eagerness to get rid of Parliament is regarded with the utmost apprehension by everyone I have come across in the past week. Fears are expressed that he will yield to pressure from the Bank of England and the Federation of British Industries and hand over the Chinese silver in Tientsin, in exchange for worthless promises to the British holders of Japanese bonds. A "double Munich", in the Far East and at Dantzig, is everywhere expected, for Mr Chamberlain has shown, over and over again, that little reliance can be placed on any of his Parliamentary utterances. Had there been any Opposition worthy of the name, Mr Hudson's alleged conversations with Herr Wohltat about a thousand million loan to Germany would have brought the Government down with a crash.

As far back as May 10th this year the *Manchester Guardian* printed the following letter from me, and I see no reason for modifying my views on August Ist.

SHAM FIGHTING

Has the Premier changed his Policy?

Sir,

Surely those who imagine that conscription indicates that Mr Chamberlain and his 'Fifth Column' supporters have at last joined their own side are merely indulging in wishful thinking. What real proof is there that he has at any time and in any way departed from his fixed policy of appeasement and surrender? If he had taken Mr Winston Churchill and Mr Anthony Eden into the Cabinet it would have been a guarantee of no more Munichs. Instead he sent Sir Nevile Henderson back to Berlin to wait on Ribbentrop's doorstep and made Dr Burgin Minister of Supply. For seven weeks he has been marking time over the Russian alliance, with the result that Litvinoff, the tireless supporter of collective security, has now resigned. The next thing we shall probably hear is that Stalin and Hitler have made a ten-year pact of non-aggression.

If Mr Chamberlain's "standing up to Hitler" bears all the marks of sham fighting, still more so does Mr Attlee's pretence of standing up to Mr Chamberlain. It has become obvious, after all the missed opportunities of the past two years, that he and his associates at Transport House are determined not to be forced to form a Government. The expulsion from the Socialist Party of a number of its most energetic and courageous members is a logical result of this determination. His handling of the conscription issue will still further divide his supporters and dishearten the leaderless masses who form the "floating electorate".

Meanwhile, millions of us have to look on like hypnotised rabbits while a thousand years of not inglorious history are being poured down the drain and all the principles of justice, decency and civil liberty, for which our people have stood for generations, are being abandoned and betrayed. Yours etc.

Douglas Goldring".

The Conservative slogan with which, if there is no intervening smash, the Party hopes to win the next election, is that "if Chamberlain goes we shall be at war in a month". In the North Cornwall election, the victor, Mr T. L. Horabin, was described by his Tory opponents as a "war-monger".

The Tory Party, 213 members of which voted against giving agricultural labourers a minimum wage of £2 a week, which has made no effort to check the most unparalleled and shameless profiteering in munitions, but yet cannot find a few extra shillings a week for old-age pensioners, which refuses to permit construction of bomb-proof shelters and distributes "Andersons" at £32 a ton, which, according to Mr. R. R. Stokes, M.P. could be profitably manufactured at £15 a ton, is not likely to refrain from any form of mendacity to maintain itself in power. If we should be fortunate enough to escape a war, it will only be because Mr Chamberlain appears to have been frightened, at long last, into sending a military mission to Russia. But during the Parliamentary recess, when he will be ruling us with dictatorial powers, he may continue to sabotage negotiations with Moscow, as he has done ever since the Russian proposal, on March 18th, for a conference at Bukharest was rejected as "premature". If he goes on "high-hatting" the Russians, who already suspect him of secretly offering Hitler a free hand to attack the Ukraine, he may get the shock of his life. Meanwhile, what madness induced him to give an unconditional guarantee to Poland—of all countries—before he had the Russian pact in his bag? If Stalin gets sickened of trying to form a genuine peace pact with our double-crossing Tory plutocracy, he may easily do a deal with Hitler, as so many of us have predicted, and then Poland, in spite of our famous guarantee, will be once again carved up. I suppose the idea is to "Runciman" the Poles into surrender, at the last moment. The delay in giving them the cash required to buy essential war materials in the open market suggests that this is the real intention.

Underneath the extraordinary events of the past twelve months we can all see the power exercised by our aristo-plutocracy, who make a fetich of ignorance, are as short-sighted as they are

arrogant and influence our foreign policy entirely in accordance with their class interests. These are the people who, working with certain financial groups, were responsible for "Non-Intervention", because of their class sympathy with the reactionary Spanish landlords. Czechoslovakia was betrayed largely because it was a democracy, the best in Central Europe, and because its people were peasants and its society "bourgeois". It was a country almost without aristocrats. Its governing circles contained only middle-class people whom Sir Basil Newton and his staff at the Legation did not care to meet, socially. They were "little known". Poland, on the other hand, is a semi-Fascist country, a land of vast estates owned by incompetent but charming aristocrats, and mainly peopled by a half-starving, downtrodden peasantry. Its diplomats, fascinating Counts of the highest social standing, are on Whitehall's social register. They know everyone and go everywhere. Even the most supercilious Whitehall bureaucrats are delighted to meet them at dinner parties. The Poles are "gentlemen", not Bolshevist scum. Therefore their country has been guaranteed against aggression, and Moscow is to be graciously permitted to furnish such aid, short of sending troops over the Polish frontier to engage the German armies, as the circumstances may require. A military mission, headed by Admiral the Hon. Reginald Ranfurly Plunkett-Ernle-Erle-Drax, has gone off to arrange matters! But the Poles have got their "guarantee" in advance, while there is no indication, so far, that Moscow is prepared to play ball and pull our chestnuts out the fire. Either our military experts were not consulted or else, if they were, they must be criminal lunatics.

That this estimate of the "behind-the-scenes" influence of our ruling families and their Tory hangers-on, is not exaggerated, is proved by the diverting activities of Lord Lloyd's "British Council", which the *Daily Express* has been investigating. This is the aristocratic body which recently despatched Lady Maureen Stanley to display dinky British *toilettes* in Balkan villages, which entertained parties of obscure Portugese and Franco-Nazi journalists at Claridges at the public expense, while ignoring visiting

journalists from the United States and the Dominions, and showed such an Etonian addiction for Greek culture that it brought over a company of Greek players to entertain the British taxpayer with a performance of Hamlet in modern Greek! Its latest effort to impress the world with the virtues of British democracy is to subsidize Professor Katzansakis (selected for his task by the British Legation at Athens) at the rate of £5 a week, to write a book, in Greek for Greeks, on "The Gentleman Tradition in England"! Let us hope the Professor's researches will bring him into contact with the International Brigaders. They, if anyone, represent our "Gentleman Tradition".

I wonder how this chapter will read in a month's time, in a year's time, in five years' time? As I write, we have weeks of personal rule by Mr Chamberlain ahead us, the Russian pact is unsigned, the Poles have been kept waiting for their eight millions, Mr Chamberlain has given a deliberately evasive reply to a question about the Chinese currency and the silver in the Tientsin banks, the fate of the four Chinese whom the Japs have ordered us to surrender is undecided, two million Nazi troops are mobilised and the situation is developing in Dantzig in accordance with the usual formula. And on August 4th—ominous day!—Parliament breaks up for its holidays, and a week later I break up for mine. If I do not escape for a fortnight from this bedlam, I shall be rushing about, with straws in my hair, shouting the words used on a famous occasion by King George V: "Wake Up England!"

The original typescript of this chapter, and other excised passages which is before me as I write, contains several pencilled annotations by the embarrassed Mr Flower. For example, a reference to "Hitler's ally, General Franco", provoked the comment, in the margin: "This is no longer true of General F." and a remark about "Hitler and the Spanish generals", produced the correction "can hardly be bracketed". Both Captain Gordon Berry and that once popular columnist Lord Donegall seem to have faded out of the limelight since this was written, but the recrudescence of Fascist activity since the advent of a Labour Govern-

ment, made possible by the extraordinary laxity of two 'Socialist' Home Secretaries, Mr Chuter Ede and his predecessor Mr Herbert Morrison, lends added significance to the article in the *Sunday Dispatch* from which I quoted. The fact that a party of Buchmanites was recently permitted by Mr Ede to enter this country, while friendly Swedish visitors are excluded, is proof of the influences still at work.

The two passages through which Mr Flower drew his blue pencil still have some relevance at the present day owing to the continuity of all the worst features af the Tory Foreign Policy which occasioned them. The longer of the two contained a critical examination of the policy of Non-Intervention, most of which I used elsewhere, after Mr Flower had blue-pencilled it. A quotation on Spain, taken from a pamphlet by the Dean of Canterbury, followed by some comments of my own about the performance of the Parliamentary Opposition, have perhaps sufficient topical interest to be rescued from Mr Flower's censorship, particularly as the public memory is short.

"Feudal landowners, reactionary clerics, the military party and big business", wrote Dr Hewlett Johnson, "had been powerless against the democratically-elected Spanish Government. They were, however, willing to pay the price for German and Italian intervention with planes, tanks, guns and men. A German-Italian-rebel attack followed and the legal Government appealed to the League.

"Duty to the League demanded the supply of food, arms and credits to the country attacked. All were refused.

"International Law demanded Spain's right to arm herself. England refused it. The farcical name of "non-intervention" was given to this flagrant violation of international law. Throwing even her vaunted sportsmanship to the winds England, together with France, the main sources of government supply, kept the one side of the pact, whilst permitting Germany and Italy to break the other. Spain was compelled to fight with one arm tied behind her back. The rebellion became an open invasion.

"The real motive, of course, was a Fascist line-up against a menacing liberal advance. The Covenant of the League, if en-

forced, would have placed England in the democratic camp *against* the aggressors. The National Government's course, however, had been less easy in Mediterranean waters than in the Pacific. The Cabinet was now divided, for the course which seemed safe for plutocracy seemed dangerous to England. To side with the aggressors was to risk sprinkling Spanish shores with German submarine bases, and Spanish fields with German and Italian aerodromes. England's empire routes might be jeopardised; France's empire cut in half. Eden and Cranbourne resigned.

"On February 16th 1938, the Spanish Government offered to enter into an agreement with the British and French Governments giving them the use of Spanish ports and aerodromes and free transit of troops in time of war.

"This, in the words, of 'Vigilantes', would mean 'A solid West European democratic bloc from Scotland to Africa, of 110,000,000 people, which could put their armies, air forces and navies under unified command, and plan their war industries, communications and resources as a whole. Allied with the U.S.S.R. this bloc would be impregnably strong, even after the betrayal of Czechoslovakia.' "

"That offer was refused. Arms to Spain were refused".

"During the Spanish war, the behaviour of His Majesty's 'loyal' Opposition, apart from a handful of courageous Liberals and Left-Wing Socialists, was pitiable. After having been deluded and outwitted over the application of Sanctions against Italy, they now allowed themseves to be manoeuvred into accepting Non-Intervention. Mr Chamberlain's treatment of the Labour Party showed that, at all events in domestic affairs, he has some of Hitler's capacity for sizing up the weakness and moral cowardice of his opponents. The Prime Minister's only moment of real danger occurred in connection with the murder of British seamen, engaged in legitimate trade with the Republican ports, by the German and Italian aviation in Franco's service. When the story broke that many of the attacks on British shipping had taken place within sight of British warships, which had looked on without moving a man or a gun, without making the slightest effort to

protect the flag and with it the lives of their compatriots, indignation was aroused throughout the country. It was remembered that when a wealthy Old Etonian, Mr Rupert Bellville, who had taken service under Franco as an aviator, came down in Basque territory, a warship was immediately sent at the taxpayers' expense to bring him home. But officers of the British Navy, whose ordinary duty it is to protect the Red Ensign and make the seas safe for legitimate commerce, looked on, without action or protest, while brave English seamen, with no means of defending themselves, were killed or maimed before their eyes. In the whole history of the Senior Service there is not to be found any episode more shameful and degrading.

"When the oil interests got tired of having their expensive tankers sunk by Italian submarines, the Government was forced to take action, the Nyon agreement was signed and proved immediately effective. There is no reason to doubt that if Mr Chamberlain had not wished to help Franco and Mussolini by starving out the Republicans, he could have stopped the attacks on our shipping within twenty-four hours. A firm warning would probably have been sufficient. When Mr Attlee and other Opposition speakers protested in Parliament, they succeeded at last in eliciting from Mr Chamberlain the historic admission that "it is not a nice thing to hear of British ships being attacked". If, at that moment, Mr Attlee and his supporters had marched straight out of the House of Commons and appealed directly to the country, there would probably have been no Munich and the present expectation of life of every inhabitant of Great Britain might have been considerably increased. The issue would have become, automatically, front-page news in every newspaper in every democratic country. The effect on opinion in the United States would have been profound. Mr Chamberlain and his umbrella, together with his plutocratic 'Fifth Column', would almost certainly have been swept out of office by the violence of popular indignation. How the masses of the people felt about the failure of the Navy to protect our seamen had already been demonstrated by the popularity of 'Potato' Jones and Captain

Roberts. We needed only to be given a lead. It was a heaven-sent opportunity to rouse Britain, at last, from the long nightmare of 'National Government', to unite us in a decent cause, to let us be true to ourselves and 'tell the world'. It was, moreover, not a political issue, but a moral one. We relied on the heroism of the men of the Mercantile Marine to save us from starvation between 1915 and 1918; our lives will depend on them if we are ever again involved in war. What right had the Government, with its command of sea power, to leave them utterly defenceless? Mr Chamberlain and his tame majority could not have cleared themselves in the eyes of their compatriots had the attack been properly launched. But Mr Attlee let the chance slip through his genteel and nerveless fingers. He and his Transport House clique show no more real desire to bring down Mr Chamberlain, than Mr Chamberlain has to free Germany and the world from Hitler. They dread responsibility and nothing haunts them so much as the thought of ever being forced to form a Government. Transport House has become infected with the disease of 'appeasement', as badly as Mr Chamberlain himself. Its bosses appear to think that by not burning their boats they will be able, eventually, to do a deal with the National Government, just as Mr Chamberlain clings tenaciously to the hope of eventually buying his way into the Axis group. If Mr Chamberlain continues in power, it will probably be necessary to include some Labour figureheads in the Cabinet to give an illusion of national unity. Any intelligent reader can think of at least three Labour 'leaders' who would be only too happy to draw their £5000 a year by 'doing a Ramsay'. Similar motives to those which have hitherto prevented the Prime Minister from appointing Mr Winston Churchill Minister of Supply, have recently led to the expulsion of Sir Stafford Cripps and his friends from the Labour Party".

The second passage, which explained why I, a life-long pacifist, had been turned by the course of events into a "resister" formed the crux of a long preceding argument. As its excision would have deprived my Introduction of its principal point I eventually managed to persuade Mr Flower to let me retain it. "The record

of Maxim Litvinov", I wrote, "as a wholehearted worker for peace was second to that of no statesman in Europe, although his effort before and after Munich met with no response from our National Government. If an opportunity still exists of making an alliance with Russia, as a pacifist, I am naturally in favour of seizing it. It may be too late; but it seems to me the sole hope of averting war that we have left. It is vain for Ethel Mannin and the I.L.P. to preach 'non-resistance' because, when it comes to the point, the country will never stand for it. As far as I myself am concerned, I would sooner see any sort of crypto-Fascist misgovernment in England and France—that we can deal with—than our defeat and conquest by Hitler".

War was declared a few days after the Introduction was completed and I was permitted to add a footnote containing the following sentences. "Since this chapter was written, Mr Chamberlain's entire edifice of 'appeasement' has crashed in the ruins which almost everyone except himself, his advisers and his aristocratic supporters foresaw . . . Peace must be won now at the bitter price of suffering and death. Only if it is a 'people's' peace, following a 'people's' war, will it be a peace that endures". By the time the book appeared—the third week in June 1940—the nation had roused itself sufficiently to force Winston Churchill into the position of war leader. Invasion was expected hourly and, as I had anticipated, the bottom had fallen out of the book-trade which, in the autumn and spring, had been booming. The long discussions and delays had effectively put paid to my endeavours; and by the end of the year the sales of "Facing the Odds" only amounted to a little over two hundred copies. The publisher's "blurb" described me as "a veteran journalist who enjoys saying just what he thinks" and "would be the last to wish all his readers to agree with him". Copies were sent for review to the Catholic press. One paper described me as having "no principles", and another asked "who wants to read all that Left Wing stuff nowadays? It's dead as a door nail".

Not quite dead yet, I think, in spite of Catholic Fascist intrigue and the efforts of Mr Ernest Bevin in the role of mortician.

CHAPTER FIVE

Letters to the Press

I

IN the days of Peace, if we may thus describe the Armistice Years, few English types were regarded as so richly comic as those who "write to the papers about it". "Cui Bono", "Mother of Six" and the rest of them were stock figures of fun, and some of the subjects of their epistolary efforts, such as the first cuckoo, or the largest vegetable marrow, were a godsend to the professional humorist. Mr H. M. Bateman, in a famous cartoon, depicted scarlet majors queuing up in a club to release their bottled indignations to the Editor of *The Times*. This raised a hearty laugh among the middle-class Conservatives, who trusted Stanley (Boy) and assumed that every diehard opponent of mechanisation must be a super-patriot at heart. *Punch*, as late as 1939, printed a memorable cartoon of a warrior on horseback, armed à la Crimean war, to congratulate the Scotch Greys on having successfully resisted the temptation to arm themselves with tanks. Though the "gentry" condoned the outbursts of retired warriors, their general attitude, and that of their wives, was that it was bad form for ordinary citizens to express views on political questions or to take part in newspaper controversy. The motive attributed to those who wrote to the papers criticizing Government policy was a vulgar desire, on the part of the obscure, to see their names in print.

The outbreak of the war in Spain, following close upon the Hoare-Laval agreement and the failure of the League of Nations,

through British influence, to apply Oil Sanctions to Italy, effected a remarkable change of attitude towards this form of public activity. Various factors operated to make the correspondence columns of the "serious" daily and weekly periodicals the valuable democratic outlet they have since become. Chief among these was the weakness and inadequacy of the official Opposition under the leadership of Mr Attlee, himself a born 'appeaser', and the inability of many editors, however patriotic their own instincts may have been, to express, on their leader pages, opinions of which their employers might disapprove. When the Spanish Civil War started, practically all the big circulation newspapers came out more or less strongly on the side of Franco. As a result, the vast majority of the Conservative middle and upper class—the 'best' people, the ladies and gentlemen of England—eagerly ranged themselves on the side of the dictators. As these classes had the monopoly of all the key positions in the Navy, Air Force, Foreign Office and diplomatic corps and would certainly provide the leadership in the world conflict which—short of a surrender involving national suicide—was already inevitable, the position was alarming to all who understood it. Among them were a number of well-informed, experienced and competent journalists who, finding themselves muzzled in their professional capacity, were glad to take advantage of the comparative freedom of speech which, in the correspondence columns of the reputable press, was accorded to Fascists and anti-Fascists alike. Franco's fanatical Catholic supporters availed themselves no less eagerly of the "Open Forum" which some periodicals maintained than did their democratic opponents. Thus in *Time and Tide*, Commander Robert N. Bower, R.N., M.P. expressed with commendable frankness what is still the Foreign Office standpoint. After referring, in a Churchillian vein, to "that foul, cancerous disease of the human soul known as Communism", Commander Bower went on: "The average Conservative dislikes dictators . . . but we have one thing in common with them, a loathing of that bestial creed, Communism. The dictators may threaten us politically and economically, but (excluding, of course, Soviet Russia) they have no

exportable philosophy with which to corrupt the very souls of our people. Reduced to simple terms, the Spanish war is a conflict between Christian civilization and the Beast. That is why so many of us hope that Franco will win". President Truman or Mr Ernest Bevin himself could hardly have put the matter more clearly.

As a victory for Franco meant also a resounding initial victory for his fellow Catholic "Christians", Hitler and Mussolini, these views aroused widespread misgivings, particularly among fathers of sons approaching military age. The masses of the people stirred angrily while the disastrous policy of Non-Intervention was being carried through, at the cost of British seamen's lives, but they were as impotent in 1937 as they are to-day. With the national newspapers against them and their representation in Parliament negligible, there was little they could do except attend meetings, pass round pamphlets and, in the case of writers and budding politicians, bombard editors with letters of protest. As these letters, when printed, evoked an appreciable response from the public and produced a noticeable effect on circulation, the policy of providing an outlet for "vox populi" was seen to be good business. To-day, as a result of the Government's action in restricting the supply of newsprint, in spite of Canada's offer to provide the necessary pulp and the financial accommodation to enable us to import it, this outlet, though not entirely blocked, is still much curtailed.

II

It may be asked why, since we have a "free" press, comments on the news should not be left entirely to professional journalists who have sources of information not available to the layman. The answer to this is that our press is not "free". It is subject to all kinds of unseen checks and balances, restrictions, Foreign Office directives, official hints and warnings, adjustments and fluctuations of which the average reader has little knowledge. The columnists and commentators who managed, from time to time, to

give expression to majority opinion, mostly in Left Wing papers, during the period of Conservative Government, numbered no more than a dozen or perhaps, at the outside, twenty, out of the two or three thousand writers and publicists who were equally well-informed. To-day the work of this handful of men, all of whom could easily be accommodated in the smallest Fleet Street bar, is handicapped by the fact that they are reluctant to criticize the Labour Government, in spite of the astonishing performances of Mr Ernest Bevin. Even the Communist papers, hampered as they are by loyalty to their fellow workers, cannot express their thoughts too freely.

To enumerate the few journalists who have tried, with some courage, to express the anti-Fascist standpoint of the common people and to reflect some of their widespread alarm at the results of what Mr Bevin, with amazing arrogance, calls "*my* policy", is unfortunately only too easy. First of all, we have the *New Statesman and Nation* group, headed by its editor, Mr Kingsley Martin. Those of us who have been regular readers of the "N.S. & N." since its foundation, may at times deplore its excessive caution and its cultivation of the genteel art of understatement, but we have only to imagine what this country would be like without it to be stricken with alarm. To secure a place in its congested correspondence columns, particularly as it is common knowledge that they could often be filled ten times over, is an honour which many value almost more than the rewards of their normal professional activities. It means that what they have to say will be read by perhaps half a million intelligent people in Great Britain and the United States. If the "N.S. & N." is the only weekly review which surveys the political field from the progressive anti-Fascist angle, the only daily which, in spite of its Communist bias, really gives the essential *news*, is the *Daily Worker*. For this reason it is read by a number of non-Communists who have sufficient curiosity to want to find out what the "capitalist" newspapers either suppress altogether or else delay revealing until they must. The treachery of Mihailovitch is perhaps the *Daily Worker's* best known "scoop". It broke this news nearly a year

before it percolated through the "usual channels" and months before any capitalist newspaper would touch it.

Among the columnists who are in a position to address large audiences of their compatriots, the names of Hannen Swaffer, A. J. Cummings, Tom Driberg, M. P. and David Raymond of the *Sunday Referee* hold an honoured place in public regard. But the first three of these evidently work under considerable restraints. Again and again, when we tear open *The People* to find what Swaffer has to say on some political topic which is agitating the public mind, we find his column filled with chit-chat about someone like Mary Pickford. Tom Driberg, also, at moments of political tension, is apt to relapse into the style of William Hickey, while even Mr Cummings often finds delayed action advisable. Among the weeklies, *Cavalcade* and *Tribune,* over long periods, have shown courage, patriotism and independence. But the former, since the advent of the Labour Government, has lost some of its vigour, while the latter, after allowing Mr George Orwell to describe all Left Wing journalists who did not accept the views of Dr Göbbels, General Anders and himself, on the subject of Warsaw, as prostitutes, has proceeded to eat bear with as much avidity as Mr Bevin. To the above very short list of writers who express the views of British anti-Fascists must be added occasional independent and anonymous support in the columns of *The Times, The Economist* and the *Manchester Guardian.*

Admirable as, during the past ten years, has been the contribution of the journalistic stalwarts enumerated above to the enlightenment of public opinion, by the exposure of ministerial falsehoods, it will be obvious to the reader that they have been forced, for a variety of reasons, to leave unsaid much that their consciences must have urged them to make plain. On at least three of the major political crises between 1940 and 1945, they found themselves unable to utter a word of comment. Often, however, what could not be said editorially, was allowed to appear in the correspondence columns, over the signatures of individuals for whose opinions it was possible for the Editors printing them to deny responsibility. It may thus be claimed that through the ingenuity and persistence of private citizens, the

thoughts of the "average man"—that is to say "public opinion"—secured a hearing. Particularly valuable, during the war years, were the letters from men in the fighting Services. Many of these disclosed facts, or aired well-founded grievances, of which nothing would otherwise have been known.

III

The series of "letters to the Editor" of which this book contains examples, became, after 1940, something in the nature of a civilian war diary. They were the self-imposed task of a writer who desired to do his utmost for the cause for which his two sons were fighting but whose proffered services had been rejected on various occasions both by the B.B.C. and the M.O.I. Had I been admitted as a humble cog in the vast governmental machine I should have been glad enough to perform set tasks, however rudimentary, with the same diligence that so many of my younger literary colleagues displayed. As a temporary over-age civil servant, I should at least have felt that my zeal and energy were not wholly wasted. I may not be a very good journalist—I don't think I am—but at least I was good enough to check proofs, draft statements and write "Passed to you for attention" on official bumph. Thrown on my own resources and, thanks to the paper restrictions, with the ample leisure of the great unpaid, I had—in order to satisfy my conscience—to make some sort of personal "war effort". The form it took was to write, at enormous pains—for I am naturally a poor and diffuse correspondent—a series of epistolary comments on current events, the majority of which were printed by the editors to whom I addressed them. Whether, unless one subscribes to the comforting theory that no effort is wasted, they did any good to those who read them is problematical. To me, I imagine, by easing the strain of isolation in an uncongenial community, they must have been a considerable relief. I reproduce a handful of them here, more in a later chapter, because none of the mysteries of the war have been

cleared up or seem likely to be, while it is evident that the struggle against Fascism, in our own and in other countries, will have to be fought all over again.

IV

During the years 1936 and 1937, though I frequently "bombarded" the press with correspondence, I confined myself to what was at that time the ruling interest in my life, the defence of our heritage of Georgian architecture in general and the establishment of the Georgian Group in particular. I was determined, as long as possible, to keep my attention glued to the peaceful subject of "amenities" but, alas, this conscious attempt at escapism was blown to pieces by the events of 1938. It was not much use endeavouring to preserve some of the Georgian character of London and other cities, if the Government continued to head us for a war which would make a vast amount of destruction inevitable. I found at last that I could not look at a Georgian mansion without imagining it as a bombed-out ruin. The only way to save such fine buildings from the fate which Hitler meted out to Guernica—obviously as a kind of "Bikini" experiment, in preparation for an attack on large targets—seemed to me to be by political action, based on the establishment of the sort of Popular Front which Sir Stafford Cripps had advocated. All hope of restraining Neville Chamberlain by united anti-Fascist pressure in the House of Commons and outside it was however destroyed by the incredible action of the Transport House gang, at Easter 1938. Commenting on this A. J. Cummings, under the caption "Labour's Pitiful Blunder", observed that "A Labour diehard group is a more melancholy object than a Tory diehard group because Labour claims to be progressive. The official Labour manifesto which last week rejected any form of alliance with other progressive political elements in this country was diehardism at its narrowest and most stupid. No more blatant act of folly has been committed by the Labour leaders since the present Government came to power. No wonder it has had a hostile or con-

temptuous Press, even on the Government side. For it reveals a political ineptitude which (in the words of the *Manchester Guardian*) amounts to 'positive genius' ". Cummings adds that the *Manchester Guardian* was at one time cold enough to what was then termed Popular Front propaganda, but like millions of apprehensive British citizens it had been converted by the stern logic of events. "According to their own declaration, the Labour leaders and the party they lead are 'facing a supreme crisis which may well submerge all that they stand for'. Their answer is to stage feeble fights in the House of Commons, which the Government throws off with something like contempt and, for the rest, to bury themselves in their minute books and conference resolutions and to appeal tearfully for 'loyalty' to precedent. Yet all the time there is growing up a movement against the Government and its foreign policy, 'that is far more powerful than anything the Labour Party has been able to arouse'." (Sir Stafford Cripps was sensationally ejected from the Party, largely through the influence of Herbert Morrison, and other Left Wing rebels were severely disciplined.)

What Cummings and the *Manchester Guardian* wrote was true enough, no doubt, but many of us who had seen the Labour leaders at close quarters had long since formed the impression that these gentleman, like the professional politicians of other parties, were not in the game for their health. Taking a long view, it may well have seemed wiser to them to reject any form of alliance with other "progressives" as that would make it simpler, when the time came, to associate themselves and their Party with the reactionaries in power. Two years later their attitude from their own standpoint proved to be justified. They agreed, without making any conditions, or assuring for their Party any measure of control over policy, to serve under Mr Churchill. Nothing they had said or done made it awkward for them to find Chamberlain one of their Cabinet associates. Mr Cummings concluded his article by saying: "It is a safe prediction that unless the National Executive changes its tune and changes it soon, the younger and more vigorous elements will leave the Labour Party

in tens of thousands". True. But where could they go, if they did leave? When the next General Election was held, seven years later, they had no alternative but to vote Labour in the hope that by electing representatives they trusted a process of "boring from within" would eventually force the leaders to break with the Tories and carry out the Socialist programme. Vain illusion! When the first test came, over Greece, only five men and one woman out of the huge Labour majority kept faith with their constituents.

In 1938 the conviction that the clique of careerists in control of Transport House were hopelessly unfitted to speak for the nation in a period of national crisis, drove patriotic individuals all over the country to write to their newspapers. Great men and little men, the known and the unknown, the wise and the simple, all contributed their quota to the stream of protest which eventually brought Mr Churchill to power. Few of us liked Churchill's politics: but no decent Englishman failed to respond to his eloquence, tenacity and bull-dog courage. While this informal press campaign was in progress it did not seem to me either right or decent that authors should regard it as a professional duty to stay silent. The idea that the artist is in a class apart, that he does not share the rights and duties of citizenship with the chemist, the coalminer, the lawyer and the clerk has always been repugnant to me. For that reason, although I dislike working without payment as much as any of my colleagues, I found myself becoming gradually involved in the public altercation. Like a great many other people, the majority of us, I had long been disgusted by the Armaments racket and convinced that the manufacture of all munitions of war should be placed under public control.

Before the outbreak of war the Tories spent upwards of two thousand million pounds of public money on their re-armament programme. The Parliament elected in 1935 was so incompetent and/or corrupt that in spite of the public uneasiness—an uneasiness which the campaigns in Norway and in France, two years later, proved to have been amply justified—no demand was ever

made for a judicial enquiry into what they spent it on. Dividends soared, but the tanks and the aeroplanes essential for our defence were not produced. Why not? The greatest financial scandal in British Parliamentary history remains, to this day, hushed up.

Speaking at Ipswich on November 18th 1940 Sir Nevile Henderson, former British Ambassador in Berlin, made the following sensational disclosures. "I do not know", he said, "whether the critics (of Mr Chamberlain) realised then or now that on September 28th 1938, we did not have a Spitfire.

"We had one or two experimental Hurricanes and we had exactly seven modern A.A. guns for the defence of London out of the 400 estimated then as the minimum necessary. Germany", he added, "could have dropped 2,000 bombs a day on London and we could have given no reply. Göring told me, 'If you insist on making war before the end there will be very little left of London and absolutely nothing of Czechoslovakia.' " *

Early in 1938 the discrepancy between the number of aircraft "accruing" to the R.A.F. and the large profits accruing to the shareholders of certain firms engaged in their manufacture, was exciting alarm in Labour circles. The following details regarding the profits of one such firm were published in the *News Chronicle* of July 7th '38.:

> "Ordinary shareholders of Handley Page Limited, manufacturers of bombing and other aeroplanes, have little cause to complain of the effect of the rearmament programme on their fortunes. Only six months ago they had their shareholdings doubled by a capital bonus of 100 %, and now they are to receive a dividend of 20 per cent tax free on the increased holding. In addition to this the shareholding is to be further increased by another capital bonus of 50 per cent, or one share for every two now held.
>
> "The final dividend is equivalent to 40 per cent tax free, on their former holding or over 55 per cent gross and with the interim of 10 per cent gross on the smaller amount makes a

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* *"News-Chronicle"* Nov. 19th 1940.

total equivalent to 65 per cent on the capital as it stood before the first capital bonus. In the preceding year the dividend was 50 per cent, less tax.

"This second capital bonus of Handley Page in little more than six months will mean the trebling of the Ordinary capital since the last balance sheet, this representing a total share bonus of 200 per cent. The Ordinary capital will now be £373,395.

"As suggested by the big dividend, profits have made a further big jump, the figure of £210,216 being more than double the preceding year's total of £100,180."

As early as 1936, the Government, when announcing its re-armament programme, had assured the nation that "no extravagant profits" from the manufacture of aeroplanes would be permitted. The following letter from my far from facile pen appeared in the *News Chronicle* on April 12th 1938.

Profits

"In a recent speech at Middlesbrough Mr Fred A. Smith, General Secretary of the A.E.U., disclosed that between 1935 and the end of 1937, 1,429 complete aeroplanes, manufactured in England, were sold abroad. Presumably these export planes were not of the type used by Imperial Airways. He also said that the responsible Minister had admitted that 'we exported fighting aircraft in 1937 to the extent of £2,640,000'. Referring to the Government's promise, two years ago, that they would not allow 'extravagant profits', he quoted the case of Handley Page, which paid a dividend last year of 50 per cent, with a 100 per cent share bonus.

"The public, since Mr Chamberlain took office, has become inured to shocks. But surely the ordinary taxpayer is entitled to have this question answered, before he parts with his money: What is Lord Swinton's idea of an 'extravagant profit'?"

Some months later, during the Munich crisis, I was spurred

again into print on the subject of a leaflet handed to me when I stood in the crowd filling Trafalgar Square. This letter appeared in the *News Chronicle*, also in the *Manchester Guardian*, on September 30th 1938. Among the throng filling the approaches to Westminster were numerous Fascists, although the great majority were ordinary patriotic citizens. The shouts of "Stand by Czechoslovakia" and "Chamberlain Must Go" must certainly have been plainly audible in 10 Downing Street but, by a queer coincidence, nobody in Fleet Street happened to hear them. In addition to defending Franco, the leaflet contained scurrilous abuse of Dr. Benes, whom it described as an "atheist".

Spain

"Many of your readers, during the past few days, must have received a propaganda leaflet which attempts to justify Franco's bombardment of open towns in Spain. The name of the printer is not given, nor is there any indication of its origin. The fact that it is being disseminated at the present moment—my copy was handed to me on September 28th—indicates the frantic efforts which are being made by the Fascists in this country to undermine the resistance of the democracies to the fate which threatens them.

"As Hitler's ultimate objective, plainly stated in *Mein Kampf*, is the 'annihilation of France', which may be taken to mean the establishment of a subservient totalitarian régime in that country, it seems obvious that whether 'peace' or war is declared during the next few days, our attitude towards the Spanish invasion, for safety's sake, must be immediately defined.

"If a 'peaceful solution' of the Czechoslovak question is arrived at, the Spanish Republic is presumably next on the list for liquidation, if we allow it. Should war break out, on the other hand, Government Spain becomes automatically an indispensable ally, and Franco must be considered, even by the blindest Blimp, as an enemy agent. The strategical importance of Spain both to France and to the British Empire ought to be

obvious to any fourth form boy who possesses a map and has been intelligently taught the history of the Peninsular war.

"Spain is therefore, now, the acid test of the honesty and patriotism of our 'National' Government. No one doubts the sincerity of Mr Chamberlain and his 'inner circle', in their efforts to avert the disasters which their policy, since 1931, has brought upon us. Sentiment, however, must be tempered by realism. If the Czechoslovak 'Maginot Line' is to be surrendered, surely France's Western frontier must now be made immune from attack by granting Republican Spain the right to buy arms and food".

The Debate in the House of Commons which took place on Wednesday September 28th 1938, the day before the final surrender, while it overjoyed the thoughtless, the selfish and the ignorant, struck dismay into the hearts of those who realized what it portended. It was in these flaming words that the Leader of the Opposition, an office to which Mr Chamberlain, in the previous year, had thoughtfully attached an annual salary of £2000, raised the clarion call of "No Surrender", after the Prime Minister had concluded his statement.

"Mr Attlee: I am absolutely certain that everyone in this House will have welcomed the statement of the Prime Minister that, even at this late hour, a fresh opportunity has arisen of further discussions which may lead to a prevention of war. I am sure that every member of this House is desirous of neglecting no chance of preserving peace without sacrificing principles. We wish to give the Prime Minister every opportunity of following up this new move and we agree to adjourn now, and hope that when the House reassembles in a short time the war clouds may have lifted".

Similar speeches were made by Sir Archibald Sinclair, Mr Maxton and George Lansbury. One man only rose to give expression to the patriotism and outraged sense of justice of the masses of the British people. This is what he said: "No one desires peace more than I and my Party; but is must be a peace based

upon freedom and democracy and not upon the cutting up and destruction of a small state. I want to say that the policy of the National Government has led to this crisis. (Hon. Members: 'No!') Yes, and if there is peace at the moment it is the determined attitude of the people that has saved it. Whatever the outcome, the National Government will have to answer for its policy. I would not be a party to what has been going on here. There are as many Fascists opposite as there are in Germany, and I protest against the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia".

The speaker? William Gallacher. The contrast between his attitude and that of the Leader of the Labour Party explains why, to-day, our "Socialist" Government regards the handful of British Communists as a "conspiracy". It explains why they are now backing the Fascist régimes in Greece and Spain, protecting prominent Nazi industrialists in the British zone in Germany, persecuting the Jews they have betrayed, and throwing this country open to a horde of reactionary Poles, many of whom fought against us in the war. What it does not explain is how all but six of the recently-elected Labour M.P.'s have managed to compromise with their conscience by submitting to the continuity of Tory policy imposed upon them by Messrs Attlee and Bevin and their Cabinet colleagues.*

After the Munich sell-out I found myself in such a distraught condition of disgust, shame and rage, that I took every opportunity I could find of expressing these emotions in print. Aspiring Leftish novelists, conditioned by service in the Ministry of Information or the B.B.C., now call such outbursts "diatribes". But is there any professional writer, apart from a handful of Catholic converts, who is not secretly rather ashamed of himself for not having said his piece? If ever there was a *trahison des clercs* in England it was in the autumn and winter of 1938. To defend Republican Spain, to denounce the betrayal of Czechoslovakia, to attack the policy of appeasement meant, it is true, incurring a risk of social ostracism in what are called "West End Club"

Written in June 1946.

circles. It was altogether safer and pleasanter for writers to have no opinions, to express no "views", to keep their mouths shut and follow the Gadarene swine without a whimper of protest, especially as the popular press was leading the way.

Cavalcade, in those days, had the best record of any of the weeklies for forthright utterance and its correspondence columns were thrown wide open to agitated patriots, a fact of which then, and for some years afterwards, I took full advantage. No doubt my own and other correspondents' letters could be described by devotees of the art of understatement as "embittered" or dismissed as "tirades". In 1938 they had about them a touch of the uninhibited directness which had characterised London journalism a century earlier. I have often wondered whether the present attitude of genteel distaste for anything in the nature of righteous indignation is not dangerously overdone. How long is it since "The Thunderer" really thundered in defence of a noble cause, or in denunciation of some political infamy? Have the bland politeness and refaned accents of the B.B.C. announcers really turned our red blood into flat soda-water? I hate to think so, but the odious miracle really seems to have occurred.

On turning up my first explosion in *Cavalcade* I have been amused to discover that at that time, knowing nothing of the Duke of Windsor's visits to Germany and wholehearted support of Chamberlain's polity of appeasement, I thought him capable of playing a patriotic role. Under the heading "Recall the Duke", I wrote.

> "That democracies need leadership if they are to survive is surely one of the lessons of the past six years. During this period of galloping corruption, betrayal and dishonour the mass of the electors of Great Britain have been confused and bewildered, impotent to arrest the progressive national collapse.
>
> "The Parliamentary Opposition has proved a farce. The Socialists could not even assert themselves sufficiently to prevent British merchant seamen being murdered by pirates with-

in sight of British warships, although they had every decent Englishman behind them.

"When the guns of H.M.S. Hero were silent, the 'Friends of Nationalist Spain' and other English 'Cagoulards' who control our so-called 'National' Government in the interests of Hitler, Mussolini and Franco, wrote a chapter of British naval history which has never been equalled for infamy and (though for the moment obscured by the betrayal of Czechoslovakia) can never be forgotten.

"Only a leader of the people who is a true democrat, whose honesty is above suspicion, and whose patriotism and disinterested motives are beyond doubt, can now save England and preserve our great traditions."

I concluded by saying that if the Duke of Windsor "is the man we think he is", a Windsor-Churchill Government might be strong enough even at that late hour to rescue both peace and honour. The Duke of Windsor, surrounded as royalties far too often are by bad advisers, was unfortunately far from being on the people's side at this critical juncture although it is interesting to speculate on what might have happened had he backed Churchill instead of Chamberlain.

My simple-minded outburst received enthusiastic support in the correspondence columns of *Cavalcade* and also elicited a considerable fan mail. I followed it up with a letter which appeared on October 15th 1938, under the heading "Up the English". It will be noted that there is no further reference to the Duke of Windsor!

"Among the communications I have received from your readers is one which states that 'there must be countless thousands' who share the views expressed in my letter to *Cavalcade* of October 1st.

" 'If only we could do something about it! If you have any suggestions for taking action, we should be only too glad to co-operate'.

"Alas, the fate of millions of ordinary English people like

myself and my correspondent, is entirely in the hands of the professional politicians.

"What can we do? The 'big four'—Mr Chamberlain, who has successively betrayed Spain and Czechoslovakia; Sir John Simon, who betrayed China and helped to wreck the League of Nations; Sir Samuel (Laval) Hoare, and the holy Lord Halifax, who never has any terrestrial information—make their decisions without consulting Parliament, secure in the knowledge that their servile majority (elected, if you please, to further the policy of 'collective security'!) will automatically ratify whatever follies they commit, even if they result in national suicide.

"There is nothing whatever to stop Mr Chamberlain handing Gibraltar and Malta to Mussolini and half the British Empire to Hitler, before November the 1st, if he feels so inclined.

"Whose advice does he follow? That of the Anglo-German-American friends of von Ribbentrop? Hitler's 'Fifth Column'? Colonel Lindbergh's? Sir Horace Wilson's? General Franco's and that of the English Catholic converts, friends of all reactionary countries and the enemies of liberty and justice in their own? No one knows, or probably ever will know.

"Mr Attlee, personally, is I am sure the most honourable and amiable of Old Haileyburians. As a leader of the Parliamentary Opposition, however, he has paralysed the 'floating electorate' which is, potentially, the backbone of the country.

"Ordinary citizens look now to men like Winston Churchill, Harold Nicolson and Duff Cooper (who was loudly clapped in a news cinema in Oxford Street last week) to extricate our national self-respect and to preserve us, at least, from the gang of 'patriots' who profiteer in sandbags and other A.R.P. necessities.

"I must also pay a tribute to Mr Gallacher who, on September 28, saved the honour of the Mother of Parliaments."

Towards the end of the month I managed to combine my specialized interest in the preservation of Georgian architecture

with the practical suggestion that a survey should be made of country houses which might be used by the A.R.P., authorities as hostels for evacuated children. I have lost the text of this letter, which was printed in the *Daily Telegraph*, but the nature of the proposal can be gathered from a leader on it which appeared in the *Estates Gazette*.

Country Houses as Refuges.

Mr Douglas Goldring, who has been prominently identified with the work of the Georgian Group, has made a suggestion which might help in solving A.R.P. problems and at the same time help the cause Mr Goldring has at heart—preserving houses possessing architectural merit from destruction. He points out that all over the country large mansions are standing empty because their owners cannot affort to keep them up and are unable to find tenants or purchasers. Very often demolition is their fate, a recent example being the late Lord Balfour's residence, Whittinghame, which the present owner has decided to demolish. Mr Goldring's point is that as the crisis through which we have just passed may recur in the near future, it seems a pity to allow any available buildings which might be converted into refuges for evacuated children to be destroyed. A list of unoccupied country houses, suitable for use as children's refuges in time of war, might, he urges, be made with advantage by the authorities in charge of A.R.P. Mr. Goldring goes on to point out that unlike the suggested cantonments, such houses all have a water supply, sanitation and other conveniences already installed. Their owners would, no doubt, be glad to co-operate in any scheme put forward by the Government which by making them of service to the community would ensure their preservation and, as so many of the "stately homes of England", now falling into decay, have architectural and historic interest, this proposal to make use of them would presumably be favourably regarded by such organizations as the National Trust".

A leader, on similar lines, appeared in *Country Life* on October 29th 1938. The writer called attention to the suggestion put forward in the *Daily Telegraph* that there should be drawn up a schedule of such country houses in remote places "as are from all points of view suitable for use as refuges in case of emergency. The schedule should be compiled by the A.R.P. authorities, in collaboration with the National Trust; this would save waste of time and effort on the part of individual cities and boroughs on the look-out for suitable properties. Under normal conditions properties bought for evacuation purposes might well be used for children's holiday centres".

As East Londoners were soon to discover, Sir John Anderson, then at the Home Office, was not much interested in evacuation schemes or even in supplying adequate shelters, with the results that many thousands of useful lives were needlessly sacrificed. When war broke out, many of the available country mansions were requisitioned by the military. To-day (July 1946), although there is a desperate shortage of suitable buildings for use as training colleges for teachers, some of these—Luton Hoo among them—are being returned to private ownership.

In the spring of 1939, as in the spring of 1946, the ostrich-like character of the British press made it very difficult either for the handful of professional commentators, or for the group of anxious patriots who were now making a practice of addressing letters to editors, to warn the public of what was certain to occur. After Lord Halifax's curt dismissal of Litvinov's proposal to hold a conference at Bucharest, no one in his senses could fail to realize that Stalin might be forced to make a bid for neutrality in order to preserve his war potential. By a happy chance the Editor of the *Manchester Guardian* consented to print, on May 10th 1939, the letter, quoted in a previous chapter, which forecast the Stalin-Hitler ten year pact of non-aggression. On August 22nd, when the news of the agreement "broke", I was staying with my wife in Bordeaux. The American newspaper which carried the story under splash headlines represented the British Foreign Office as being staggered by surprise at this development

and the Foreign Editors of British newspapers as being equally flabbergasted. Whether the British Secret Service, at that period, was composed of fools or Fifth Columnists is a question still in debate, which can only be finally answered if and when its personnel are invited to attend a judicial enquiry and cross-examined under oath. That Fleet Street's foreign newshawks come into either of these categories I decline to believe. What professional journalists know, and what their employers allow them to say in print, are totally different matters.

CHAPTER SIX

Darkest Hampshire

AFTER September 3rd 1939 my attention was rudely diverted from world events to problems of a personal nature.

The only haven of refuge we could think of in our financial dilemma was a village in Hampshire, where some friends of ours had already installed themselves. We had spent our summer holiday in this village, the previous year, while optimistically hunting for a week-end cottage, so we were not complete strangers to the place. Kingsley, contiguous as it was to Bordon camp and therefore in a "target area", held few attractions for people who wanted a safe war. For this reason, as the district was not overrun by wealthy evacuees, we were lucky enough to discover a cottage on a remote part of the common. Brookside Cottage, as it was called, had formerly been occupied by an outdoor servant of the nearby "big house". The tenant obligingly let us take it off her hands and although it was in bad repair and had no conveniences, we were thankful to secure a roof. Pending the release of our possessions from Dolphin Square we managed to borrow a few essential sticks of furniture from the village Lady Bountiful, and, in October 1939, moved in to what was to be our home for nearly six years. There was no electric light, gas, or company's water and both the kitchen range and the sitting-room fireplace were defective. A grass track, almost impassible to wheeled traffic—completely so after the tanks had been over it—took one across the common to a by-road leading to Kingsley village and to Alton. To get to the Petersfield-Farnham highway, the main bus route and the nearest pub, one had to push one's

way along a narrow footpath, through a tangle of bracken and heather. After rain, shoes and trousers got wet through long before one reached open ground. Surrounding the cottage there was about three-quarters of an acre of enclosed common which had been left uncultivated for several years and, at the time of our arrival, had become a picturesque jungle. Four or five sturdy old apple trees, which in normal years yielded heavy crops, and a couple of decayed plum trees were the only useful legacies from previous occupants. The ground in front of our windows descended in terraces, like a Provençal small-holding, to a sluggish brook half choked with flags and weeds. Beyond the stream, one of the many tributaries of the river Wey, was a soggy water meadow in which about a dozen cows grazed or reclined. The landscape was framed by a line of low hills, naked and windswept on the Surrey side but, west of the main road, surmounted by a dark pinewood. It was not an extensive view but, within its limits, except when disfigured by tanks, a peaceful and satisfying one. Out on the sandy common, covered with bracken, gorse and heather, and sprinkled with silver birches and stunted oaks, which stretched between us and Kingsley village, the view extended in the west to Nore Hill and Selborne Hanger. During the years of my stay at Kingsley the "green variegated country of the Hangers", beloved by naturalists from White to Hudson, never lost its fascination for me although, as the years went by, I became increasingly conscious of the same depressing atmosphere about Kingsley as Hudson found in Selborne. The beauty of the Selborne beech-woods did not, he records, "prevent a sense of lassitude, of ill-being, which I experience in the village when I am long in it and which vanishes when I quit it, and seem to breathe a better air".

The winter of 1940 was one of the most severe I can remember. Night after night the water froze in the jug and the temperature in our bedroom was not appreciably different from the temperature in the open. In Sweden, where my wife had lived up till our marriage, temperatures fall far below anything over recorded in Southern England, but adequate heating is universal and the dry

cold causes little discomfort. Our Dolphin Square flat, with constant hot water and central heating, supplemented by electric fires, was so snug that we actually enjoyed the winter months. Brookside Cottage, exposed to all the Arctic winds blowing across treeless Broxmoor, was therefore a new experience for a pampered Londoner getting on in years. As it did not kill me, it probably did me a lot of good. Certainly, I was freer from catarrh at Kingsley than I had ever been in London. The Canadian first-arrivals and English militiamen who had to face the elements in unheated barns and other temporary shelters must have suffered appallingly. We heard of many pneumonia cases and several deaths.

If the severity of the physical climate of Kingsley was something of a shock, the mental and political atmosphere surrounding us was a revelation of an even more disturbing kind. I had heard of Hampshire as a centre and breeding ground of Fascism in the early days of the B.U.F. Friends of General Franco were also said to be more numerous in Hampshire's stately homes than elsewhere, while stories of illicit gun running in Hampshire lanes had gone the rounds in London. When Morrison started rounding up public enemies under "18b", the little town of Alton was credited with the doubtful distinction of providing His Majesty with more socially prominent guests than any other place of its size. Fortunately for us, there was little trace of Fascist sympathies in our immediate neighbourhood, while our village Great Lady, a noted amateur *chef d'orchestre* and indefatigable organiser of concerts for the troops, had inherited from her father, who had been a friend of the pre-Raphaelites, much of their Liberal cultural tradition. We were thus, as regards actual Fascism, better off, than might have been the case in other parts of the country. There were, however, some astonishing relics of the old Tory feudalism which we imagined had disappeared after 1914. What, as Londoners, baffled us was the fact that no one with whom we came in contact seemed to have the faintest idea of what the war was about or why it had happened, so that any form of intelligent discussion with village acquaintances was out of the question.

One Sunday morning, during the phoney war, in order to make conversation of an innocuous character with a lady encountered on the common, I casually referred to the subject of an article which had just appeared in the *Sunday Express*. Apparently the matter under public discussion, something to do with the R.A.F. High Command, had not been mentioned in the *Sunday Times*, for she gave me a withering glance and passed on. Later, I heard she was putting it round that "Mr Goldring is running down our gallant airmen"! The only person I had ever "run down" in the village inn and elsewhere, was Mr Neville Chamberlain. Not being used to feudal inhibitions, I exercised my Cockney freedom of speech by asserting, when occasion arose, that I did not see how we could win unless we pushed out Chamberlain and made Winston Churchill our War Leader.

This heretical opinion reached the ears of the village constable, who was considerably disturbed by it. So much so that he polished his helmet, got out his bicycle and rode over to the Hall to consult. The Hall's châtelaine very wisely remarked that "as Mr Goldring's two sons are in the Army I think we ought to give him the benefit of the doubt".

Even after the Parliamentary revolt which installed Mr Churchill as Prime Minister and made Mr Attlee his second in command, we were still the objects of village suspicion. As my wife was "foreign-looking"—she was born in Sweden but had been a British subject since 1927—anonymous letters of denunciation poured in to the local police Superintendent. He called on us one day to see what it was all about and, luckily, proved a veritable Bobby Owen for personal charm, good humour and common sense. In spite of this official vindication, some of the villagers remained secretly convinced that we were foreign spies, although I must admit they continued to be outwardly genial. I discovered what had been going on, quite by chance, nearly a year later. At that time, the New Inn was frequented by a number of O.C.T.U. boys, fresh from Oxford, who were training to be gunners. I became rather friendly with one of them, with whom I had interests in common. One day he mentioned having lunched with a young

"gentleman" farmer, a member of the village Home Guard, whom I knew of as the head of the local branch of the Labour Party. I said that, as I also was a Socialist, I should like to meet him.

The O.C.T.U. boy then became extremely embarrassed. "As a matter of fact", he replied, "I don't think I'd go near him, if I were you. You see he's been telling us that you're a well-known Dutch quisling, who's been flashing signals to the Nazi bombers and getting paid for it". "How else does he live?" the Labour chum had asked. I had to confess that, at the moment, that was one I couldn't answer because I hardly knew myself.

Later on, after standing a few pints to Home Guard cronies, I got the whole story out of them. Their Commander, not a figure highly esteemed either for brains or charm, had apparently convinced himself, after seeing me use a torch to find my way home through the bracken, that I was a dangerous character, who must be watched. Unknown to myself, therefore, the village partisans, night after night, had surrounded my cottage. Concealed in the undergrowth, rifle in hand, they had spent many cold but vigilant hours, waiting for me to emerge and be caught in the act. It is highly probable that if our benefactress had not thoughtfully lent me a chamber pot, I might have been found, one daybreak, weltering in my gore.

In the eyes of the gentry, two of whom, including the vicar, actually called on us in August 1942, after reading the announcement in *The Times* that my elder son had been killed in North Africa—my association with Joseph King, whose part-time secretary I became in 1941, was regarded as a mark at least of modified respectability. Joe King, who had been a friend of mine for nearly thirty years and had met my wife in Sweden, was highly respected in the neighbourhood, in spite of his notorious "views". He had lived for many years at Haslemere, not far from his old political associate Lord Ponsonby of Shulbrede, was a friend and patron of the famous Dolmetsch family and prominent in all benevolent and cultural activities. At the time when he re-appeared in my life and temporarily rescued us from destitution, he had just celebrated his eightieth birthday and was

living in a house among the trees of Charles Hilltop, two or three miles outside Farnham. His interest in Left Wing politics was unabated although he had long since retired from any active connection with the Labour Party. Like most former pacifists whose consciences now told them to regard the people's struggle against Fascism as a war for the liberation of the soul of man, his patriotic belligerence was only equalled by that of Winston Churchill. As an elder statesman of the Left, however, he never lost sight of the dangers to the popular cause which, even after the defeat of the external enemy and victory at the polls, might result from incompetent or treacherous leadership. His distrust of Transport House was no less profound than my own. For this reason he took the keenest interest in the various political campaigns, centring first in the abortive "British Democratic Movement" and later in Sir Richard Acland's Common Wealth Party, on which I was engaged—in conditions of unimaginable difficulty—in my remote and poverty-stricken cottage. Too old to take any part in them himself, he was, nevertheless, eager to make a personal contribution to the anti-Fascist cause. No doubt aware that time was short, he was anxious to leave behind him something that could be regarded by his many friends as his "last utterance". He therefore decided, with my secretarial assistance, to devote his remaining energies to the production of a book, intended for popular consumption, explaining exactly why Britain found herself, so soon after the Victory of 1918, fighting once more against the same aggressive Power. The title he chose for it, "Invasion Today", was rather misleading. He did not intend to convey the idea that an actual invasion of our shores was imminent—the Battle of Britain had been fought and the danger largely averted before we started work—but rather to answer the question of how it had been made possible for our nation to have to endure a second and more fearful ordeal, so soon after the first. In other words, the book was a résumé of political events between 1918 and 1939. Although I may be said to have done the "actual writing", "Invasion Today" is nevertheless a completely faithful reflection of the mind and character

of its nominal author. Any intrusion, however accidental, of the secretary's ideas or points of view was rigorously expunged. Each page had to be a hundred per cent "Joe King" before it was passed. The resulting volume, though as odd and full of quirks as its creator, had therefore running through it the lovable idealism, the courage, honesty, breadth of mind and political shrewdness which so endeared Joe King both to his former Parliamentary colleagues and his innumerable personal friends. It was the "Mad Hatter's" epitaph, composed by himself. After he had completed it, secured its publication by the firm of Watts & Co, and read the few reviews of it which appeared, he died one summer morning, very comfortably, of old age. My wife and I both held him in deep affection and as long as we live we shall remember him with gratitude. He was the last, and one of the best, of the long line of wealthy English Eccentrics.

The most harassing of the many drawbacks to Brookside Cottage was the fact that it was perpetually surrounded by soldiers and frequently made the objective of elaborate "schemes". Although the Army had an almost limitless expanse of War Department common land over which to manoeuvre, the temptation to overrun our poor little cabbage patch appeared to be irresistible. Batteries of guns were established immediately behind us and continued to fire terrifying salvoes months after the war had ended. Presumably the ammunition they used was blank, although we could never be quite certain of this. The big house, some two hundred yards behind us, of which our cottage was a dependancy, was requisitioned by the War Department early in 1940 and was occupied for the next five years by relays of troops, mostly Canadians. The Common, moreover, in our immediate vicinity, was used as a temporary camping ground by contingents on their way to the various fronts. It was also used as a training ground for drivers of tanks and Bren-gun carriers and motor-cyclist "learners". The noise they made was almost as nerve-racking as the noise of the Nazi bombers which, during the raids on London, used to pass nightly over our roof. The tanks chawed up the lanes and footpaths, making it exceedingly difficult to find one's

way back to the cottage at night, and raised clouds of sand which blew in through our windows. The two public houses in the village, the "Cricketers" in the centre, near the church and pond, and the "New Inn" on the main road from Bordon to Aldershot, became, for practical purposes, military canteens. As the "social pint" at night was the sole relaxation available to a sedentary worker like myself, I continued to use my "locals" in spite of the fact that I was often the only civilian customer. In this way, over a period of five and a half years, I got to know some hundreds of British and Canadian "other ranks" belonging to a great variety of regiments and heard first-hand accounts of their experiences from men who had been in most of the big campaigns, from Dunkirk onwards. Unlike my artist and literary friends in the village, I could not have escaped either from the war itself or from its political implications, however much I might have liked to do so. After the autumn of 1941, when my elder son volunteered to fill a vacancy in a battalion of his regiment which was already in the "Western Desert", and my younger son went out to the Middle East, the war began to obsess not only all my waking thoughts but even my dreams. In sleep my mind became sensitive to a series of vivid impressions of war in the desert, hunger, thirst, excitement, fear, relief, alternating in quick succession to build up a composite experience of the campaign. I was haunted with anxiety about my elder boy because I had seen in his hand the cross which, in accordance with the rules of palmistry, signifies a violent death. He himself, moreover, had a premonition, expressed in a cynical cartoon which I found among his papers, that he would not return. These war dreams continued for some years after he had received his fatal wound. The most detailed and disturbing of them was concerned with a violent clash between the British and American generals in command of a joint landing operation in Southern Italy. The American general, in my dream, was General Mark Clark, but the English general was nameless. The net result of the bitter discussion, the charges and counter-charges, was that the American forces withdrew by sea and left their English comrades to

bear the brunt of the attack. Whether in fact, any such incident ever occurred, I have not to this day been able to discover. The censor's blanket has not yet been removed from the Italian campaign and as the British public is apathetic and indifferent, and too intellectually lazy to care about knowing what really happened anywhere, it probably never will be. As dreams are said to go by opposites it may well be that, if any quarrel of the kind described actually took place, it was the British and not the American general who was at fault. I recall the dream merely as an indication of the way in which the war obsessed my imagination, both sleeping and waking.

It was a relief to me to have occasional long walks and still longer sessions in remote village pubs which the soldiery had not invaded, with an old friend whose intellectual ivory tower had remained undisturbed by the world cataclysm. This quality of detachment, peculiarly English and peculiarly the product of our older Universities, has a great fascination for anyone who, like myself, is incapable of achieving it. Occasionally it enables its possessor to make passing comments on events which combine penetration with wisdom in a few marmoreal phrases. More often, alas, it produces comments which, though superior in style almost to the point of pomposity, are subtly vulgarized through cultivated ignorance and lack of feeling. The XVIIIth century produced many examples of such aristocratic pronouncements which have come down to us because of the indestructible elegance of the language in which they were expressed. As soon as their thought content is examined, what G. S. Street once called an "edifice of words" too often collapses.

I have been betrayed into this digression, which has no bearing on the prolonged and absorbing literary discussions on which Tommy Earp and I embarked. We must, between us, have recalled at different times everything we had ever read in French or English, every work of art we had ever seen or admired, every place we had visited in happier days, and all the friends and acquaintances we shared in common. These joint researches into time past provided me with many of my happiest hours during the war's

long nightmare, and I look back upon them as my most agreeable memories of Kingsley. When, after Violet Hunt's death, in 1942, Michael Sadleir commissioned me to write for Messrs Constable a book of reminiscences centring round her home on Campden Hill and the literary figures who frequented it, Tommy's advice and help were invaluable.

Alas, as the war continued and my Left Wing sympathies, "partisan" outlook and anti-Fascist ardour became increasingly pronounced, I became less and less able to concentrate on purely literary themes, more and more what strict Marxists call a "cultural worker". By the time the General Election loomed in sight association with so pronounced and ardent a supporter of the popular cause as myself became an embarrassment to my "non-political" friends, who shrank back with horror, like the fastidious Henry James, from the possibility of getting involved or mixed up in anything which might affect their social prestige. In East Hants, the Election was, largely, though not entirely, fought on the traditional class lines. The gentry, the farmers, the insecure "half-sirs" or not quite-quites, hung together and voted for the Tory candidate, an Old Etonian Major-General with a titled wife. Some of the professional people, in the towns, together with a contingent of "Gladstonian" Nonconformists, voted Liberal. The Labour Party, had it bothered to put up a candidate and had it made the slightest effort to rally its supporters, could have captured most of the agricultural labourers' votes and probably have won the seat. With characteristic inertia, it did nothing. The last thing desired, or expected, by Transport House, was a large working majority which would upset its plans for a new national coalition, with the Right Wing Labour leaders in control. As Mr Ernest Bevin so frankly admitted in his first conference with Mr Molotov, "we thought we had been defeated and woke up to find we had won".

The idea of handing the seat to the sitting Tory member, without even showing the Socialist flag or making any sort of a fight, was maddening to me, after so many years of uphill propaganda. Luckily I was able to persuade an excellent Common Wealth

candidate, Tom Sargant, to make a last-minute intervention. In a three-week's "whirlwind" campaign, embarked on without any organisation, adequate funds, or official Labour support, he was amazingly successful and secured over six thousand votes. As a local stalwart said to me: "If only he could have used the magic word 'Labour' and started two months' earlier, we should have got him in". Much to my surprise, when I entered the "local" on the day of Labour's sweeping victory, I was received with cheers by the civilian workers. The surprise was shared by some Canadian soldiers who had been warned by their "Intelligence" that I was a "Fifth Columnist".

The revelation that England, outside East Hampshire, had decisively swung to the Left, increased my already overwhelming desire to escape from my war-time concentration camp and rejoin my compatriots. Oh to be in *England,* away from the Tory gestapo, the ivory towers, the relics of Feudalism, the blighting atmosphere of ignorance, selfishness and prejudice by which we were surrounded throughout the dreary years! Until that moment, I had not realised how terribly lonely my wife and I had been in our isolated cottage. We had friends and political comrades in Farnham, but the transport difficulties made it impossible for us to meet them frequently. Apart from these occasional contacts, there was no one among our neighbours, kind as several of them were, who shared our hopes and fears and with whom we could talk freely, with some chance of being understood. We should have felt far more at home, apart from the language difficulty, in France, in Yugoslavia, indeed in any country where there was a politically-educated resistance movement, than we ever did in Kingsley. During the whole summer of 1945 the desire to escape was an obsession. But how? But where? We scoured the coastal towns, in vain. We explored the Isle of Wight, but mercifully found nothing in the way of a house or flat available. We went to Sandgate and were in despair because, at the last moment, we failed to secure a weatherboard cottage in which we should have been miserable. And then, at last, we had a piece of luck.

During the war years our principal peace-time "ambitions"

centred round such things as hot baths, electric kettles, bedside reading-lamps, a telephone and a laundry which "collects and delivers". When all these long-dreamed-of amenities were providentially vouchsafed to us, assembled, moreover, in a small Georgian house in a charming old town on the coast of my native Kent, the cup of our happiness "was filled to overflowing". Added to all this was the sense of liberation which came from living in a corner of "traditional" England which had, in the main, turned Left, after its gruelling experiences of blitz and bombardment. The proximity of a lively and progressive mining community, recruited largely from Wales, North England and Scotland, charged the political atmosphere with what, for me, was a sympathetic vitality which blended admirably with the bracing sea air.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Tory Defeat

THE revolutionary struggle which broke out in September 1939 and has not yet reached its culmination, had more extraordinary features, was conducted with more incompetence and confusion of aim than any war in which Great Britain has ever been engaged. Its declaration by the Chamberlain Government which, up to the last minute, was anticipating some kind of Polish "Munich", was forced by the irresistible pressure of the masses who declined to accept surrender to the dictators and had an overwhelming moral aversion to the Nazi-Fascist ideology. The Party which led them into battle, however, and the classes which immediately pounced upon every available war-job, had previously given all possible encouragement, social, diplomatic and financial, to Britain's enemies, and reserved their ideological antipathies for "Bolshevism". I made an imaginary character, in my book, "Facing the Odds", put the matter in this way. "If this were a war against Bolshevist Russia and it was going to be conducted by Messrs Harry Pollitt, Pritt, Tom Mann, Victor Gollancz and the Dean of Canterbury, the Tories would register alarm. A war against Hitler conducted by a clique who have hitherto been Hitler's warmest supporters, strikes me as a bit phoney, for the same season. Obviously, we must have a crack at the Nazis—English as well as German—but for the love of Mike, let's have leaders we can trust!"

The only soldiers in Great Britain who had any practical experience of modern methods of war were the surviving veterans of the International Brigade. These men had proved their courage, tenacity, military skill and fanatical hatred of the Fascist enemy

on a dozen battlefields. England had, in fact, a number of potential Titos, but as General Sir George Jeffreys, M.P. for East Hants, observed in reply to a letter I wrote to him on the subject, there was "no place for men of the so-called International Brigade in the British Army". There wasn't. Tom Wintringham, Slater, Vernon and others were permitted, when invasion was hourly expected, to train members of the Home Guard in modern methods of guerilla warfare, in the school they established at Osterley Park, but as soon as the danger receded, the war office took over and Wintringham was forced to resign. Although the war would have collapsed ignominiously after Dunkirk if the people had not risen in their might and refused to give in, no one on the popular side, politically, was allowed, if his opinions were known, to receive the promotion to which his military record entitled him. Even in the women's corps, priority in regard to commissions was automatically accorded to Mayfair girls, some of whom openly admitted that "of course, we are fighting the wrong war", while ladies of pronounced Fascist sympathies found no difficulty in obtaining employment in the Censor's office. From first to last, with the possible exception of General Wingate, of Chindit fame, no one suspected of being unsound, from the Tory standpoint, was permitted to hold a key position in any of the Services or Government Departments. As far as "the Reds" where concerned, they might sweat in the mines and workshops and die in thousands on the battlefields, but only under the strict control of their political opponents and social superiors.

The opening stages of the "phoney" war were certainly calculated to fill patriotic people with alarm and despondency. Our Armies crossed the Channel and took up the positions allotted to them; but nothing happened. The officers, according to some reports, took golf clubs and tennis rackets with them, and a British General, with vulgar levity, asked permission to transport a pack of foxhounds to France. Corrupt as the French Government was, it at least refused this insulting request.

Popular illustrated papers came out with fulsome articles about "Philosopher Gamelin", the diminutive French generalissimo, and

it was assumed that, like his predecessor, Trochu, he "had a plan". To the disgust of decent people, the plan, if it existed, did not include taking any steps to intervene while Poland was being overrun. The suspicion that Neville Chamberlain and Lord Halifax were still playing for 'appeasement' and hoping to patch up peace, at Poland's expense, before the Western Powers were attacked, was widespread. Two British intelligence officers were kidnapped in Holland two months after war broke out and it was alleged that they were conveying a personal letter from Lord Halifax to Göring. As far as I can discover, no enquiries were made in Parliament, and to this day the allegation has been neither confirmed nor denied.

In an analysis of the war's opening stages, Lord Strabolgi, in his book "Singapore and After" (1942) wrote as follows: "When war came those responsible for the conduct of the campaign in London and Paris proved utterly unworthy of their responsibilities. They allowed their Polish Allies, who were willing to fight, and were fighting hard, to be overrun without any serious attempt to divert or lessen the German pressure. A great French Army, supported by certain well-trained British divisions, and a fine British Air force remained quiescent behind the fixed fortifications while the great bulk of the German Army was engaged in the first great example of a blitzkrieg against the unhappy Poles. The French had magnificent heavy tanks, ample heavy artillery and, together with the British, disposed of splendid infantry, if properly led. The corresponding fortifications on the German side were far weaker and incomplete; responsible German staff officers have since admitted that a large-scale offensive against the West Wall (Siegfried Line) would probably have succeeded. No second fighting front was created".

Further details of the Anglo-French failure were supplied by Dr Wilhelm Necker, in his book "This Bewildering War". At the beginning of the war, Dr Necker reminds us, "an advance was made in the region of Saarbrucken and a French communiqué announced: The entire ninety mile front between the Moselle and the Rhine is now on German soil.

"... There were a number of very good reasons for a Franco-British offensive, and the question arises why no such offensive was launched ... At the beginning of the war there were hardly any German aeroplanes on the Western front at all, and when in the first few days of the war a squadron of British bombers paid a surprise visit to Wilhelmshaven and the Kiel Canal they reported that they had met with no opposition from enemy fighters". Our raiders, at this period, it may be remarked in passing, were engaged, in dropping *leaflets*, composed in German by a British Civil Servant, which are supposed to have invited the German people to get rid of Hitler and lay down their arms. Frequent demands were made for the publication of the text of these strange documents. Publication was refused on 'security' grounds—presumably to prevent the Nazi Government from getting to hear about them!

"At the beginning of the war", Dr Necker continues, "Great Britain and France undoubtedly could have had command of the air. An air offensive launched by their two air forces in conjunction could have struck directly at the most vital centres of the German industrial system. Germany's coal fields and iron foundries were all to hand, and the industry of Saarbrucken and Neunkirchen could have been put out of commission with ease. A little further to the north lie the great chemical works in Ludwigshaven and Hoechst-am-Main ... In addition, a very high percentage of Nazi Germany's war production is concentrated in the Ruhr district; which is not too far away to be attacked successfully ... Further, the railway network in the Ruhr and Rhine industrial districts is so closely meshed that the bombs would have found easy targets ... the Krupp works in Essen are so big and widespread that they would be difficult to miss, and the same is true of the big Rheinmetall-Borsig works in Duisburg". Dr Necker points out that a big air offensive of the kind described, if launched by the Allied powers at the outset of the war, would have compelled the German High Command to bring back large mumbers of aeroplanes from the Polish front. The offensive, which would have relieved Poland,

and, as we are now told, brought about Hitler's rapid defeat, was never attempted. "Why it was not carried out we shall probably know only after the war. Perhaps the authorities responsible did not realize the full effect such an offensive might have had. Perhaps they were afraid of Nazi reprisals."

Some idea of the political atmosphere in London at this time can be gathered from the evidence given in a case brought by Princess Hohenlohe against the late Lord Rothermere for arrears of salary. Lord Rothermere had already paid this woman £ 51,000 for somewhat equivocal services in connection with his personal negotiations with the Nazis. "You surely know", said Captain Weidemann, addressing Lord Rothermere for the Princess, "that the Princess last May, with your assistance, started negotiations with Lord Halifax, and it was her groundwork that made the Munich agreement possible. Furthermore it was the Princess who introduced you to the Fuehrer". Lord Rothermere won his case, but the report of the trial was not sent to the public prosecutor. With the conduct of affairs in such hands, it is hardly surprising that the Poles were abandoned to their fate.

The French, until just before the May offensive, put such faith in their Maginot Line that their initiative was paralysed. Yet they refused to pay for its completion to the coast and the British also refused.

M. W. Fodor, in his book "The Revolution is On", disclosed that "Leslie Hore-Belisha, the British War Minister, insisted that his country should pay for the extension of a strong Maginot Line to the North Sea—he knew what he was talking about—but 'appeaser' Sir John Simon objected to such a large expenditure. And Hore-Belisha had to go". Neville Chamberlain, in announcing Hore-Belisha's enforced retirement in the House of Commons, appeared embarrassed, but Mr Attlee came to his rescue and, to the surprise of his supporters, made the speech expected from the Premier.

While these events were taking place, Soviet Russia, always the "real enemy" of the plutocratic Tory party and their Labour

supporters, had embarked upon a preventive war against Finland. The enormously strong Mannerheim defences—said to be the most powerful fortified line in Europe—constituted a direct menace to Leningrad. As Stalin had no illusions about Hitler's ultimate intentions, his "preventive war" proved to be amply justified on the ground of security. The anti-Soviet "Munichcers", including the Right-Wing Labour leaders, showed as little political awareness over Finland and as much fanatical anti-Soviet prejudice as they do to-day. The Nazi menace was almost forgotten in the frenzy of rage caused by Stalin's "wanton" attack on the gallant little Finns. The fact that Chamberlain's surrender at Munich and behaviour afterwards had been the direct cause of the Hitler-Stalin pact was conveniently forgotten. The Labour leaders vied with the Catholic Fascist press and the Bolshie-haunted Tories in their eagerness to add the might of Russia to our other foes. Here, as memories are short, it may be as well to remind readers, in Dr Necker's words, how Russia had been treated at Munich. "The Four-Power Conference (Munich) was a clear challenge and threat to Soviet Russia, irrespective of the diplomatic denials which accompanied it. The Czechoslovakian Minister of Propaganda declared openly, in a speech which was broadcast to the world, that the Czechoslovakian Government had been told bluntly by Great Britain and France that it would be regarded as an enemy if it dared to defend its country in alliance with Soviet Russia. And now Soviet Russia was suddenly (in the summer of 1939) asked to be a partner with the automatic obligation of carrying great burdens under the most unfavourable conditions". In another passage, complementary to the above, Dr Necker states: "To Soviet Russia it appeared that she was not wanted in the European front against Nazi Germany, though, of course, she was wanted in reality, but not on her own terms, even though her membership of the front against aggression was the keystone to the problem of war or peace... Soviet Russia stated the terms on which she was prepared to come in. Once those terms were rejected she had to act independently in the interests of her own security".

Such was the political background of the Russo-Finnish war although the British Press, with only one or two exceptions, was careful to misinterpret Stalin's action and to paint our future allies in the blackest colours. Eager crowds of British journalists flocked to Helsinki to describe the fighting, and, although not one of them was allowed to proceed to the front, vivid accounts of the Finnish victories appeared in the London dailies. The credit for enlightening that section of the British public which is capable of using its brains and examining facts with detachment belongs very largely to Mr D. N. Pritt, K. C., M. P., whose widely-read Penguin volume, "Must the War Spread?" impressed patriots of all parties, except Right Wing Labour, by the cogency of its arguments. Sir Walter Citrine, Transport House's official expert on Foreign Affairs, who had previously supported Non-Intervention in Spain, hurried off to Finland to report. After his return, Mr Attlee and his associates decided to agree to the Tory plan of campaign in Finland and Scandinavia, and Mr Pritt was expelled from the Labour Party for his "deviation".

On February 4th 1940, Messrs Chamberlain and Daladier and their combined General Staffs decided to despatch a force of 100,000 men to aid the Finns. Whether such an army of trained and equipped men was actually available is open to question in the light of later revelations. In any case, fortunately for the world, the Prime Ministers of Norway and Sweden declined to allow the passage of allied troops over their territories. Thus the Franco-British decision to commit national suicide three months before Dunkirk, which the Labour Party had approved in principle, had to be abandoned, much to the chagrin of British anti-bolshevists.

In the hope of getting a few readers to face and examine the Bolshevik bogey, I addressed the following letter to the *New Statesman and Nation,* which was then sitting rather precariously on the fence. The letter did not appear.

"Bolshevism"

To the Editor, *The New Statesman and Nation.*

Sir,

The chronic hysteria of our property-owning classes, which enables those who control our policy to stampede them into paroxysms of rage and terror by exploiting some word or phrase to which their newspapers have given a pejorative significance, has long been a national danger. It may soon prove a disaster.

Forty years ago, "Pro-Boer" was enough to make any genteel inhabitant of South Kensington or Wimbledon grow scarlet with wrath. Identified "Pro-Boers" were heavily cut and drawing-rooms known to harbour them were frequently evacuated "in a marked manner".

Nowadays, "Bolshevism" is the red rag which infuriates the Tory bull and any Englishman who, on patriotic grounds, declines to show confidence in the Chamberlain-Attlee combine, is automatically suspected of being a "Bolshevist". In the past seven years Hitler, by skilfully waving it to stimulate plutocratic jitters, has driven our governing classes almost off their heads and, but for the core of resistance in the common people of England and France, would have fooled the Western democracies into surrender without firing a shot. Even now, so great is the panic inspired in our rulers by "Bolshevism", that they appear to be trying to make the campaign in Finland a pretext for "switching the war" into an "anti-Bolshevik" crusade. In order to fight "Bolshevism" our big financial sharks are not only prepared, as someone cynically put it, "to fight to the last Finn", they also appear to be quite ready to send English militiamen to reinforce the White Guards of the ex-Czarist Mannerheim, and fight shoulder to shoulder in the arctic snow, with "volunteers" from Franco Spain, Fascist

Italy and—if their plans succeed—a Germany weaned from Stalin and regenerated by the substitution of Göring for Hitler.

Although this one word of three syllables had already had the effect of confusing and befogging our war aims and thus weakening the national resistance to our Nazi-Fascist enemies, no Member of Parliament has yet had the courage to ask our rulers for a plain statement of what they think it means. The Bolshevist bogey has never been produced for public inspection. If Mr Chamberlain and his friends want our soldiers to risk their lives fighting against such nameless horrors as the abolition of unemployment, paid holidays for the workers, maternity benefits and the removal of the profit motive in industry, let them say so. If their more positive aim is to re-open Russia as a field for finance-capital, to restore a Czar, Grand Dukes and serfdom, let them frankly admit it.

They should also make it clear why they think that by bringing down Stalin—in the unlikely event of their achieving their long-distance objective—they will thereby suppress those new economic ideas on which Lenin so successfully established the Russia of to-day.

Although the Communist Party had made the appalling blunder of refusing to support the war until Russia was attacked, the credit of being the first to reveal the real facts about the campaign in Finland, belongs, alone among English newspapers, to the *Daily Worker*. Some day we may discover how much the directors of International Nickel and the bankers of London and Paris had to do with preparing the way for a disaster which was so narrowly averted.

How great was the danger from which we escaped through the enforced abandonment of the hare-brained Finnish adventure, was revealed in the Debate on our Norwegian defeat which opened in the House of Commons on May 7th 1940 and resulted in Mr Chamberlain's displacement. On the previous Thursday, Mr Churchill, First Lord of the Admirality, said: "We are greatly advantaged by what has occurred, provided we act with unceasing

and increasing vigour". Chamberlain, on the same occasion said: "I am satisfied that the balance of advantage lies up to the present with the Allied Forces". The Debate, to which the Liberal leader, Sir Archibald Sinclair, made a notable contribution, revealed these astounding staetements in their true light. As Sir Archibald put in: "The complacent and, alas, ill-founded boastings of Ministers contrast pitifully with the hard, swift blows of the German forces, for in war it is only results which count". What roused the country to flaming revolt were examples of the incompetence of the Military and Naval High Command, and of the Minister of Supply, the egregious Dr Burgin, which Sir Archibald and other speakers gave to a horrified Parliament. Dr Burgin had told journalists that he did not know of "any force which had been so splendidly equipped in so short a time". Sir Archibald, however, had received first-hand accounts, from men who had returned from Norway, which gave a very different picture. "I want to tell the House", Sir Archibald said, "what these men told me about the equipment of our troops. They criticized our assigning such a difficult task to Territorials instead of to seasoned troops. The French sent their best troops. Then there were serious deficiencies in equipment. The Minister of Supply appeared in a Press picture in a becoming white coat, but the troops at Namsos had no white coats at all. Apparently he had the only one. They had no snow shoes, and if this force were really prepared for Finland it seems incredible that they should have had no snow shoes, because without them soldiers cannot deploy in deep snow or scatter under air attack or send out patrols to guard their flanks. In the fighting which occurred at Namsos, I understand that men were caught up to their waists in snow. Indeed, it makes me wonder whether the Finnish force really did exist, at any rate on the scale which I understood from the Prime Minister when he talked about the 100.000 men who would be available for Finland and for defending Norway and Sweden from a German counter stroke.

"These men gave me several examples of deficiencies of equipment, but there are two which I ought to tell the House, of

the muddle, waste and confusion, because they ought really to be the subject of inquiry. At one place two anti-aircraft guns were landed. They had an unsuitable type of mounting, they were unprovided with height-finders, they had no means of testing sights, no trained men to work the guns, no fuse keys to set the fuses, no range tables and no trajectory charts. The House will not be surprised if I say that these men told me that the guns were utterly useless. The second example relates to a transport. This transport sailed without a chronometer or barometer. It had no international code book and, therefore, no means of communicating with other vessels. It had no arms,—not even a rifle. It had no splinter-proof protection, not even a tin hat, and no escort on its return voyage. It had food for less than half the number of men on board and carried a small number of wounded soldiers for whom there was no medical attention or treatment of any kind. Only one in three of the lifeboats could be swung and held outboard—for these there were no water breakers, so that there would haven been no supplies of fresh water if the men had had to take to the boats. They had some charts, but not for the particular Norwegian waters to which the ship was directed. They had no charts for the parts of the North Sea over which they returned on the way home. The greatest mystery about this ship is why she ever made the voyage. She carried a certain cargo, and I have worked out the proportions carefully to give the House a picture. The cargo represented an insignificant fraction of her capacity, and stores of this material which she carried existing at her destination amounted to just under 300 times the amount which she brought. Yet to convoy this absurdly insignificant cargo across the North Sea and to return she burned 350 tons of fuel".

A surprising speech, in view of his past record as a supporter of General Franco and a die-hard reactionary, came from Sir Henry Page Croft, who actually suggested, "amid laughter", that we should get into touch with Russia. "I really do not understand what there is to laugh at", he said. "I am perfectly aware that there are one or two Conservative Members who think that

Russia's assistance would be almost worse than defeat by Germany. Personally, I think we want all the help we can get in this war, and the sooner we get Russian help, and any American help, the better it will be. One of our greatest difficulties at the present time is that we have this sullen, stupid rupture with Russia, based mostly upon snobbery and upon the hatred of Bolshevism or some silly nonsense of that sort. We have to collect our friends from where we can, and the sooner we have a trade treaty with Russia—that trade can only come round the North Sea from Archangel through dangerous waters at the present time—the better it will be in the end. Russia is as terrified of Germany as any other country at the present time. We want a complete change in the conduct of this war".

The "change" came in the form of a revolt of patriotic Tories, but it was not of so drastic a nature as the country expected or desired. The Labour Party, at their Bournemouth Conference, agreed to serve under Mr Churchill in a new Coalition Government, but they attached no conditions to this agreement, not even demanding the resignation of Neville Chamberlain and Lord Halifax, the two men whose actions had been chiefly responsible for our long chain of calamities. Thus they accepted responsibility without power, paralysed the Labour Movement by the "electoral truce", and thereby not only delayed our final victory, but made infinitely more difficult the achievement of peace. In the intense relief caused by Mr Churchill's promotion to the position of War leader, at a moment of direst peril, few realised how completely the Labour Party had, once again, let the country down.

The new War Cabinet consisted of five members. Mr Churchill, Mr Chamberlain and Lord Halifax, with Mr Attlee as Lord Privy Seal and Mr Arthur Greenwood as Minister without portfolio. On May 13th, a little more than a fortnight before Dunkirk, Mr Churchill moved that "this House welcomes the formation of a Government representing the united and inflexible resolve of the nation to prosecute the war with Germany to a victorious conclusion". On May 22nd, Mr Attlee, on behalf of

the new Government, asked for, and obtained, comprehensive powers to conscript both life and *property* in the service of the nation. This meant that the Government had legal authority to control industry and capital as well as man-power, to eliminate profiteering and implement the principle of equality of sacrifice. The response from the working classes, particularly when their emotions were aroused by Mr Churchill's magnificently inspiring orations, was immediate and overwhelming. The irresistible dynamic force, generated by a successful democratic revolution, carried the people triumphantly through Dunkirk, set the wheels of industry turning night and day, and found expression in the matchless heroism displayed in the Battle of Britain.

The ignominious defeat of the Conservative ruling class and of the political machine by means of which they had so long misgoverned Britain was miraculously transformed, by the popular resistance, into something which had in it the hope, if not the presage, of ultimate victory. The collapse of "Chamberlain's England" at Dunkirk did not, however, produce the same consequences for the English, as the collapse of the third Republic produced for the people of France. Perhaps, for that reason, the liberation of our country from its evil past is still, a year after the advent of a Labour Government, very far from being accomplished. For the time being, however, Dunkirk and its aftermath, had a salutary influence, by changing the whole atmosphere, and welding the people of Britain, regardless of class distinctions and political differences, into a band of brothers united in one great and ennobling purpose. I listened to Churchill's immortal "we shall fight" speech in the saloon of a pub called 'The Cherry Tree' in a near-by village. It was a lovely summer evening. The gentle English landscape had never looked more delicious, more peaceful, more steeped in gracious and kindly traditions, more worth a supreme effort to defend. Churchill, in this his finest hour, was inspired to speak over the heads of his Government, of the House of Commons, the Service chiefs and the permanent officials, to the masses of the people and, in doing so, he achieved greatness both for himself and

them. The phoney war was forgotten: the war of confused aims, secret purposes, commercial intrigues and political treacheries which dragged its way to the most austere and disheartening "victory" in our history, had not yet properly begun. For six months, while we were living under the constant threat of invasion, all our thoughts were fixed upon the survival not of ourselves, as individuals, but of the land we loved and the heritage of beauty and greatness which our fore-fathers had built up and bequeathed to us. The English *mystique* revealed itself, in those days, as a curious blend of humour and poetry, of trivial things like being fond of flowers and animals and friends, fond of the "seaside" and the "local", of games and discussions, of books and homes and hobbies, fond of a whole lot of nonsense, including plenty of 'cheap sentiment' and ecstatic enjoyment when Gert and Daisy laughed at it.

Norway and Dunkirk, following so inevitably after Non-Intervention, Munich and "all that" was so complete an exposure of the corruption, incompetence and moral depravity of our ruling clique and the social class in which they had their roots that, for a time, the Conservative gentry and their toadies were frightened, ashamed of themselves, tongue-tied and apologetic. Even Fleet Street was permitted to show its genuine patriotism and the tone of the national newspapers changed miraculously to reflect the national spirit. A half-hearted attempt was made to claim the Battle of Britain as a triumph for the old school tie, as a demonstration of the superior military virtues of Etonians and Harrovians. It was not successful because no one knew better than the parents of the pilots and their chums and girl friends, that the great majority of them were just chaps from secondary schools and suburban homes and shops and offices and banks. A cross-section of Young England. It was, in fact, the ordinary blokes, including their wives and mothers, "the old married women" of the popular song, who saved England in her finest and darkest hour. Mrs Miniver, the Vicar and the dear old Colonel no longer took the lead in civilian activities, as they had done in previous national emergencies, though, to do them

justice, the best of them, as politicians put it, "played their part". It was this protected class, however, and particularly the female section of it, which supplied most of the war-work shirkers, food hogs and safety-firsters who caused so much ill feeling. It has recently been possible for everyone to identify the type. When bread rationing had to be instituted, to insure that the poorest and most hard-working of the community got their fair share of our diminished stocks, all the idle and worthless women who had never gone without food "in short supply" during the war years, ganged up to sign petitions of protest.

While England was engaged in fighting, quite simply for her survival as a free nation, while she could rely on the single-minded courage and tenacity of a leader who towered head and shoulders above all his associates, while she stood alone among the nations, defending not only herself and Europe but also the great greedy Republic—the ultimate objective of all European aggressors—which refused to aid us except on "cash and carry" terms, the war was at least *clean*. The English could, and did, hold up their heads with pride and face what was coming to them with all the courage they could muster. When dangers are removed and tension relaxed, memory tends to pass a sponge over the bad moments. To recall the imminent peril of invasion through which we lived in the summer of 1940, in view of the subsequent more actual perils from the bombs and rockets which destroyed so many lives and homes, now requires a mental effort. It comes back to me, to-day, as having been, paradoxically, one of the happiest, although the most terrifying, periods I had known for a quarter of a century, or have known since. At last our country was united, at last our people were able to prove their intestinal strength in a desperate effort to withstand the forces of Evil and to overcome them; at last we had a leader worthy of us, a leader who had risen above the nauseous bargainings of Party politics. It was grand—while it lasted. Grand and inspiring to be living in "the finest hour" of England's history, after so much "appeasement" of our enemies by Foreign Office cads, at the instigation of financial crooks. It was grand

to be able to draw a breath of clean air to-day, even if the struggle in the towns and "on the beaches" were to go against us tomorrow.

Yes, it was grand. And while we were feeling how grand it was, still rejoicing in the Battle of Britain, Neville Chamberlain passed to his unlamented grave. And Mr Churchill, at the invitation of Lord Halifax, accepted the Chairmanship of the Conservative Party. And that was that.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Tory Recovery

WHILE Mr Churchill never faltered in his determination to beat the "Narzis", in which aim he had the whole country solidly behind him, it soon became evident to political observers that he was equally determined to do his utmost to restore the prestige of the class and Party to which he belonged. As the man in the street saw the situation Mr Churchill had been kept out of office for nine years by the Chamberlain gang. His warnings which, had they been acted upon, might, up to the last moment, have made the outbreak of war impossible, had been disregarded by them. The fact that he had incurred the active hostility and dislike of those of his political associates who had proved so unworthy of the nation's trust was one of his greatest assets in the eyes of decent Englishmen. It inspired them with confidence in his leadership and contributed enormously to his popularity. It was assumed that as the common people had brought him to power, in the teeth of Tory opposition, the changes they demanded, including the dismissal of the "Munich-cheers", were as good as "in the bag". This assumption, due to wishful thinking and to the average Englishman's invincible ignorance of how he is governed and who actually governs him, proved to have very little foundation. To begin with, there was the complicated problem of Mr Churchill's "loyalty". Undoubtedly Mr Churchill was loyal to "England", magnificently pugnacious in her defence and as courageous and tenacious as the Bull-dog he personified. But you cannot teach an old dog new tricks or give an old politician, who has spent forty years of his life in

the House of Commons, new conceptions. The "England" of our Conservative Old Harrovian, of half-American, half-aristocratic lineage, was something very different from the "England" which dims the eye of the old woman in the back street, inspires emotions in the Cockney which he conceals under a protective armour of corrosively cynical backchat, or arouses Cromwellian fire in the bosom of a Nonconformist Radical. Churchill's "England" was the grand old firm, the historic group, imprisoning and supporting the Crown, for which his great ancestor had won Blenheim and Malplaquet. It was an England primarily composed of Etonians and Harrovians, landowners, permanent officials, the military and naval caste, controlled by the bankers and industrialists with whom they were closely connected and loyally supported by patriotic lower orders who were loyal to their Trade Union bosses who were, in their turn, loyal to the Government in power. It was the "England", in short, of Noel Coward's "Cavalcade", an England run by the ruling class, and the only changes Mr Churchill ever made or contemplated were a substitution of efficient executives within that class, for those who had proved weak or incompetent. He kept very clearly in mind the determination that, in spite of its past failures, the Conservative ruling class was to be, revealed under his guidance, as to quote his words "the main part of the rock on which the salvation of Britain was founded and the freedom of mankind regained". Accordingly, he spread out over them the protective umbrella of his enormous popularity and encouraged the best people to continue that "Forward march" to what they considered their true and just inheritance—big profits, Free Enterprise and financial domination—which their military defeat had so gravely interrupted. It was, no doubt, something of a tragedy that the common herd did not produce a champion of their own, to lead them in what was essentially an ideological and revolutionary struggle. The fact remains that they did not. The anti-Fascist "resistance", in Britain as in other countries, supplied innumerable humble heroes and its fair quota of martyrs to the Cause, but it never threw up a figure in any way comparable to Winston

Churchill. No other Englishman, of any class or party, could have done for us what Churchill did in his finest hour. And it is by their "finest hours" that men of genius, whether artists or politicians, should be judged by posterity. What brought down Churchill, in spite of his immense services to the nation, was his obstinate, incorrigible "loyalty" to the third-rate "guilty men", whose services he insisted on retaining, and his own ideological sympathies with our Nazi-Fascist enemies. Churchill did not hate Hitler and Mussolini because they were dictators or because their régimes were totalitarian, but simply because they had the infamous effrontery to wage an aggressive war on England and her allies. This was made clear in his dealings with General Franco who, although as vile a tyrant and mass murderer as Hitler, did not attack us and therefore received from him a pat on the back for his restraint.

All this, although clear enough in retrospect, was not apparent when the nation had its back to the wall in the brave and glorious days of 1940, although even then there were alarming indications that the old gang of appeasers, defeatists and fifth columnists had not been smoked out of their retreats in the War office and the Home Office. Shortly before the collapse of France Pétain had rounded up all the anti-Nazi Germans the police could lay hands on, so that when the invaders swept into Paris the Gestapo found them "ready chained and labelled".

After the retreat from Dunkirk, when the invasion of our island was hourly expected, the British authorities, acting in conjunction with a Committee of the Cabinet, appropriately presided over by Neville Chamberlain, took exactly the same line. Some 70,000 anti-Nazi refugees, whose services as soldiers or technicians would have been of immense value to our cause, were rounded up and herded in concentration camps which, though less congested than Buchenwald and Dachau, were scandalously inadequate. Not content with this, the Home Office supplied the Gestapo, through Switzerland, with a list of the anti-Nazi "criminals" thus obligingly interned in anticipation of Hitler's arrival. Some genuine Nazis and Italian Fascists were, no doubt, imprisoned

with the unfortunate men who had sought protection in Britain from their brutality: but there were not enough of them to fill more than a third of the accommodation in the ill-fated *Arandora Star*. The remainder of the prisoners on the doomed ship were innocent victims and included invalids, children snatched from school without warning, technicians and anti-Nazi writers of European fame. When the liner was torpedoed, they were drowned like rats. In spite of the nation-wide outcry against this revolting episode, which H. G. Wells, in an article which appeared in *Reynolds' News* and the New York *New Republic*, bluntly attributed to treachery of the Quisling type, no action was taken to bring the persons responsible to justice.In a debate which took place in the House of Lords the Duke of Devonshire stated that the decision to intern all aliens was "forced on the Government by the military authorities" and added that it was impossible "to deny that conditions in some camps had been unsatisfactory but the Home Secretary (Sir John Anderson) hoped to bring about a steady and progressive improvement". The Bishop of Chichester said that "brilliant men who had fought Hitler for years were walking about in internment camps . . ." He mentioned men he had seen in camps in the Isle of Man and elsewhere—Bren gun and tank experts, the author of a text book used by the Royal Air Force, and men who, if their dossiers at the Home Office were found, would be executed by Hitler should they fall into his power. "I was astounded", he said, "at the quantity as well as the quality of the material available—doctors, professors, scientists, inventors, chemists, industrialists—who want to work for Britain, freedom and justice". The anti-Nazi cartoonist, Willi Wolper, who was lucky enough to secure his release in August 1940, appealed for "men like Robert Neumann, men like Bruno Heilig—both still interned, both writers against the Nazis; men who fought with the International Brigade in Spain: the 365 of them who volunteered for the Pioneer Corps. These men could be used. They want to be used".

The real reason for the action of the military authorities, and the gang of hard-bitten reactionaries in the Home Office, was,

we may well suspect, the fact all these fanatical anti-Nazi foreigners came under the category of "Red scum". They were Communists, or Socialists or Liberals or even Jews. The most hated of all were the heroes of the International Brigade, who had volunteered to fight in the first round of the struggle, at the time when British conservatives were backing our enemies. For that offence the Home Office permanent officials, who have done so much for Mosley, the Service Chiefs, the notorious "M. I. 5", and all the Catholic Fascists who "preferred defeat to Bolshevism" have never forgiven them.

Indications of the fanatical hatred of the British friends of Franco for men known to have fought on the Republican side were plentiful when the Home Guard was being recruited. The *Daily Express* quoted the case of the Hon. Wogan Philipps who was refused an enrolment card as a result of a round robin having been signed against him by some of the members in his district. "Mr Philipps said last night: 'All this dates back to the Spanish Civil War when the local gentry sympathized with Franco and I happened to drive an ambulance for the Republicans'." The incident and numerous similar ones threw a curious sidelight on rural England on the eve of the anticipated invasion. Would the friends of Franco really have fought their ideological comrades, or would they have collaborated with them like Laval, Quisling and Mihailovitch and helped to sabotage our resistance? The answers to this question will never be definitely known.

The treatment of our Spanish Republican allies in 1940 was particularly caddish. Some of these men, belonging to a Volunteer Labour Corps, fought side by side with the British Army in France, and were evacuated with our forces from Dunkirk. On arrival in this country they were promptly arrested, thrown into gaol and regarded as "ordinary prisoners"—that is to say as *criminals!* From that day to this, while Franco's agents and emissaries have been shown extraordinary favour by successive British Governments, anti-Fascist Spaniards have been treated little better than enemies. Only after a year's agitation by the decent elements in the Trade Unions has the Labour Government been

forced, reluctantly, to terminate this hoary scandal. The following paragraph appeared in *Reynolds' News* as late as August 5th 1946: "After languishing in internment camps in France and England for nine years, 43 members of the Spanish Republican Army who fled when Franco triumphed will be given their freedom in this country on two conditions. The Government has decided that they must work and must be provided with accommodation. If these conditions can be fulfilled, 29 are to be sent to Manchester, 10 to London, and four will remain in Chorley, where the men have been in a camp of their own, segregated from German internees... The big difficulty is finding billets". There was no difficulty in finding "billets" for Franco's missionaries who at the peak of London's housing shortage were allowed to acquire an enormous mansion for their exclusive use.

The realisation that the war was not to be in any real sense a 'people's war', or rather that 'the people' were to have no say in its conduct or direction, came when Mr Churchill completed his bargaining with the Conservative Central Office and appointed Captain Margesson to the War Office and sent Lord Halifax to Washington. The former appointment, though an insult to the Army and a cynical announcement to the nation that the Old Gang were still in the saddle, had little real significance, as it merely confirmed what most people suspected. The latter, though received with respectful applause by the press, produced widespread consternation and alarm throughout the country. What Liberal Americans thought of it was, as usual, not revealed by the Washington correspondents of British newspapers, though one of the weeklies quoted a comment from the *New Republic*, a review believed to be closely in touch with the White House, to the effect that the kindest thing that could be said of the appointment was that it was "a hideous mistake".

No figure in British politics, in my lifetime, has presented a more baffling psychological enigma than Lord Halifax. Is he a "split personality", a sufferer from schizophrenia? In private a "Dr Jekyll", in public a political "Mr Hyde"? To his saintliness, his lovable nature, his modesty, his high sense of honour, his

disinterestedness, his patriotism, his moral courage, his unswerving devotion to duty, his friends and admirers have paid eloquent tributes. We must accept their testimony, since they know him and we do not, that he is the veritable incarnation, in private, of all the qualities which our grandparents used to associate with their conception of the "English gentleman".

But a politician, who for a number of years has exercised immense power and influence, can be judged by his compatriots only by his *public* actions. If, for example, an eminent Foreign Secretary points a loaded pistol at his son's head, and fires it, the average citizen will regard him as a murderer, without paying much consideration to the nobility of his intentions or the prayerful devoutness of his character. Judged by his record as a leading British statesman, which is all that legitimately concerns us, Lord Halifax's career has been one of unrelieved disaster. Not only have all his principal decisions and pronouncements been demonstrably wrong and tragic in their results, they have also been morally indefensible. Again and again, he has, in schoolboy language, acted like a cad, spoken like a cad and consorted with cads. Six months after Dr Melly had established his field hospital in Abyssinia, paid for by the subscriptions of thousands of horrified English people, Lord Halifax found it impossible to believe that a great and civilized nation like Italy could be capable of using poison gas. The Italian ships had passed through the Suez Canal and the exact amount of yperite they carried in their holds was known to the British authorities. In 1937 Lord Halifax, well aware of the atrocities for which he has now been arraigned at Nuremberg, accepted an invitation to visit Göring at his country house and was presented by his host to Hitler, at Berchtesgaden. Lord Halifax, unlike the inmates of Buchenwald and Dachau, was impressed by Göring's "human quality". He was so much impressed by it that even the evidences of Göring's "humanity", afforded by the performances of the Nazi *Luftwaffe* at Guernica and elsewhere, left him unmoved. After all, Pope Pius XI, had just sent his Apostolic blessing to General Franco and expressed his happiness to hear of the "living faith of Catholic Spain", so

that Göring's actions must have the Church's approval. What the Pope had blessed, it was not for a British Foreign Secretary to condemn. Ordinary citizens, especially those of a predominantly Protestant country like Britain, were unable to see the matter quite in the same light. In *The Daily Telegraph* of May 29th 1938 the following paragraph appeared under the captions "Spanish Protest to Britain" and "Bombing Encouraged".

> "A strong protest has been sent to the British Government by the Spanish Foreign Minister, Senor del Vayo. His note was delivered at the Foreign Office yesterday through the Spanish Embassy. A similar protest has been made to France.
>
> "He protests against the fact that the recent bombing of Almeria—in which some 500 people are believed to have been killed—has provoked no public condemnation from those who formerly urged that there should be no bombardment of open cities.
>
> "He implies that the Nationalists have been encouraged to this latest outrage by the speech of Viscount Halifax, the Foreign Secretary, at Geneva on May 11th, in which he said that the "tragic loss of life, deplored by all, is inseparable from modern methods of warfare."

The Minister asks for a "concrete statement" on what Britain has done towards implementing the decision taken in common with the French Government in February to try to secure agreement to end the bombing of civilian populations.

> "No more has been heard of these negotiations, adds the note, which speaks of the profound indignation of the Spanish people and asks if Britain intends to practice 'appropriate measures to avoid a repetition of crimes such as that recently perpetrated on Almeria'."

As Lord Halifax was up to the ears in appeasement and on terms of friendship with one of the chief perpetrators of the outrages

which he had so publicly condoned, no statement, concrete or otherwise, was forthcoming, and British prestige fell still lower in the estimation of our European friends and potential allies. At Munich, Lord Halifax's share in which was certainly as great as Neville Chamberlain's, Englishmen who had hitherto taken pride in their country's history and traditions were forced to drink the cup of ignominy to the dregs. In his book *A Great Experiment,* Viscount Cecil records that Madame Benes rang him up from Prague on behalf of her husband, "to assure me that the Sudeten agitation was a put-up job and to ask me what I advised. I felt forced to reply that much as I sympathized with her country I could not advise her to rely on any help from mine. It was the only reply that could be made, but I have never felt a more miserable worm than I did when making it. To me as to many others the transaction was as shameful as anything in our history". To the men so largely responsible for it, the British Foreign Secretary and his Foreign Office advisers, it did not seem shameful at all. No one has yet discovered what makes a British permanent official, whether ensconced in the Foreign Office, the Home Office or the War Office, feel a qualm of shame. Lord Halifax and Mr Chamberlain were evidently so pleased with what they had accomplished that, a few months later, they paid a formal visit to Rome to make a "gentleman's agreement" with Mussolini. That Lord Halifax, in his capacity of representative of the supposed stronghold of Western democracy, was not fastidious about the company he kept, had been proved by his acceptance of Göring's hospitality. His visit to Mussolini, which included a State banquet, at which he dutifully drank the health of the diminutive King as "Emperor of Abyssinia", was an even more curious action on the part of a man so noted for his high moral principles. In his early life, before he became a dictator, and, by signing the Lateran Accord, secured the support of Pope Pius XI and thus of the millions of Catholics throughout the world, Mussolini had been not only an atheist but a blasphemer of the most obscene and violent type. Before his conversion, he never troubled to marry the peasant woman who was the mother of his

sons, and after his conversion he never troubled to conceal his numerous "infidelities". What was there about this bald-headed voluptuary, with his vile record of broken treaties, dishonoured promises and political assassinations, which made him socially acceptable to a high-minded English aristocrat? Would a Gladstone, a Palmerston, a Lord John Russell, or a Lord Salisbury have dined and wined with such a man? It is impossible to believe it.

As Lord Halifax had affected to disbelieve that Mussolini had used poison gas on the Abyssinians, he had no doubt also refused to listen to the accounts of Vittorio Mussolini's exploits in the air, which included dropping a bomb on a large Union Jack spread outside a field hospital. All the same, he could not have deluded himself that his host, with whom he proposed to make "a gentleman's agreement", was anything else but a treacherous and deceitful enemy of the country he represented. "A gentleman's agreement" is usually held to be an agreement between gentlemen. Lord Halifax's conception of a "gentleman" evidently differed from Lord Cecil's. In his reference to the banquet at Rome on January 11th 1939, Lord Cecil coldly observes that "we read of two British Ministers solemnly drinking, at a State banquet, to the extinction of the independence of a country that we were pledged to protect". He adds that Mussolini, according to press accounts, "took pains to show his indifference to the representatives of the British Empire by absenting himself from Rome during a considerable part of their visit". It appears that even the Duce was capable of a twinge of nausea.

Two months after the Rome visit, it was clear to everyone outside the Foreign Office that Hitler meant what he said in *Mein Kampf* and that Europe was heading straight for war. Russia's great Foreign Minister, Maxim Litvinov, made a final desperate effort to induce the Western Powers to pull themselves together and face realities. Even in March 1939 it was not too late, by united action, to avert the impending catastrophe. But when Litvinov suggested that a conference of the threatened democracies should be held at Bukharest, Lord Halifax snubbed him

for his pains and dismissed the proposal as 'premature'. Later, when negotiations were tardily opened with the U.S.S.R., instead of flying to Moscow himself, Lord Halifax sent a minor Foreign Office official by the slowest route. No doubt he was surprised when the Russians gave up the struggle to induce the British to talk sense and decided to play, if not for safety, at least for time. If so, no one else was who had sufficient intelligence to grasp the facts. Having, by his folly, involved his countrymen in the necessity of fighting, without the aid of our strongest potential ally, a war which he and his colleagues could easily have prevented, Lord Halifax gave no sign of remorse, regret or even of understanding. In an article published by *Reynolds News* in July 1940, H. G. Wells referred to a pamphlet called *The British Case,* issued by the British Council and written mainly by Lord Lloyd, with a preface by Lord Halifax. "It is a statement", he says, "of incomparable presumption and offensiveness, and I cannot understand why men like Messrs Greenwood, Bevin, Dalton and Morrison, for example, have consented to sit in the same Government with its two chief perpetrators". The pamphlet was evidently withdrawn after this exposure as I made every possible effort to get hold of a copy but without success. Wells concludes his article by a moving appeal to the "Chamberlain section of the Conservative Party" in general and particularly to "Sir Samuel Hoare, whom we associate with the traitor Laval, Lord Halifax and Lord Lloyd, Viscount Caldecote, Lord Simon and Sir Kingsley Wood" to show their patriotism by retiring into positions in which they could do no further harm. "I would particularly appeal to Lord Halifax for a justification of his always exalted and conspicuous piety. The sacrifice could be made with prayerful dignity . . . But, please, get out of the way of the country, *now*, while the going is good.

"Once or twice in the past I have made successful prophecies. All prophecies are conditional, and I will simply remark now that sitting in the House as you do, still playing the old familiar political game, in a country already bankrupt and badly entangled, fighting splendidly but fighting at an immense disadvantage be-

cause of your faults, you seem to have not the slightest inkling of the storm of bitter scorn, indignation and revolutionary resentment that may presently break upon you".

Like all Mr Wells's pronouncements, this article evoked a widespread response throughout the country, though it made no impression on the Labour "collaborators" who had already become Mr Churchill's loyal yesmen. For once in a way, therefore, Mr Wells's prophecy was unfulfilled. The predicted storm never broke. Mr Churchill used his popularity to protect his guilty associates and gave Lord Halifax the one assignment in which it was possible for him to do our cause the maximum of harm. In commenting on his appointment, the *News Chronicle,* to the amazement of one at least of its faithful readers, made the following observations in its issue of December 23rd 1940.

> "It is an accurate measure of the importance rightly attached in this country to the post of Ambassador to Washington that the Prime Minister, breaking all precedent, has appointed no less a person than Lord Halifax to fill the vacancy created by the untimely death of Lord Lothian . . . Let it be said at once that we have full confidence in Lord Halifax as the new Ambassador. His high qualities of character and culture should make him well-liked across the Atlantic. In judging the appointment, we should remember that the Ambassador will be accredited to an Administration which is liberal in the broadest sense and from that point of view Lord Halifax is a sound choice".

Precisely why the Liberal Party should have been thus insulted in a Liberal newspaper was not apparent.

In the autumn of 1941, when the nation was already growing impatient at the inadequate assistance afforded by the Government to our hardpressed Russian Allies, the "soundness" of the choice of Lord Halifax to speak for Britain in the United States, was sharply called in question in the House of Commons. In the course of an important Debate on Thursday October

23rd 1941, Mr Aneurin Bevan said: "The fact was that the people did not trust the Government(cheers). The people did not trust many of those in the Government. The people believed that the Government was a racket. When Hitler was preparing his attack on Moscow, Lord Halifax, a member of the War Cabinet, who had just been in this country and was privy to all that was going on, returned to the United States and in a speech gave Hitler all the comfort, consolation and assurance he needed; Lord Halifax informed Hitler in the plainest possible language that he need fear no attack by us and that he could prepare his forces without any danger that we would take advantage of it. At that time when Hitler was gathering his forces from all over Europe, how far was such a statement removed from high treason? (Cheers). Even if we intendend to do nothing, surely it was essential to the Russians that Hitler should have a doubt about our intentions.

"He (Mr Bevan) had been rebuked by the Prime Minister for saying that this was an irresponsible person with a bad record, but he thought that that was a masterpiece of Parliamentary understatement (Laughter). Lord Halifax was partly the architect of the policy which led up to disaster. It was time that the Prime Minister realized that unless he got rid of some of these men they would drag him down with them (Cheers). He believed that it was time for the Government to be wholly reconstructed and for its machinery to be overhauled". After a singularly feeble reply by Mr Eden, Mr Clement Davies, the present Liberal leader, asked if industry had been put on a war basis. "Were they not still carrying on exactly as in peacetime? A promise had been made to Russia which the Right. Hon. gentleman re-emphasized. If the country was to implement that promise to Russia they had to re-organize their methods and they would not do that until they reorganized the Treasury Bench. Early in the war many of them called attention to the lack of equipment. Today they knew the truth from Lord Gort's dispatches. The answers given then were precisely the answers given today very largely by the same men and certainly by the

same type of mind. The country was getting not only disturbed but tired of these answers. They were entitled now at this desperate moment to have a united country turning out every effort they possibly could. The people were willing. It was only leadership they lacked".

What precisely was the real feeling of Winston Churchill and the Service Chiefs towards our Russian Allies, at the time when Lord Halifax made his notorious speech, will probably never be known to the public, since so few of us now have sufficient interest in the matter to wish to find out. Something may be guessed, no doubt, from the present outburst of vituperation against the U.S.S.R., which has all the appearance of having been long repressed, but perhaps the true reason for the long delay in opening a Second Front—a delay, which by giving Nazi scientists time to perfect their secret weapons, very nearly had disastrous consequences—was casually let out at a luncheon party, by Colonel Moore-Brabazon, in the hearing of shocked Trade Unionists. What the Colonel, who was then Minister of Aircraft Production, indicated was that it was a good thing that the Russians and the Nazis were engaged in destroying each other's armies, because when both sides were sufficiently weakened, we could then march into Europe and take over. I cannot find among my mountainous pile of press cuttings a report of his exact words, but I do not think I have misrepresented him and it was certainly believed at the time that his remarks accurately reflected the views of the General Staff. In any case, as a result of his indiscretion, the Colonel was hastily elevated to the peerage.

From 1941 onwards the iron curtain, which to this day keeps the people of Britain in complete ignorance of Anglo-American relations at the higher levels, prevented us from hearing more about Lord Halifax's activities. All we know is that he was still at Washington when President Truman shut down on Lease-lend, without fair warning or previous consultation, and that he acted as our senior spokesman at the conference which resulted in the "blackmailer's" loan agreement.

Now he appears to have retired at last into private life, although, with the exception of Mr Ernest Bevin, no political figure stands higher in Conservative estimation. The newspapers completely ignored the evidence given at the Pétain trial about his part in letting six Vichy battleships sail past Gibraltar on their way to Dakar. No one remembers how he kept his side of the "gentleman's agreement" with Mussolini by holding the blockade wide open until the Duce had sufficiently replenished his stocks of oil and other war materials to enable him to stab France in the back. It is one of the peculiar features of the British political system that persistent failure on the part of a Minister is usually the surest passport to promotion. When failure is allied with moral virtue and unquestioned piety the combination appears to be irresistible. If Mr Attlee, who is nothing if not Conservative by temperament and sympathy, were to put Lord Halifax in charge of some new mission, as important as his mission to the United States, the appointment would evoke universal approval—except from what the *New Statesman and Nation* once described as "the small and unimportant group of crypto-Communists".

CHAPTER NINE

"Goldring's War".

THE heading of this chapter is taken from the satirical caption to a letter which appeared in *Tribune*, in support of one of my numerous "tirades". As I have already observed, the man who feels sufficiently inspired by patriotic emotions, or public spirit, to write letters to the press commenting on passing events, must expect to incur the contempt or ridicule of the "silent columnists" and the constitutionally cautious. If he is a Socialist he must expect attack on two fronts, for the Conservatives will describe him as ignorant and ill-informed, while the bureaucrats and literary panjandrums of his own side will unhesitatingly ascribe his criticisms of public figures to personal rancour, bitterness, disgruntlement or disappointed "ambitions". In point of fact, as any competent psychologist would agree, controversial writers are often the happiest and least embittered of men. Constant preoccupation with matters outside themselves relieves them from concentrating on their personal problems and anxieties. As their intellectual curiosity never abates they never, mentally, grow old or unreceptive. They enjoy impersonal argument and, if they are sincere, have as keen a desire to convince their audience as any evangelical hot-gospeller. On the other hand, their very earnestness, in view of the fact that their objurgations are apt to attract so little attention, has its comic side.

While I was reading the letters which follow, less than a fifth of my total war-time output of epistolary "diatribes", I found myself chuckling with laughter at the recollection of Ludovic Halévy's immortal Monsieur Cardinal. In "Le Programme de

M Cardinal", the devoted Madame Cardinal thus describes her patriotically preoccupied husband. "Du matin au soir, Monsieur Cardinal ne pense qu'à son pays et même du soir au matin, car très souvent la nuit il se réveille pour y penser. Et alors, tout d'un coup, dans les ténèbres, j'entends une voix qui me dit: 'Allume, Madame Cardinal, allume'. C'est qu'il lui est venu une pensée de réforme, une pensée de progrès . . . Il a peur que cette pensée lui échappe . . . Il veut l'écrire tout de suite . . . Comme je suis du côté des allumettes, j'allume. Je lui passe son petit carnet, son petit crayon; et il écrit, au milieu de la nuit, pour son pays".

If I didn't wake up my wife in the middle of the night, I am afraid that too often, when she was tired or otherwise occupied, I said "Would you mind typing this in time to catch the post?"

My principal obsession from the summer of 1940 onwards was the need for a United Socialist Opposition, both inside and outside the House of Commons. The effect of the Electoral Truce, agreed to with—as I still think—reckless irresponsibility by the Right Wing Labour leaders, was to preserve the predominantly Tory character of the most discredited Parliament in our history and to prevent the infiltration of new men who really represented the 'will of the people'. As most of the impetus to carry on the war with vigour and to provide the essential tanks, aeroplanes and munitions, came from the Left, the formation of a united Socialist Opposition, acting as a much-needed "ginger group", would have had a stimulating effect not only on the Government as a whole but also on the minority of Labour ministers forming part of it. As it was, the two or three bye-elections won by Independents or by Common Wealth candidates acted as a much-needed spur and warning. In his election address to the people of Rugby, Mr W. J. Brown, who won the seat as an Independent, struck a note to which many people throughout the country responded. "I am not a member of any party", said Mr Brown, "but at the same time I am a member of what I think is the largest party in Britain—the millions of men and women who feel that all parties have failed them and that a new approach is required to the

problems of war and the problems of the peace which follows the war. To win the war 100 per cent efficiency in every branch of the war effort is necessary, and complete collaboration with Russia and all our other allies . . . The world of 1939 is dead".

As a result of a letter I addressed in July 1940 to the Editor of *Cavalcade*, which brought me in contact with a number of like-minded enthusiasts, an effort was made—after some unedifying preliminary wrangles—to launch a new political group, eventually known as the "British Democratic Movement". If I were still in business as a novelist, I should find in my experiences in connection with this Quixotic venture material for a side-splitting farce. At the time, however, I took the whole affair with fanatical seriousness, and spent many hours working for it. I don't think we ever managed to secure more than fifty adherents and, naturally, no one of any prominence in public life would have anything to do with us. "Who is *behind* it?" friends asked me suspiciously, to which I could only reply: "If you join, *you* will be behind it".

As I had informed my colleagues that I was a writer, I was accordingly allotted the task of drawing up our manifesto and our Ten Point Programme. At least a hundred people read them both and thought them grand. The remaining odd forty millions unfortunately did neither. As a political curiosity of the war years—a "collector's item" of the distant future—the documents may already have acquired a serio-comic interest. They preceded similar manifestoes by the so-called "1941 Committee" and Sir Richard Acland's Common Wealth Party, which was launched some two years later and of which I became an early member.

BRITISH DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT

Victory Through Democracy Justice For Humanity

United Democratic Action

The British Democratic Movement has come into existence to provide a rallying-point for all who are prepared to fight

for Victory through Democracy. Such a rallying-point does not at present exist in Great Britain although is has never been more urgently needed than it is to-day.

While good service to the nation has been rendered by individual Members of Parliament, many of them backbenchers, neither the Liberal Party nor the Labour Party—the traditional strongholds of democratic faith—has shown any sign of corporate vigour since their leaders agreed to accept office in the present Cabinet.

Even before the War, the subservience of the official Opposition to the Chamberlain Government had alienated public respect for the Parliamentary Labour Party and reduced many of its Socialist supporters almost to despair.

What the much sub-divided Liberal Party now stands for, no one knows. It has no discernible policy or programme.

The active membership of both parties has, for some time past, been falling off. Neither has made any appeal to the huge "floating electorate" which is the outstanding political phenomenon of the past six years.

The effect of the Electoral Truce has been still further to discourage rank-and-file democrats, while providing the Conservative Caucus with an opportunity, of which it has taken unscrupulous advantage, to re-assert its control over the nation's war effort in the interests of the Money Power.

Majority opinion which, as the war continues, becomes every day more clarified, more articulate and more democratic, remains un-organized, and is therefore unaware of its real strength.

Not Another Group.

The Members of the provisional Executive Committee of the British Democratic Movement are ordinary citizens who have met together for the purpose of devising a plan of action which will give adequate expression to the Will of the People.

As Britain is already well on the road towards a classless society, they believe the time has gone by to draw out-of-date distinctions between "the workers", the "bourgeoisie", etc. Everyone who earns his living by his own efforts belongs to the people. The "People" means *you*.

As time is short and world history is being made week by week with ever-increasing rapidity, the Committee does not aim at forming yet another "Discussion Group".

Numerous debating societies, committees and discussion groups are already in existence. They have done and are doing excellent work in popularizing progressive ideas by means of pamphlets, leaflets, and public meetings. None of them has yet put forward a plan for co-ordinating action in the political field.

The House of Commons.

Political power, in a democratic country, is theoretically vested in the elected representatives of the people, in Parliament assembled. The war has necessitated the prolongation of the life of the present House of Commons which, even when elected, never represented the true state of feeling in the country. As all contemporary historians agree and as Lord Baldwin himself has admitted, the existing large Conservative majority of disciplined yes-men was obtained by fraud. "These tenth-rate nonenities", as the *Economist* has recently pointed out, "who were jobbed into the House of Commons because they were men of 'the right type', provided just the background that the Front Bench required for its calamitous foreign policy, and for its blindness to the danger in which the country stood . . . The political bosses saw to it that the right men were provided by Captain Ramsay and others of the same intellectual and social build". The pledges given to the electorate in 1935 by the Conservative Central Office were promptly dishonoured and the League of Nations Policy, involving Collective Security—for which so many millions

of votes had been cast—was reversed by the Tory Caucus within a few months of its return to power. In September 1941, this Caucus remains in essential control. Out of 85 Ministers no less than 50 are survivors of the discredited Baldwin-Chamberlain administration, while others owe their position not to their merits, but to an out-of-date process of political bargaining.

In the circumstances which have arisen, every patriotic member of the Parliament which led us into war, without the support of our strongest potential allies and without adequate arms even for defence, owes a special debt of honour to his constituents. As he retains his seat, without having to contest it, only as a result of the national emergency, his duty to his constituents should take precedence over his loyalty to the particular Party machine to which he normally owes allegiance.

The problem for the people is first how to make their wishes known to their Parliamentary representatives and secondly, how to induce them to act in accordance with those wishes. The answer which experience supplies can be given in one word: Organization.

National Unity

Although the people are united in their gratitude to the Prime Minister for his inspired leadership at a moment when defeat seemed inevitable, it can no longer be denied that they are equally united in their distrust of the majority of his political associates. Pressure from below must again be exerted if the British people, on whom the ultimate issue of the struggle depends, are to be permitted a full share in the shaping of their own destiny.

There exists, even in the present House of Commons, the nucleus of a United Democratic Front which would have behind it the support of a United Democratic Nation. So far, vested Party interests have prevented its formation.

Need for Cabinet Changes.

There are few average citizens, oustide the governing clique, who do not believe that the retirement of the "Munich Gang" would be as heartening to our cause as a victory in the field. The effect of such a long over-due purge on our Russian allies, on public opinion in the United States, India, and the Dominions, and on the oppressed democrats in the countries over-run by Hitler, would be electrifying. As an anti-Nazi refugee has put it: "As long as England fails to make a clean break with a past that almost brought her to suicide, she cannot expect others to forget that past or rid them of the suspicion that one fine day England may again commit suicide 'by mistake'."

The inner history of the political and military collapse of France has proved the peril of allowing men with Fascist sympathies to occupy high positions in the government and armed forces of a democracy fighting for its life. As an elementary measure of precaution, former members of such organizations as the Right Club, the Link, the Anglo-German Fellowship, and the Friends of National (Franco) Spain, should be excluded from the public services. This is all the more urgent in view of the alliance with the U.S.S.R, on which our hopes of victory so largely depend.

The Conservative Record.

That the Conservative Party has from time to time thrown up—and not infrequently thrown out—statesman of the highest integrity and patriotism, is recognized by all. Mr Winston Churchill and Viscount Cecil, although they were driven into the wilderness by the bosses, are representatives of the true Conservative tradition of public service. The electorate must, however, wake up to the fact—unless, indeed, we intend once again to 'commit suicide by mistake'—that the Party

as at present constituted is purely a class organization under plutocratic control. Its policy, however much it may attempt to disguise it, is to manipulate the machinery of democratic government in the interests of bankers, international financiers, monopoly capitalists and large property owners. Past experience has proved that its patriotism is bound up with privilege and profit and dies unless sustained by dividends. Its record, since 1931, has ceased to be a matter of controversy. Judgment has been passed upon the actions of its leaders by contemporary historians in England and America, among them Viscount Cecil and Ambassador Dodd, whose authority cannot be questioned. That after their public exposure and indictment some of those most responsible for our disasters continue to hold office as Ambassadors and Cabinet Ministers is proof that the Conservative Caucus has retained its stranglehold on the nation's war effort. The Old Gang, which still regards Soviet Russia as "the real enemy", has never surrendered.

What Democracy has Accomplished.

Such progress as has been made during the present war, and the principal successes so far achieved, can be traced back directly or indirectly, to pressure from below, exerted by the British People.

In May 1940, the people refused to lie down under the crushing defeat for which the incompetence of the Conservative governing class was responsible.

They dislodged Chamberlain and demanded that Churchill should take his place, not as the leader of a Party, but as the leader of the Nation.

In the autumn and winter of 1940, it was the Battle of Britain and the heroism of the common people of London and the provincial cities under intensive bombardment, that at last broke down the barriers of suspicion which the "Munich Gang" had erected between ourselves and the United States.

Britain's Will to Win.

The British people to-day are more than ever united in their determination to win the war against Nazi-Fascism. They are prepared for hardships and willing to work till they drop. But they demand that all essential industries shall be put on a war basis, brought under State control, and the profit motive eliminated. They demand that an end shall be made to inefficiency and profiteering as exemplified by the "cost-plus-ten-per-cent" contracts, the railway ramp, the coal scandal, and the grossly unfair distribution of food supplies. They demand the nationalization of banking and credit.

They demand that immediate and effective assistance shall be given to our Russian Allies.

They demand a United Democratic Front and a genuinely democratic Government, free from Tory appeasers, proved incompetents, secret Fascist sympathizers, and anti-Soviet saboteurs.

The people will not grudge their blood, their tears, their sweat; nor will they fail in endurance. But they have earned the right to be assured that Total War, unrestrained by vested interests, will be waged against the Axis and that, when Victory has been achieved by their endeavours, *Prosperity, like Peace, will be indivisible.*

The British Democratic Movement will work to secure total Victory by the only means which, as all our past experience has proved, can ensure success.

A Majority Movement.

The British Democratic Movement is essentially a majority movement and its statement of general principles will be readily accepted and endorsed by all genuine democrats. Based upon these principles, it has drawn up a two-fold programme. The first part outlines those methods of securing a people's victory upon which there appears to be the maximum of agree-

ment. The second part contains proposals for a long-term policy of post-war social and economic reconstruction which it is believed represent the wishes of the largest number of responsible citizens.

Remember!

One hundred thousand organized voters can exert more influence on the House of Commons than ten million individual citizens, who, without realizing it, share the same ideas.

One million organized voters constitute a force with which any Government must reckon.

Ten million organized voters, under honest and efficient leadership, can carry all before them. A majority movement grows like a snowball.

Read the programme of action which follows and

Join Now.

The "programme of action" was printed on a separate sheet and consisted of ten points under the caption "What We Stand For". I scarcely knew whether to laugh or to cry when I fished it out of a bottom drawer and re-read it after five years. Here it is.

What We Stand For.

1) Cabinet Reconstruction, involving the retirement of all ministers who supported the Chamberlain policy of appeasement, and their replacement by trusted representatives of the people.
2) State control and ownership of banking, insurance, mines, transport, fuel, land, power, and all heavy industries engaged in the manufacture of war material.
3) A planned production and man-power policy, to ensure the full mobilisation of our economic resources, under the control of a Minister set free from departmental duties.
4) Democratic reforms in the administration of the Army,

Foreign Office, Treasury, Ministry of Information and other Government Departments.

5) Rationing and distribution of food and other essential commodities on equitable lines, special provision being made for nursing mothers, young children, and those engaged in heavy manual labour. The suppression of Black Markets, and heavier penalties for profiteering.
6) India to be granted a temporary measure of self-government, permitting Indian diplomatic representation in the Eastern capitals, together with the promise of full Dominion status when the war is over. Political prisoners to be released unconditionally.
7) Immediate aid to the U.S.S.R., and full co-operation with the Russian High Command.
8) The International Brigade to be re-formed for special duties, and permitted to recruit anti-Nazi Germans, Austrians, Italians, and other refugees who may wish to serve in it.
9) No more appeasement of "non-belligerent" enemies, by supplying them with oil or other commodities essential to nations preparing for war.
10) Establisment of an Advisory Committee of anti-Fascist refugees, including Communists, for the purpose of co-ordinating revolutionary fifth column activities in enemy and occupied countries.

Beside me on my desk, as I write these lines, stands a formidable pile of letters addressed during the war years to the Editors of such papers as the *New Statesman and Nation, Tribune, Cavalcade,* the *Manchester Guardian* and the *News Chronicle.* Some were printed, some rejected, some never actually posted. They represent an amount of labour which, if paid for at the usual rates, would have brought me in at least a thousand pounds. At the time when I composed them, with a zeal for my country's cause not surpassed by that of M. Cardinal, my normal professional activities had come to a standstill owing to the paper shortage. Publishers were

failing, as politicians say, to "implement" existing contracts and chary of making new ones, while none of the newspapers, reduced as they were in size, had any use for independent comment from outside contributors. Authors were either living on their own fat, or, if considered politically sound from the Tory standpoint, on salaries allowed them by the B.B.C. or the "Min. of Inf.". I was not in the latter category, or indeed in the former, but my patriotic ardour had to find some kind of outlet, even though it was at my own expense. In addition to bombarding editors, I carried on a lively correspondence with the local Tory M.P.'s, Sir George Jeffreys, the Member for East Hants, and Mr Godfrey Nicholson, Member for Farnham and Woking, both of whom retained their seats in July 1945. On many of the topics which kept me awake at night and made me rush to the desk and ink bottle in the morning, the public has by now received sufficient information to enable it to make up its mind. Others have remained hushed up. The quarrels with General de Gaulle, the Lisbon story, the names of Hitler's British collaborators, the names of the members of Captain Ramsay's "Right Club"; the instructions given to Colonel Bailey when he was despatched from Cairo to Mihailovitch, the intrigues with General Anders, the reasons for sheltering Prince Paul of Serbia and the quisling Pavelitch, are among the numerous secrets which the Labour Government has refused to reveal. Even Field-Marshal Montgomery's "long-term military programme", under which it has been stated in the press that thousands of American troops are shortly to return to their war-time camps at Warminster, has never been disclosed to the House of Commons. The only means the common citizen has had, during the past seven years, of gaining any insight into the designs and policies of the men who really rule this country, behind the Government ostensibly in power, has been by piecing together such stray facts as from time to time appear in the press, and by using his intelligence and general knowledge to appraise their real significance. The letters which follow are the result of an effort on the writer's part to follow this practice during the period covered by this book.

While "marching with the times", I at least did my best to see where we were going. As a result, I found myself constantly out of tep with official opinion.

Quislings.

(To the Editor, *Cavalcade,* June 1940)

The object lesson provided by that eminent Old Etonian, ex-King Leopold, should convince even our most hard-boiled snobs that all the Quislings, "Hitler-addicts" and Fifth Columnists who really matter belong to the "top drawer", and are therefore more or less immune from police supervision.

Is is not the half-baked Fascists, Irish irreconcilables, and petty traitors who chalk up "Down with Britain" and "Heil Hitler" in the public lavatories of garrison towns who get the big results—although they certainly constitute a danger.

The disastrous betrayals of the past five years, owing to which we are now fighting for our very existence as a free nation, were brought about by the stupidity and ignorance of our Tory "pluto-aristocracy", whose terror of "Bolshevism" made them easy prey for Hitler's agents. The public does not yet realise more than a fraction of the truth of what happened at Munich, although the news that nearly all the giant tanks which caused the break-through in Belgium were manufactured in Czechoslovakia during the past twelve months may have helped to enlighten them.

As a political party, owing to the past record of Baldwin, Chamberlain, Montagu Norman, Simon, Hoare, and, last but not least, Captain David Margesson, the supporters of the former National Government are now hopelessly discredited.

When our hard-pressed troops in Belgium cried, "For God's sake, send us more aeroplanes", they condemned to everlasting obloquy the muddlers who, for six years, turned a deaf ear to Mr Churchill's warnings in the House of Commons.

At last, but only in the nick of time, the "English miracle" for which so many of us have been impatiently waiting has

united us under a people's Government to win a people's war. Our aristocratic Fifth Column, including the group of Roman Catholic Fascists who tried so hard to embroil us with Russia, have now missed their last bus. Today the motto for the Allied Democracies is: "Tails up. We shall come through!"

Facing Facts.

(To the Editor, *The Tribune*. 22nd Oct. 1940)

In his excellent article, "Every Man his own Tactician", Jon Kimche makes frequent use of the term "Labour Movement", but this is surely an anachronism at the present day. Ramsay MacDonald, reactionary T.U.C. bosses, card-voting, petty-bourgeois class snobbery, and the refined leadership of Mr Attlee (who recently paid such a glowing tribute to Captain Margesson) have left the "Labour Movement" with about as much kick in it as a half-frozen cod on a fishmonger's slab.

In its place, as we advance rapidly and thankfully towards a classless society, there is growing up a broad democratic "people's" movement, which at present is without organization, defined aims, or recognised leadership. It is this movement, not "Labour", which pushed out Mr Chamberlain, shoved Anderson "upstairs", refused to accept defeat after the French collapse, and will go on pushing until a "people's war" is followed by a "people's peace". Only the suppression of normal political activity prevents the vast army of the party-less, disfranchised, inarticulate masses from effecting contact with the politicians they respect.

Sir Stafford Cripps is probably our eventual leader. In his absence Aneurin Bevan, Eleanor Rathbone, Clement Davies, Vyvyan Adams, Sir Richard Acland, and all the Members of the present House of Commons who stand for genuine democracy, should get together, forget their political past and *act* for the people, before it is too late.

In the meantime, I regret that Aneurin Bevan found it

necessary to pick on Priestley. Priestley, Frank Owen, "Cato" and many other writers and journalists have done, and are doing, magnificent work in educating the people. "Victory" books and Penguin "Specials", and Priestley's postscripts have helped enormously to awaken hope and enthusiasm.

When Mr Clement Davies observed recently that "the old political parties are dead" he was stating a fact which Socialists will have to face, no less than Conservatives and Liberals. The alternative is the continuance, in real power, of the old gang of bankers, industrialists, and Fascist "appeasers", whose chief fear is an "absolute victory" for democracy.

Gas Masks.

(Rejected by *Reynolds News.*)

Gas masks, like tightly-rolled umbrellas, seem symbolic of the late unlamented Administration. Rightly or wrongly, many people think they only waste the time of Air Raid Wardens who have far more urgent matters to attend to. They argue that the respirators were originally issued purely for political purposes, in order to scare the nation into accepting the Munich Settlement. The fact that, even experimentally, gas was never tried in Spain, Finland, Poland or, more recently, in Belgium or North France, proves, in the view of these critics, that no efficent gas bomb has ever been invented. In support of this contention, I find the following observations in a book by Mr A. G. J. Whitehouse. "Any effort to fly any distance to bomb a city", says the writer, "would be utterly wasted if bombs containing poison gas were to be carried instead of high explosive. No known bomb would carry enough to even make a handful of people in a confined area suffer any serious discomfort. Gas must be delivered in large clouds through open nozzles and from large containers near the point of the intended attack. It can only be used under ideal atmospheric conditions, and when the wind is moving at less than 4 miles an hour—in the right direction! If gas could

be carried and discharged successfully from aeroplanes, why wasn't it used in the Spanish Civil War? There's one answer, and one only. There is no such thing as a poison gas bomb! So why the gas masks?"

An authoritative statement from the present Air Minister might settle a controversy which has now been raging in our "locals" for many months.

The Cabinet Changes.

(To the Editor, *Tribune*. 10 Jan. 1941)

Since the new Government was formed, I have never noted such widespread gloom among ordinary soldiers and civilians as that caused by the promotion of Captain Margesson to Cabinet rank and the despatch of Lord Halifax to America. Friends who have been on leave in the Midlands and North of England during the past fortnight, formed the same impression. Not only have I, personally, met no one who does not consider the appointments disastrous, but I have not yet encountered anyone who has ever met, or even heard of, anyone who does not so regard them. Searching eagerly in the columns of the *New Statesman and Nation, News Chronicle*, and *Manchester Guardian,* for some reflection of what seems the prevalent view among all sorts of people, with no interest in party politics but a great desire to win the war, I find nothing but tributes to Lord Halifax's high moral character, and Captain Margesson's undoubted efficiency. If this excess of caution is due to the "political truce", or to fear of the censorship, the sooner some M.P. has the courage to point out in Parliament that the "truce" was never intended by the people to include the Guilty Men of Munich, the better for all of us.

The Week.

(To the Editor, *The Manchester Guardian*. Febr. 19th, 1941. Rejected)

Sir,

As none of your correspondents has so far discussed the

issues raised by the closing of *The Week*, which are quite different from those involved in the squashing of *The Daily Worker*, perhaps you will permit one of its fairly regular readers to break the silence. *The Week*, during the eight years of its existence, owed its success to the fact that it was unusually well-informed and remarkably accurate in its political forecasts. Its circulation is known to have been confined to educated people of the professional type—including diplomats, government officials and Members of Parliament—who take an adult interest in world affairs and are impervious to "propaganda". Had its columns been devoted to spreading Communist theories, instead of to giving 'inside' information not easily obtainable elsewhere, its sales would almost certainly have dropped to zero. Nothing I saw in *The Week*, since the outbreak of war, in any way modified my personal contempt for the Communist 'party line' or undermined my wholehearted desire for the war to be carried on, with the utmost vigour, to a victorious conclusion. Far from creating in its readers "a state of mind in which they would refrain from co-operating in the national war effort", its revelations concerning the Fifth Column activities of the extreme Right, in France and Great Britain, both before and after Munich, must have helped to swell the wave of patriotic indignation which eventually made Mr Churchill our Premier and elevated Mr Morrison to the position he now occupies.

These revelations, however, can hardly have made Mr Cockburn *persona grata* at the Conservative Central Office, while his occasional caustic comments on the attitude of the former "Opposition" leaders must have made him equally unpopular at Transport House.

Since, under Regulation 2D—by resorting to which Mr Morrison broke faith, not only with the House of Commons but also with the nation—the authorities are not required to give any explanation of their actions, the public are entitled to draw their own conclusions. Searching the final issues of *The Week*, therefore, for passages which may have roused

official wrath, I was struck by the references which appeared on January 1st 1941, to the then recent Cabinet changes. *The Week's* comment was the sufficiently obvious one that these indicated a pronounced swing to the Right. It added that Captain Margesson's appointment was as emphatic a demonstration to the Labour Party of "who really is in control" as would be the sudden elevation of Sir Horace Wilson himself, and went on to observe, with sardonic humour, that the Carlton Club had the exquisite pleasure of watching the Labour people and their press once again "swallow their pride and go grovelling about looking for rosy explanations". On the subject of Lord Halifax, *The Week's* observations were in accordance with democratic opinion not only in this country but also in America, where the *New Republic* remarked that "the kindest comment that could be made on the appointment of Lord Halifax as British Ambassador to the United States would be to say that it is a hideous mistake".

If to regard with suspicion the growing predominance in the present Cabinet of men whose past actions and policies landed us in disaster is 'Bolshevism', excitement to sabotage and all the rest of it, then numerous patriotic Conservatives must be regarded as raging Reds. Nothing I have ever read in *The Week* about the policies pursued by the Conservative caucus, the Munich betrayal, and the career of Lord Halifax at the Foreign Office, can be compared with the devastating exposures contained in the Prime Minister's pre-war speeches and in Lord Cecil's autobiography, "A Great Experiment". It is significant, in this connection, that the two popular newspapers which have the best record for trying to make the "Munich" Tories stand up to Hitler and have since been foremost in urging that the war should be prosecuted with the utmost vigour and efficiency, have both been subjected to a warning from Mr Attlee for their alleged "subversive" tendencies. Mr Churchill's reply to Mr Mander's question about this incident seemed a shade embarrassed, if not actually evasive.

It is with Mr Attlee's warning to the proprietors of the *Daily Mirror* and the *Sunday Pictorial*, rather than with the case of the *Daily Worker* that the suppression of *The Week* ought to be associated. Both are symptoms of a tendency which no one who understands what happened in France a year ago can regard with equanimity. The Government standpoint seems to be that the cause of national unity will be best served if the editors of newspapers are restrained from criticising ministerial appointments which they know to be unpopular and fear may prove disastrous. But our national unity which, as our enemies will discover, is basically indestructible, is surely a unity of determination to win the war. This, as the events of May 1940 conclusively proved, includes a determination not to let our war effort be hampered by the discredited party caucus which in the view of Lord Cecil—no less than that of Mr Cockburn—is so largely responsible for its outbreak. One result of Mr Morrison's ill-advised action may be to make possible, by muzzling the press, the return of all the Munich Tories, if for any reason Mr Churchill's hand should be removed from the helm. Even if men like Sir Samuel Hoare and Lord Simon were to be made members of the War Cabinet, at the instigation of the Conservative caucus, it is doubtful if any newspaper would now find it advisable to reflect the anger and dismay of the democratic majority.

By-Elections.

(To the Editor, *New Statesman and Nation*. 6th December 1941)
Sir,—The fact that over seven thousand Hampstead electors voted for the official Conservative candidate—who opposed the Second Front and deplored the demand for the dismissal of the "Munich gang"—may seem depressing to the millions who feel themselves frustrated by the Electoral Truce. It should be borne in mind, however, that none of the three "freak" candidates fought the election on a national programme or had any sort of organisation behind him. Such a

programme, outlining what are believed to be the views of the majority of patriotic democrats, has been drawn up by the British Democratic Movement, which aims at cutting across the existing Party formations and establishing a United Democratic Front. Whether this movement—or any other which may emerge, with similar objects and a more powerful backing—succeeds or fails, depends on how soon the electorate wake up to the fact that the Conservative caucus, thanks to the Prime Minister's personal popularity, is once again in almost full control. Sir Roger Keyes has hinted that Mr Churchill is not in all respects a free agent, and it is obvious that as the leader of a discredited Party he is handicapped in his efforts to unite the nation for total war. The emergence in the House of Commons of a United Democratic Opposition, free from the discipline of the Party whips, would be a powerful support to the nation's will to victory. If rank-and-file Socialists and Liberals do not find an opportunity to use their votes before it is too late, they may discover that democracy in this country has expired, 'not with a bang, but a whimper'. Should Mr Herbert Morrison wake up one fine morning to find that, as a result of a Cabinet re-shuffle, he has only been keeping a place warm for Sir Samuel Hoare, even he may regard Regulations 18B and 2D in a somewhat different light. Meanwhile, at Oxford, the Minister of Information has issued a salutary warning. "People who maintained", he said, "that pre-war England was dead for ever were making a very great mistake". Those escapists who spend their time drawing up chimerical plans for post-war reconstruction, instead of devoting their energies to working *now,* for "victory through democracy"—which means through the ballot-box—may live to see his ominous words come true. One decisive democratic triumph at the polls will have far more effect on the present Government than all the leading articles in the press and all the pamphlets of "discussion groups" put together. This can only be achieved by an organisation which secures mass membership. Many of us hoped that the 1941 Committee, under

Mr J. B. Priestley's able presidency, would step into the breach or, to change the metaphor, break the ice. The opening of a new restaurant, however desirable, will help neither to give us a people's victory, nor to prevent a return to "Chamberlain's England", enforced by concentration camps for democrats. Only votes can save us, while the opportunity for using them remains.

Democratic Movement.

(To the Editor, *Tribune*. January 23rd 1942)

I have been a regular and appreciative reader of *Tribune* for nearly two years and have almost always found myself in agreement with its editorial policy. The only thing I have missed in the past, and find no indication of in the statement in your issue of January 2nd, is any plan for translating "Left" political views into "terms of appropriate action". You say that it is "not more parties we want but more democracy in the parties that already exist", but you admit, in a later passage, that there is not much hope from the existing political parties. If the existing parties are hopeless—as an increasing number of patriotic democrats believe—does not this point to the desirability of forming a united Democratic Opposition in the present House of Commons, backed by a nation-wide organisation, independent of vested party interests, for contesting by-elections on an agreed programme?

About a year ago, a group of "ordinary people", who found they had, for some time, been thinking on these lines, met together and evolved a plan of action in the political field. In due course, the still embryonic British Democratic Movement came into existence, and issued its programme and manifesto. Since then it has done some pioneer work by publicising plans for contesting by-elections on the basis of a programme for achieving Victory through Democracy. (Mr Herbert Morrison, by a coincidence, has recently dropped a dark hint that by-elections may be prohibited, in which event our efforts will have come too late). Either these proposals are sound, in

which case everyone who thinks that, even with Mr Churchill in command, the Conservative caucus is incapable of conducting a people's war efficiently, should support them; or else, if democracy is to survive, better ones should be announced without delay. Unless something is done within the next few months, we may win the war, thanks to Russia, but the Munich Gang will see to it that the people lose the peace. Surely, therefore, it is high time that the various Committees, organisations and movements whose aim is to infuse democratic vitality into the present House of Commons, should agree on a common policy and amalgamate. Only when they do so will it be possible to make a forward march from discussion to action. If, for example, the 1941 Committee, Sir Richard Acland and the Editorial Board of *Tribune* could unite in giving us a clear lead, they might be surprised to discover how many ordinary people "with unencumbered minds" would follow it.

The 1922 Committee.

(To the Editor, *Tribune*. 19th June 1942)

After the debate on the Government Coal Scheme, appropriately opened by Sir John Anderson, of Black-and-Tan fame, it must be obvious to everyone that the ultimate control of our destinies remains in the hands of the 1922 Committee. By withdrawing its support from the Government, this organisation of Munichmen, representing vested interests, can at any moment create a Parliamentary crisis and bring it down. According to normal constitutional practice, if Churchill fell his successor would have to be someone approved by the Conservative Central Office—possible Eden, possibly Halifax, possibly Sir John himself. The only way the Cabinet has of safeguarding itself against such a contingency is by surrendering to pressure, as it has done over coal rationing, and as it must now go on doing.

At the recent Labour Party Conference, Lord Strabolgi made the sensible suggestion that "we withdraw from the Govern-

ment and form an effective opposition". Unfortunately, no opposition could be "effective" unless it was led by Sir Stafford Cripps. If, in due course, Sir Stafford feels that he can serve his country better, and do more to promote the efficient conduct of the war, by crossing the floor of the House, many of those who have begun to despair of democracy's chances of survival will be filled with new hope. The emergence of Cripps candidates would almost certainly result in by-election landslides. The longer Sir Stafford stays in the Cabinet, sharing responsibility for its failures, the more his prestige must suffer.

Foreign Office Security.

(To the Editor, *Tribune*. January 1943)

Appeasement and non-intervention made it clear that if there is one Government Department which must at all costs be kept absolutely free from the influence of international finance, it is the Foreign Office. The interests which it is the business of the Foreign Office to defend, both in peace and war, are not those of any group of bankers and company directors but of the nation as a whole. Consequently, it is axiomatic that no one should be employed in the Foreign Office who has any financial connections with what is vaguely termed "the City".

In the course of an interview with Captain Codrington, M.C., the recently "eliminated" director of Carreras, a *Star* reporter elicited some interesting facts. Captain Codrington is chairman of six big companies and director of eight more. He is chairman of four railway companies—in Brazil, Madeira, Nyasaland and Central Africa—and is a director of railways in Greece and Zambesia. His other directorial interests include the Sun Life Assurance Society, South American gas companies and Metropolitan Ground Rents. "An important job", adds the *Star*, "for which he gets no salary—although the post normally carries £1,700 a year—is his full-time work as Chief Security Officer at the Foreign Office, with the rank of Assistant

Under-Secretary of State. He is responsible for 'vetting' all Foreign Office omployees."

In quoting these details, for which he himself is the authority, no reflection of any kind is intended against Captain Codrington, who, for all we know, may be well fitted for his duties, and as ardent a democrat and anti-Fascist as any reader of *Tribune*. He may be even more reliable, politically, than some of the officials whom it is his task to "vet". The fact remains, however, that his commercial interests ought to render him ineligible for the position he holds. A question of principle is involved, and some M.P. should ask Mr Eden a question about it.

Target for Tomorrow.

(To the Editor, *Tribune*. 19th February 1943)

Why is so much political comment, from the democratic standpoint, tinged with defeatism and despair? It is true that, so far, the majority of the electorate have not found the leadership for which they are seeking, but it is at last equally true that none of the established parties can any longer rely on their rank and file. A Conservative, with whom I discussed this matter, expressed the view that 80 per cent of the votes cast for Conservative candidates in recent by-elections were only votes for Winston Churchill. He added, after referring to the support given to the new Common Wealth party, that what would happen if the Prime Minister should, for any reason, have to furl his protective umbrella, was anybody's guess.

The Conservative Central Office, like Transport House, appears to have forgotten that when the war is over millions of young men and women who have been called on to perform the duties of citizenship will demand to exercise its rights. In 1935 they were too young to vote. In 1943, after three and a half years of war conducted by Conservatives—and repeatedly sabotaged by vested interests who put profits before victory—they are not too young to think.

At the next General Election the alternatives before the voter will be a continuance of Old Gang rule or a Clean Sweep, followed by a new start. If our people choose the former they will condemn themselves to industrial slavery, mass unemployment, the loss of every democratic safeguard they have fought to preserve, and another ghastly war within ten years. If they choose the latter and demand the nationalisation of banking and credit, the establishment of a new economic system and the immediate setting-up of a Royal Commission of Enquiry into the Causes and Conduct of the War, they have it in their power to lay the foundation of a new era of prosperity and peace.

The reception in the House of Commons of Mr Bevin's Catering Bill and the Beveridge Report, and such incidents as Mr Herbert Morrison's reluctance to punish the perpetrators of the Holford Square outrage, are object lessons the meaning of which is not likely to be lost on the men and women who, with unexampled heroism, are fighting for the future. They have their "target for to-morrow", and it is very different from "Chamberlain's England" and Mr Montagu Norman's conception of sound finance and "bulwarks against Bolshevism".

Let us bank on their victory and do our utmost to help them achieve it, instead of crying that all is lost because the Tories in the House of Commons have now dropped their masks and are showing their false teeth.

Mosley and Morrison.

(To the Editor. *New Statesman and Nation.* Rejected)

Shortly after the release by Mr Morrison of a large number of Mosley's supporters, Lenin's bust in Holford Square was mutilated and Fascist and anti-Semitic slogans were chalked up in various parts of London and in military camps. No arrests were made. By a coincidence which did not surprise those who remember Thurloe Square, when "Communists",

stung into reprisal, decorated walls with demands for the opening of a Second Front, they were promptly apprehended and fined.

Thinking that a Conservative M.P. ought to be as much disturbed by these facts as I was myself, I wrote to one and asked him to make a protest in the House of Commons. In his reply, dated April 9th of this year, he made the following observations: "We are not fighting an anti-Fascist war, but a war for freedom. Freedom means the right of anyone to express their opinions in a reasonable manner. 'Anyone' includes even Fascists and anti-Semites". As my correspondent was a typical yes-man, it seemed probable that his views were those of the Conservative Central Office, and that Mr Morrison was acting upon them. It was thus a logical prediction that the release of Admiral Sir Barry Domvile, Mr Beckett and others would follow in due course, and, if the public stood for it, of Sir Oswald Mosley and Captain Ramsay M.P.

As the Conservatives are not fighting an "anti-Fascist war", a fact which Darlan, Amgot, Mihailovitch and the efforts of the Foreign Office to bolster up Franco, King Victor and King George of Greece have now made clear to all, from their standpoint it is manifestly unjust to keep British Fascists in detention.

Fighting France.

(To the Editor, *Tribune*. May 14th 1943)

God help Democracy in this country and in France if the magnificent achievements of General Alexander and the Allied armies in Tunisia have the effect of diverting public attention from the de Gaulle-Giraud negotiations. On their result may depend whether victory is followed by an enduring peace, or by a series of revolutionary outbreaks culminating, inevitably, in a third war. The apathy and ignorance shown by British newspapers regarding the questions at issue are reminiscent of the days when they were urging us to attack Russia through Finland. Can anyone seriously deny that the disruption of the

unity of French resistance, by means of Fifth Column intrigues, would be an ever greater triumph for Göbbels than the split between Stalin and Sikorski? The French people do not want our "sympathy"; they expect us to have sense enough to realize that our fight against Fascism is inextricably bound up with their own.

The following points may be tabulated as being beyond any reasonable dispute:

1) General de Gaulle may, or may not, have an "attractive personality"; some British officials may not find him easy to get on with; like Mr Churchill, he may even have in his entourage "undesirable elements". The inescapable fact remains that he is the chosen leader of the French people, of all classes and all political backgrounds, and the living symbol of that "fighting France" which, in the darkest days, never surrendered. He has given the most formal guarantees that he will fight with all his strength for the restitution of French democracy, and these guarantees have been accepted by anti-Fascist Frenchmen.
2) From the above, it is axiomatic that any successful attempt to liberate France, when a Second Front is opened, must be carried out in full collaboration with General de Gaulle, otherwise the result may be chaos and a situation may arise similar to that which exists in Jugoslavia.
3) General Giraud, however honest and well-intentioned he may be, has practically no popular support, except among a small Fascist and Royalist minority, either in Africa or in Metropolitan France, and no Frenchman with a clean record has so far collaborated with him. He owes his position, as a "rival" to General de Gaulle, exclusively to reactionary influences in the American State Department and the British Foreign Office, who would like to see a "Franco" régime established in France, and are frightened of a democratic "revolution".
4) The French people will never allow Fascism to be imposed on them by Wall Street, with the aid of African troops,

whether led by Giraud or anyone else. "Liberation" by such elements means civil war.

5) General de Gaulle *cannot* compromise on matters of principle without forfeiting the confidence of his compatriots. If the Conservatives now betray him, as they betrayed Spain and Czechoslovakia, they will betray the cause for which so many of our sons have sacrificed their lives.

6) There is only one way by which General Giraud can prove his patriotism to the French nation: that is by freeing himself from Vichy influences and loyally co-operating with the French National Committee and its President.

Chaos.

(To the Editor, *Tribune*. 15th October 1943)

The revolution of the Socialist workers of Milan and Turin, which brought down Mussolini and forced the pace of Badoglio's surrender, has been suppressed by the Nazis and Fascists without us having made the slightest effort to help those who risked their lives for freedom. Lord Cranborne, in a naive speech, gave the whole game away. "Had we called on the Italian nation to rise" he said. "*we might have produced chaos*". What else, if the war was honestly conducted, should it have been our first object to produce? Such "chaos" as the anti-Fascists contrived to create in Northern Italy engaged enemy forces which, had they been available at Salerno at the crucial moment, might have pushed our Fifth Army into the sea. We rewarded their courage by bombing them out of their strongholds. But for this action Milan and Turin might have been defended by their workers as tenaciously as—Madrid . . .

Ezra Pound.

(To the Editor, *Tribune*. 4th February 1944)

During his stay in England, roughly between 1907 and 1920, Ezra Pound was an intimate friend of Ford Madox Ford, P.

Wyndham Lewis, T. S. Eliot, T. E. Hulme and W. B. Yeats. He exerted a considerable influence on the poetry of Yeats's latter period and was best man at his wedding.

In early life Pound, like his compatriot T. S. Eliot, was an admirer of the French poet and Catholic reactionary, Charles Maurras. Later, he absorbed the philosophical theories of Hulme, who, unfortunately for his disciples, died before he could modify or develop them. Finally, Pound became a fanatical convert to the Douglas Credit scheme. It may be partly due to the fact that he believed Fascist finance to be conducted more or less on Douglas lines, that he fell in with the trend of British Conservative opinion and accepted Mussolini as a superman.

In the lively controversies in which he engaged before his departure to Rapallo, Pound invariably championed pioneering genius against the attacks of the Establishment. He fought for James Joyce and D. H. Lawrence against all comers, was the friend and biographer of the sculptor Gaudier and—rightly or wrongly—one of the first to appreciate the musical eccentricities of Georges Antheil.

During the ten years in which I knew him fairly well, Ezra's attitude to all the arts was as charmingly romantic as that of any Middle Westerner on his first excursion to Montparnasse. Most of his ideas seemed to me "barmy", and I have never been able to make up my mind whether my failure to appreciate the greater part of his poetry was my fault or his. As a man, he struck me as loyal and generous in friendship, comically vain, a bit of a poseur, a 'pure' artist in Max Jacob's sense of the term, and superbly disinterested as regards money-making and careerism. He made some cordial enemies when he lived in London, but it would not have occurred to any of them to regard him as base or dishonourable.

In his present predicament Ezra has proved a useful scapegoat for recent turncoats. His views on Abyssinia were shared by most English Catholic converts as well as by a considerable number of English Army officers and Foreign Office high-ups.

Admiration of Mussolini, as of Franco, was prevalent among our Conservative class, at least until June 1940. As the latter has been "appeased" throughout the war and the former was allowed to escape from Badoglio's custody, it may be assumed that they still have influential friends in this country and in America.

Ezra, though a romantic and misguided ass, was never a rat; consequently, he failed to leave the sinking ship while the going was good.

George Orwell's comment that Pound "did not sell himself solely for money" looks like an indulgence, on his part, in that favourite public school pastime, "kicking a man when he is down".

Ourselves and France.

(To the Editor, *Tribune*. 14th April 1944)

Mr Cordell Hull who now appears to have assumed the leadership of Anglo-American diplomacy and political warfare, has made an unfortunate début in this capacity.

1) On the "eve of great events", when expediency requires the closest and most cordial collaboration between the Allied High Command and French resistance, he has seized the opportunity to throw a spanner into the works and to create the very "confusion" he professes to fear.
2) By his unilateral action in a matter which is, for geographical reasons, a primary British interest, he has publicly placed this country in the position of a "satellite power".
3) This fresh blow at Mr Churchill's prestige which, apart from India and Burma, has not yet recovered from Darlan, Badoglio, Amgot "and all that", is bound to have serious repercussions both on himself and his party at the next election. Mr Hull can, therefore, hardly be popular at the Conservative Central Office.
4) Mr Hull's statement that he is placing General de Gaulle's Committee of Liberation "under General Eisenhower's supervision", in view of the American General's previous

dealings with Peyrouton and other protégés of Mr Murphy, might have been expressed differently. The French have not forgotten that his first action in North Africa was to imprison the patriots who had risked their lives to facilitate his landing.

5) Mr. Hull has made it clear by inference that he and President Roosevelt still do not accept General de Gaulle as the accredited leader of the French people during the forthcoming military operations. Obediently, the section of the British press most subject to Wall Street influences has for months past been pointing out the warts on the General's nose and crediting him with Napoleonic ambitions. In view of the parts played in the Allied struggle by Stalin, Tito, and Chiang-Kai-Chek, not to mention Mr Winston Churchill, the humbug and hypocrisy of this campaign of denigration are self evident. In their hour of peril the British people chose a Premier whose politics most of them detested and endowed him with quasi-dictatorial powers, a fact which his recent bludgeoning of the House of Commons has demonstrated. Why should not the French, to whom a leader is no less essential, be allowed to do the same? If they don't like him, when he has served his purpose, they can get rid of him. Neither President Roosevelt nor Mr Churchill are fixtures in their respective offices.

6) If General de Gaulle is not to be acknowledged, what new French Mihailovitch can Mr Robert Murphy produce to supplant him, without creating "incidents" and possibly provoking civil war?

7) Writing in 1917 on the subject of Anglo-American relations, an Englishman with twelve years' experience of America, uttered the following warning: "Policies of obsequiousness and animosity alike are futile . . . Subservience and flattery destroy respect; they never conciliate, and though there is scarcely a man in England who would not welcome better feeling and a better understanding between

ourselves and the United States, our politicians have no mandate from the people to grovel for it . . . By their attitude of servility towards the United States our leaders only earn contempt and beget restiveness here".

8) Only the most incompetent and hamhanded British diplomacy, coupled with the muzzling of the British Press which Mr Wendell Willkie long ago deplored, could have made Mr Hull's broadcast possible in the form in which it was delivered. Lord Halifax should be recalled. His appointment, as Liberal Americans realised, was a disastrous blunder.

Poland.

(To the Editor, *Tribune*. 9th February 1945)

Printed with editorial cuts.

With the Russian armies within fifty miles of Berlin and General Eisenhower's armies still on the wrong side of the Siegfried Line, *Tribune's* new all-out anti-Soviet offensive (in close association with the Catholic Fascist Poles assembled in South Kensington) must be regarded as the last forlorn hope of Dr Göbbels. Elementary facts hitherto indisputed by historians, are ignored in the ardour of the fray and charges made "on all the evidence" for which not a scrap of evidence is produced.

"Poland will lose a large portion of her eastern territory to Russia". Can this actually refer, in 1945, to the territory East of the Curzon line, seized over twenty years ago by Polish imperialists and predominantly inhabited by non-Polish peasants?

"The Lublin Committee is a creature of Russia's, and from all the evidence it had no popular basis among the Poles". Which Poles? The landlords? Or those Poles who had to go down on their knees to kiss the hem of their master's garments before addressing them? According to "evidence", which has never been contradicted, the Lublin Committee, even before the recent Russian advance, had begin to break up the big

estates and had settled 900,000 peasants on their own land. If this is the action of a "Quisling Government", clearly Major Vidkun Quisling, C.B.E., has been grossly maligned.

The wholesale evacuation of East Prussia, which Mr Orwell deplores, appears to have been undertaken largely on their own volition by the East Prussians. In any case, it forms a minor part of those enormous migrations and uprootings which have been going on throughout Europe for over five years, and for which not Stalin, but Hitler, is responsible. The assertion that an exchange of populations, if well-organized and humanely carried out, necessarily breeds future wars, is disproved by the only pre-war example of such a racial settlement. The transference of the Greek population of Asia Minor to Metropolitan Greece, though it occasioned much temporary suffering, proved a complete success in the long run and led to the establishment of friendly relations between two peoples who had been enemies for centuries.

What Czechoslovakia "should" or should not do in regard to the problem of the Sudeten Germans, at some future date, is surely a matter for the Czechoslovakians to decide. When British Socialists have set an example to the world by insisting on some sort of decency in our relations with India, Burma, Italy, Greece, not to mention Belgium and France, they will be in a position to lecture their Allies, but not before. Both in his pre-war Foreign policy and in his subsequent treatment of liberated countries, Stalin has a more consistent and statesmanlike record than either Roosevelt or Churchill. Towards the London Poles he has shown a moderation and forbearance, in face of intense and long continued provocation, which even Churchill could not deny. Neither *Tribune*, nor anyone else in this country, knows the facts about the existing situation in Poland. All we can be certain of is that the stream of anti-Soviet propaganda, some of which has found its way into the Left Wing press, is tainted at the source and largely based on the sort of Catholic Fascist "Truth" of which General Franco and Dr Göbbels are the principal exponents. No one

in his senses would put a dog to sleep on the sort of "evidence" on which *Tribune* has seen fit to rely. The charge recently made by Mr Orwell in these columns that all Socialists who prefer to wait and see, before swallowing Fascist "directives" against our Soviet Allies, are whores and cowards, recoils on his own head.

Greece.

(To the Editor, *Cavalcade*. March 24th, 1945)

If I heard him correctly on March 17th, Kenneth Matthews, B.B.C. correspondent in Athens, complacently referred to E.A.M. as "the defeated Party". This can only mean that the Government imposed on Greece by Mr Churchill, with the connivance of the Labour leaders, is officially regarded as established on a permanent basis, under General Scobie's protection; that the agreement signed on February 12 was fraudulent; that the promise of elections "conducted in complete freedom" will never be kept; and that the House of Commons has been deceived.

If the democratic forces which survived the régime of terror imposed by King George II and the dictator Metaxas, stood up heroically to Mussolini and Hitler, and endured years of semi-starvation in the hope of liberation, have now indeed succumbed—which is most unlikely—there would be little ground for satisfaction. The defeat of patriots and anti-Fascists in Greece or anywhere else means a defeat for patriots and anti-Fascists in Great Britain. As no one can possibly deny this salient truth, it is surely up to Messrs Attlee, Bevin, Morrison and Sir Walter Citrine to explain their position to the electorate.

There is only one way of cleansing the Augean stable of British diplomacy in the Balkans, and that is by the setting up of a Select Commission of Inquiry, with power to examine witnesses under oath and to insist on the production of relevant documents. How soon will M.P.'s have the courage and honesty to demand it?

Chelmsford.

(To the Editor, *Cavalcade*. May 2nd, 1945)

One reason for Mr Churchill's defeat at Chelmsford, which no one seems to have pointed out, is the almost universal distrust felt for so many of his associates. It was one thing to plead for "no recriminations" against the Munichеers, quite another to maintain them in their key positions and load them with "honours".

The feelings of the average patriotic citizen for men like Simon, Halifax, and Hoare differ only in degree from those of the average French patriot for Pétain, Flandin, and Laval. Although Mr Churchill has kindly provided Sir Samuel with a disguise, that will not prevent the names of Hoare and Laval from being indissolubly linked by future historians.

That Lord Templewood, as he is now, is untroubled by remorse is shown by the fact that he recently had the effrontery to plead for "continuity of Foreign Policy", should a Labour Government come into power. This policy of giving open or undercover support to all reactionary régimes and carrying on ceaseless sabotage of popular resistance movements has embroiled us with our Continental friends, delayed the conclusion of the European war by at least a year, and already brought a third world conflict appreciably nearer.

Unless it is reversed after the next election and there is, at the same time, a drastic purge of Foreign Office personnel, the Diplomatic Corps, the Consular Service, Security, political "Intelligence", and all the other secret agents of big business, our chances of achieving liberation after nearly ten years of bitter struggle appear illusory. (Are we supposed to have forgotten that when this war began, in Spain, practically the whole of the Conservative class sided with the enemy?)

What is astonishing about Chelmsford is not that Millington was returned but that over 18,000 electors were induced by the exploitation of Mr Churchill's popularity as a military leader to vote for a continuation of the Tory dictatorship

which has proved so disastrous during the past 25 years. A vote for a Tory is a vote for no homes for our returning soldiers, "free enterprise" for industrial gangsters and profiteering landlords, further attacks on democracy in Greece and Italy, renewed support for the Fascist dictators of Spain, Portugal and Argentina, revolution instead of settlement in India, and the steady undermining of the Anglo-Soviet alliance, on which all our hopes of an enduring peace depend.

The Polish "Trojan Horse".

(To the Editor, *New Statesman and Nation.* May 20, 1945. Rejected)

Sir,

Mr Wilanowski's letter in your issue of May 19th follows alarmingly upon the statement that the Polish forces in this country are shortly to be increased to 300,000 men. As this formidable army is financed by the British taxpayer, apparently with the concurrence of Transport House, it seems odd that no M.P. has troubled to enquire for what purpose we are still being saddled with this burden. What are the Poles here for? The object of an army is presumably to fight. Now that Germany has surrendered, the only discernible enemies of the Sosnkowski clique are our Soviet Allies and the Provisional Government in Warsaw. Does Mr Churchill propose to repeat his disastrous adventure of 1919, by letting loose these firebrands, somewhere in Central Europe, to attack the U.S.S.R. and provoke a Civil War? Pending further enlightenment, it is obvious that the existence of a powerful foreign army in our congested island—an army closely linked to the Catholic Fascist International, and officered by reactionaries and anti-semites fanatically hostile to Russia— constitutes a menace which it would be criminal to disregard.

The only safe solution would seem to be first to honour the Crimea agreement, secondly to put an end to the London

Poles' misuse of B.B.C. facilities, thirdly to disarm the Polish troops, fourthly to repatriate them and fifthly to send to Warsaw the Anglo-American observers for whom Stalin originally asked.

It would be interesting to know whether Messrs Attlee, Bevin & Co, if forced reluctantly into power at the coming election, have any plans for dealing with this urgent problem. Their record in Greece, where they have allowed Mr Churchill to establish a brutal and incompetent "police state" with the aid of General Scobie and the notorious Ulster Constabulary, scarcely inspires confidence. A "grand coup de balai" in the Foreign Office would appear to some of us to be the first essential. If they contemplate it, they have never said so. Perhaps they are afraid, if they did, that it would win them too many votes.

Foreign Policy.

(To the Editor, *New Statesman and Nation*. 7th July, 1945)

Sir,

The Tory plea for "continuity of foreign policy"—which to the ordinary anti-Fascist citizen seems staggering in its effrontery—reveals the extent of the sacrifices made by the Left to preserve "national unity".

What emerges from behind the veil of secrecy in which our wartime diplomacy has been shrouded is that we have not one foreign policy but two. The discrepancy between the policy which was sold to the late House of Commons and the public, and the one which is actually being pursued behind the scenes, has now become so glaring that no intelligent person can plead ignorance of it. The cause of the discrepancy is not really in any serious doubt; it is the control exercised over the Foreign Office by the "City". There is nothing new in this situation. The Foreign Office has always been the servant of the Money Power and has always framed its policies in accord-

ance with what the financial world understands by "British interests", regardless of public opinion. As a result, we have been involved in two world wars in a quarter of a century and —unless Parliament at last asserts itself to defend the people's rights—we may shortly be involved in a third.

In a moment of candour the late Neville Chamberlain admitted that "Non-Intervention" was due to the fact that the City had "£40 million invested in Franco territory". All the ballyhoo about Bolshevism and "Christianity" was claptrap, to delude the House of Commons and the public. Similar claptrap has been talked by Mr Churchill and Mr Anthony Eden about our recent crusades to save Greece from "bandits" and defend the "independence" of Syria and Lebanon. No one of any intelligence or sense of decency believes a word of it.

At San Francisco, M. Paul-Boncour asked for a neutral fact-finding commission to be set up, to inquire into the situation in the Levant. No request could have been more reasonable; but the reply of Mr Stettinius was a curt refusal. By inference this means that the Anglo-American oil kings do not wish the real facts to be disclosed. Thus our friendship with our nearest neighbour, which it should be a paramount British interest to strengthen and preserve, has been imperilled by a group of shady financiers and military intriguers of whose secret motives we are kept in ignorance.

Any reputation for veracity which Foreign Office spokesmen may have acquired in the past was blown sky-high by Mr R. A. Butler during the Spanish Civil War, when his replies to questions in the House of Commons made us the laughing-stock of Europe and America. Since then, no serious student of Foreign Affairs, either in England or abroad, has believed any official statement or Foreign Office "handout" unless amply corroborated from outside sources. The most that can be said in excuse of some of the utterances of Messrs Churchill and Eden is that they were based on false information supplied to them through the "usual channels".

It is these mysterious"channels" that all honest men, who have the slightest regard for the future of their country, should now require to see in the witness box. A Royal Commission of Enquiry should be set up by the new Parliament with power to examine witnesses under oath and to enforce the production of relevant documents. Only in this way will the secret Fascist influences which are endangering the prospects of Peace be revealed and purged. Surely the least we can do for the sons we have lost is to find out who is really responsible for the efforts to sabotage resistance movements and preserve reactionary régimes in the countries they died to liberate.

Whatever may be the composition of the new Parliament, the test of the patriotism, courage and honesty of its members will be their attitude towards the secret diplomacy which menaces our future and has brought on us so many disasters in the past. Only the truth can set our children free.

One Way Traffic.

(To the Editor, *Tribune*. September 21st, 1945)

The termination of Lend-Lease may have at least one good result if it forces the British public to decide whether it can any longer afford, either on financial or moral grounds, to allow the business of providing light entertainment for the masses to remain, for practical purposes, an American monopoly. In theory, there is free trade between the two countries in such things as books, films, music and stage plays. There is, of course, still some money to be made in the United States by British "best-sellers". Occasionally an outstanding British film is shown by a limited number of American cinemas, and now and then a London play achieves a New York success. But, in practice, the traffic in these cultural commodities is overwhelmingly in American hands.

For example, scarcely 2½ per cent of present-day American publications are of British origin, although British publishers

still use 25 per cent of their diminished stocks of paper for the production of books by American authors. If they were works of serious interest or of outstanding literary merit, there might be no grounds for complaint. As everyone knows, they are, for the most part, nothing of the kind.

Again, at one time British composers of light music had a deserved reputation and presumably made a comfortable living. The B.B.C. policy of swamping the air with American jazz has seen to it that our Carylls, Moncktons and Fraser- Simsons have had no successors. So, to-day, tiny English children can be heard in our streets advising "pistol-packing mommas" to "lay that pistol down".

There is no need for me to stress, in *Tribune,* the serious situation which exists in the film trade.

Surely the moment for decontamination has now arrived. If, as Jennie Lee recently stated, we have "a brilliant and devoted group of scenario writers and producers", why should they not be given a chance to put our native film industry on its feet? Since we obviously cannot afford any longer to pay a vast annual tribute to Hollywood, why should we not popularize the British "way of life", for a change, and keep our money in the country?

The first requirements would seem to be the breaking up of private monopolies, the establishment of Government studios and appropriate action by the Board of Trade.

Sold Again!

(To the Editor, *Cavalcade,* Sept. 15th, 1945)

In 1935 the British people, with their usual sound judgment, demanded a strong League of Nations policy, to end aggression by means of collective security. The Tories, to obtain their votes, promised to obey the people's mandate, and were returned with a huge majority to enable them to do so. No sooner were they safely in office than they dishonoured their

pledges. The Hoare-Laval scandal leaked out, the League was sabotaged, and war inevitably followed.

In 1945, when the first opportunity occurred of getting rid of these guilty politicians, the British people, with the same sound judgment, voted for their opponents. The country had swung Left. Impetus had been given to this leftwards trend, particularly in the Forces, by Mr Churchill's armed intervention in favour of Greek Fascism. The average citizen was quite alert enough to realise that, before the second world war was over, Mr Churchill had fired the first shots in a future conflict between "Democracy" (as understood by Wall Street and the City) and "Bolshevism".

Even before the advent of the atomic bomb the people refused to stand for a continuity of the kind of power politics which would make a third and final massacre inevitable. They therefore demanded a reversal of our foreign policy in accordance with Socialist principles. At the election, Labour candidates throughout the country pledged themselves to carry out the people's wishes.

No sooner did Messrs Attlee, Bevin, Morrison and the other Labour collaborators in the previous Tory coalition find themselves returned to power with a large majority, than they proceeded to act precisely as their predecessors had acted ten years earlier. Mr Bevin's "continuity" speech, loudly applauded by Messrs Churchill, Eden, and the Hearst Press, might have been written for him, before the results of the election were known, by some Old Gang permanent official under Mr Eden's guidance.

Not to be outdone in currying favour with the City, Mr Morrison has now followed it up with a speech attacking socialism and praising "free enterprise" which was greeted with almost delirious enthusiasm by the "Daily Telegraph" (September 6th). Meanwhile, demobilisation is being carried out on strictly Conservative lines, the only difference being that the rising anger of the Forces will be directed against the leaders they voted for. That the Right Wing Labour

bosses are, consciously or unconsciously, playing for some new form of Capitalist coalition, in which they will receive the rewards allotted to "Ramsays", seems likely enough from their efforts to ingratiate themselves with their former colleagues.

The fate of the present Government may depend on whether the backbenchers prove strong enough to insist on Socialist leadership before it is too late. If the machine defeats them, there may be a repetition of 1931, and Britain will be sold again.

The Conspiracy of Silence.

(To the Editor, *New Statesman and Nation.* Oct. 25th, 1945. Rejected).

No one who travels about and keeps his ears open can deny that the conspiracy of silence in which Parliament, the Press and the B.B.C. appear to have joined, is rapidly getting on the public's nerves. As we hurry on towards world catastrophe not a squeak comes from our rulers. It is almost impossible to find any reflection of what average citizens are saying and thinking in anything that is being written and printed. The atom bomb seems to have spread a graveyard hush over the entire Press and the only glimpses we can get of the Government's policy and intentions, come in the form of news flashes from abroad. It was from President Truman that we heard that Mr Attlee had agreed to his refusal to share the secrets of the new weapon of destruction with our Russian Allies. Not a word has come from Mr Attlee himself, and two attempts to raise the matter in Parliament have been crushed by the Party machine. The sensational Press conference held at Washington on August 17th at which General H. H. Arnold, Chief of the American Air Force, outlined his Government's plans for "making the world safe for Americans" was ignored by the B.B.C., the millionaire press and all the serious weeklies, with the result that, when the London Conference broke up,

the fatuous explanations of Messrs Byrnes and Bevin were received in a bewildered silence. No voice has been raised in Parliament or anywhere else to demand that reactionary finance, now armed with the atomic bomb, shall be forced by world opinion to define its aims. No attempt has been made on this side of the Atlantic to establish contact with the millions of Americans who have no more desire to see New York and Chicago vaporised than we have to see our own country wiped off the map. Instead, the Tory-Catholic-Fascist propaganda against Soviet Russia has broken out with renewed violence now that all control over the Service chiefs and the permanent officials of the Foreign Office appears to have ceased.

Continuity of Foreign policy means that subservience to the Axis, as planned by Chamberlain and Lord Halifax, is merely being replaced by subservience to Wall Street. The policy and the motives for it—the desire to protect "free enterprise" against the dangerous threat of a planned Socialist economy—remain unchanged. The direction of the policy, thanks to Mr Bevin, remains in the hands of the same financial wire-pullers, permanent officials and military high-ups who once banked on being able to do a deal with Hitler. Or doesn't it? Have any of the Old Gang been sacked? Instead of sending a powerful Trade Delegation to Moscow and tightening up our commercial relations with the Empire our delegates are kept dangling on the line in Washington. Is it so unlikely that when Anglo-Russian misunderstandings have been sufficiently exasperated to suit American purposes, Washington and Moscow will come to a "realistic" agreement and we shall be left in the cart? That would be "continuity of policy" with a vengeance. No one wishes to embarrass the new Government which so many millions of responsible citizens have worked so hard to put into power. No one underestimates their difficulties or fails to realise the legacy of muddle and confusion left them by their predecessors. All the same the fact has to be faced that not one of the abuses which brought about

Mr Churchill's downfall has yet been remedied, not one of the accumulated scandals has been investigated, not one of the garrulous Service chiefs, incompetent Tory diplomats, or crypto-fascist military and political "Intelligence" officers has been court-martialled or dismissed. "Left Wingers" are still being weeded out by M. I. 5 and prevented from acting as interpreters, Greek and Spanish patriots are retained in Mr Churchill's concentration camps. Sir Reginald Leeper has returned to Athens, the Nazi-sponsored "Archbishop" Damaskinos has been presented with a K.G.M.G., Lord Halifax still represents us in Washington and the amiable Mr Duff Cooper still cultivates the best people in Paris. Meanwhile, the B.B.C. has cut down its news service to a few minutes of triviality and our diminished newspapers contain mostly padding and have to fall back, for front-page items, on such old favourites as "Baronet's Wife Sues for Divorce" and "Peer's Nephew in Car Crash". The lively controversies which used to animate our more intelligent weeklies are now confined chiefly to literary squabbles or arguments about such "safe" subjects as basic English. No one must criticize a "Party line" or express any opinion on any subject that matters. It might "provoke" Mr Byrnes, or annoy President Truman or exasperate the Middle West. There is one exception to this rule of suppression. Anybody can tell any hoary old lie about Soviet Russia and be sure of getting all the space he needs to tell it in.

The Loan Settlement.

(To the Editor, *New Statesman and Nation*. Rejected)

Mr Churchill's claim that he would have secured better terms from America than those which Lords Keynes and Halifax brought back with them is scarcely supported by an examination of what he actually achieved. Admittedly the greater part of his arrangements with President Roosevelt have never been revealed, and probably never will be, but the transactions which could not be hushed up certainly do not show him in

the role of tough negotiator. For at least twenty-five years the U.S.A. has been coveting naval bases, for "security" reasons, on various islands in the British Empire. Reckoned in terms of cash—an essential reckoning in any dealings with the United States—99 years' leases of these bases would have represented a very large sum in dollars. Mr Churchill gave them away for nothing. He did not even make any stipulation that there should be an adjustment at the end of the war. The only quid pro quo he got for a deal for which, except after defeat, there is no historical parallel, was permission to purchase 50 over-age destroyers at an exaggerated price. These destroyers were used as much in defence of America as of our own country.

In order to secure the necessary dollars to build and equip factories in the United States and to purchase their products for cash, Mr Churchill agreed to sell out the large British holdings in American companies. Wall Street forced these shares down to half their value, bought them at the rock bottem price, and pocketed enormous profits when they returned to their normal Stock Exchange quotation.

After Pearl Harbour when the Lease-Lend plan was successfully launched, there was no reason on earth why Mr Churchill should not have staked out a claim for the eventual return of our dollar securities. He was on friendly terms with Roosevelt, he is half an American and he enjoyed considerable prestige and popularity in the United States. He has oratorical gifts denied to Mr Attlee, and in the then mood of American opinion, he could have put our claims on public record in a way which would not have aroused any feeling of animosity. He did nothing of the kind. Instead he referred to Lease-Lend in terms of grovelling enthusiasm as one of the most unsordid actions in history. Lease-Lend may have been one of the least sordid actions in American history, but regarded realistically it was a device by which, on the easiest possible terms, Roosevelt was enabled to save valuable American lives by fighting "to the last Ally". No sooner were the objects

of Lease-Lend achieved than President Truman closed down on it with brutal haste, with the plain object of creating a crisis which would embarrass the newly-elected Labour Government. Mr Churchill, while "rolling along with America", had secured no safeguards against the economic "Pearl Harbour" to which we have been subjected.

In regard to the atom bomb Mr Churchill's actions are wrapped in impenetrable mystery. Apparently he gave away the essential secret of the bomb—a British discovery—with the same light-hearted recklessness as he handed over British territory and such immeasurably valuable British inventions as Radar and the Merlin engine. Beneath a mass of evasions or downright lies it seems probable that there was at least a promise to give this country a supply of the bombs—a promise which has never been kept. But it is evident that no clear or avowable agreement was ever entered into by Mr Churchill to safeguard the interests of Great Britain or her Allies. Not only did he fail as a negotiator: he never even attempted to negotiate. That his Labour collaborators were equally responsible with himself for this record of futility is unfortunately true. He, more than anyone else, is responsible for the predicament in which we now find ourselves, and his boast that he would have done better than his former colleagues will hardly impress even those members of his own Party who are genuine patriots.

The American Loan.

(To the Editor, *The New Statesman and Nation*. Dec. 22nd, 1945)

Sir,

The Government's case for accepting the onerous American terms was based on the argument that we had "no alternative". As Congress may quite possibly throw out the loan next March, it seems obvious that we may be *forced* to find an alternative.

Common sense, therefore, suggests that the sooner we set about looking for one the better. Like our Russian and other European allies we won the war the hard way; like them, we may have to win the peace the hard way. The suggestion that the British race is too feeble and exhausted to discover any means of extricating itself from its present difficulties, if American help should be denied, is surely unworthy of Labour spokesmen.

In spite of Mr Bevin's foreign policy, an enormous amount of goodwill towards this country still exists in Europe and throughout the Empire. Is is pertinent to ask why a private conference of Empire representatives was not held in London simultaneously with the conference in Washington? No one doubts that Lord Keynes did his best, but how could he be expected to beat the toughest poker-players in the world with all his best cards removed from his hand? Why has no trade delegation been sent to Moscow, as well as to the Scandinavian countries and to our nearest European neighbours? Why does Mr Dalton think we are incapable of learning to smoke Balkan or Rhodesian tobacco and like it? Is there really no cotton in the Sudan, no wood pulp or newsprint in Sweden? What is the truth about shipping? If we are really as short of ships as we are led to believe, why are we engaging, under the orders of General MacArthur, in a costly and discreditable war against the Indonesian Republic? To convey British troops to Java and keep them supplied must require a whole fleet of cargo boats which could be profitably employed elsewhere.

These are only a few of the questions which citizens of reasonable intelligence have been asking since the Government, with such indecent haste, rushed us into the American gamble. There may be convincing answers to all these queries. If so, they were not supplied by any of the principal speakers in the hurried debate in the House of Commons.

The Personified State.

(To the Editor, *The New Statesman and Nation*. 16th March, 1946).

Sir,

The late Robert Dell, from his watch tower at Geneva, tried in vain to warn us against the dangerous habit of referring to the "personified State".

On March 3rd, the Foreign Editor of the only Socialist Sunday paper, informed his readers that "*Britain* takes a grave view of Russia's decision not to withdraw completely from Persia in accordance with the Anglo-Soviet-Persian treaty, but has not yet decided what steps to take". Some mere Britons, including Servicemen waiting to be demobbed, miners, dockers and other essential workers, if they saw this piece, may have wondered what "Ernie" and his Foreign Office pals were up to and why the men they sent to Parliament to represent them were not consulted. Who is "Britain", anyway? Apart from Mr Bevin, who evidently fancies himself in the role of "Britannia", complete with cardboard trident, the answer seems to be a group of anonymous oil kings, some permanent officials whose names are equally unknown, and a gentleman called Sir Reader Bullard, who first hit the limelight in December, 1941, when M. and Mme Litvinov were grossly insulted at Teheran.

I have not yet come across any Briton who does not hold the view that the Soviet Union has probably as much right to keep its troops in North Persia as we have to keep ours in Egypt, Greece, Indo-China and Indonesia and has not at least as much justification for seeking oil concessions in Azerbaijan as we and the Americans have for exploiting similar concessions in the South. "Persia", the personified State, in any case means only a clique of some two thousand landlords, supported by British reactionaries, who rule over a half-starved peasantry which may well be looking to the U.S.S.R. for liberation.

One result of the war has been that the "power", on which Governments must rely for the implementation of "power politics", now depends entirely on the willingness of the people to co-operate. "Britain" therefore—whoever it is, or whoever they are—must watch its "steps" with some care if, while endeavouring to save Franco, it continues to embroil us unnecessarily with our Soviet Allies.

Freedom From Fear?

(To the Editor, *The New Statesman and Nation.* July 1946. Rejected)

Sir,

The concluding speeches in the Congress loan debate should leave no doubt in anyone's mind as to the political conditions which Americans assume us to have accepted. The Anglo-Soviet alliance, which has been practically a dead letter since Mr Bevin assumed office, is to be finally discarded. Great Britain, saved by the dollar credit from "Soviet influence", can now be considered securely "aligned in the American bloc". When Mr Byrnes says "yes" or "no", in Paris, Mr Bevin will continue to find himself in complete agreement with Mr Byrnes.

Unless the words of Senator Rayburn and others mean this they mean nothing.

What has been agreed to, therefore, in simplified terms, is that this country, for the third time in succession, is to be made the front line of defence for international finance, controlled from Wall Street. In atomic warfare "defence" and "attack" are synonymous, while "bases for security" are *ipso facto* "bases for aggression".

Doubtless our Service chiefs, whose anti-Soviet bias has never been concealed, will be overjoyed at the prospect of eventually being able to have a crack at their "real enemy". The Government seems blandly confident in Mr Bevin and

the British press, with few dissentients, appears to share their confidence.

It is doubtful, however, if that "freedom from fear", based on the monopoly of the atomic bomb, which inspires the utterances of American diplomats like Mr Maynard Barnes and Mr William C. Bullitt, can reasonably be shared by the inhabitants of this congested island. As America's "advanced aircraft carrier", in a war against Soviet Russia—in preparation for which, since Hiroshima, the Anglo-American General Staffs Committee have been in continuous session at Washington—it is at least questionable if our fate will be much better than that of the animals symbolically sacrificed in Operation Cross Roads. Only politicians will be foolish enough to believe that the defenders of Stalingrad surrounded, unlike us, by unlimited open spaces, will imitate the present British Government by surrendering to Dollar Imperialism without a struggle. A nation capable of staging the Bikini experiment, as a diplomatic prelude to a "Peace" Conference, is clearly capable of anything. If Russia is attacked by the United States and Great Britain is forced into the conflict as a willing or unwilling vassal state, we shall have to take what comes to us. Only "experts" imagine that the U.S.S.R. has failed to provide itself with secret weapons which, if not quite so devastating as those which American scientists are working day and night to perfect, will still be powerful enough to make a mess of London.

While it will, no doubt, be jolly fun to be able to see "Mothers Wears Tights" and a chemically pure version of "Forever Amber", to have a bit more spam, some real "imitation American jewellery", nylon stockings and lipsticks, the price exacted for our all-too-brief enjoyment of these delights appears excessive.

Readers in Ostrich-land may say that "all this war talk" is nonsense. The *Daily Express* said the same in 1939.

If it is nonsense, how comes it that a Gallup Poll recently disclosed that 75 per cent of American citizens consider war

with Russia "inevitable"? After all, it is they who started atomic diplomacy and it is they who have allowed their military maniacs to attempt to paralyse the world with fear. Surely they ought to know?

Training Areas.

(To the Editor, *The Times*. Rejected)

Sir,

Prior to the Debate on Mr Crossman's Amendment efforts were made by various citizens, unattached to any political Party, to call attention by means of letters to the press to the dissatisfaction with Mr Bevin's Foreign Policy which they knew to be widespread. Unfortunately the iron curtain proved impermeable. As a result, the Government was taken completely by surprise, one spokesman even going so far as to state, before being confronted by the abstentions, that 98 per cent of the nation supported the Foreign Secretary. This was of course the impression, wholly erroneous as it proved, which most of the newspapers had managed to convey to official minds.

It is with these facts in view that as an ordinary citizen who has contacts with other ordinary people, including rank-and-file Trade Unionists, I beg permission to suggest that the opposition to War Office land-grabbing is not only due to the desire to preserve tracts of unspoiled country for public use, but is also a sign of the moral revolt against the whole "long-term military programme" of which it forms a part.

The continued day and night piling up of atomic bombs and the development by the United States Navy Department, during the Peace Conference, of devices for bacteriological warfare which are claimed to be even more murderously destructive, have rendered the practice of labelling aggression "defence" an absurdity to anyone of average intelligence. Few of us in this country have any desire to be associated with this form of "defence". On the contrary, many of us share the

Soviet view that, as a first step towards world disarmament, the new weapons should be declared illegal by the United Nations and their manufacture condemned in accordance with the judgment at Nuremberg. We, in these islands, have no physical means of protection against atomic bombs nor are we ideologically in harmony with the Power which has persisted in their production after the cessation of hostilities. Our working classes will never willingly consent to any form if military alliance with the United States which can be regarded as a threat to our Soviet Allies. Whitehall may play the politics but the defeat of the platform at the recent Trade Union Conference at Brighton indicates that, in the last resort, organised Labour controls the power.

Suspicions as to the Government's secret "commitments" and disapproval of the tasks assigned to our troops in Palestine, Greece, Italy and elsewhere, which have delayed demobilisation, lowered our industrial man-power and prevented tax reduction, are rising in intensity and no responsible journal, no Member of Parliament, will serve the nation's interests by ignoring them. Concealment can only lead to further painful "surprises".

The suggestion, put forward in some quarters, that the wives and mothers who are clamouring for the demobilisation of their husbands and sons are "crypto-Communists", is as far from reality as the belief, prevalent in Labour circles, that they were returned to power by the votes of the Party stalwarts. They owe their majority to the non-political "floating electorate" who gave them a mandate to carry out a definite programme, of which a change of foreign policy was the most important feature. We voted for Peace, rapid demobilisation, world disarmament under the aegis of the United Nations, friendship with Soviet Russia, the Four Freedoms; not for a military alliance to make the world safe for dollar imperialism.

The menace of atomic warfare has, in the popular mind, rendered the firing of live ammunition from pop guns on

Dartmoor an expensive anachronism. The only means of salvation for humanity which many of the listeners to Mr Hersey's account of Hiroshima can imagine, lies in morally inspired statesmanship and the mobilisation of public opinion behind the spokesmen of those nations which, like the U.S.S.R., are genuinely striving for a peaceful world.

These ideas may seem over-simplified to some of the distinguished correspondents who have discussed the problem of Training Areas in your columns. Others, however, may retort that the views they have hitherto expressed have about as much actuality as an argument on ping-pong, conducted on the branch of a tree already three-parts sawn through. Faced by the atomic threat, the differences between "idealism" and "realism" are rapidly becoming almost negligible.*

The Case for Mr Bevin.

(To the Editor, *The New Statesman and Nation.* Rejected)

Sir,

Unless Mr Raymond Blackburn can claim that he has actually attended the UNO conferences it is improbable that he knows any more about them than the rest of us, who have to depend on condensed and possibly garbled newspaper reports. His statement that the Russians "used the veto to frustrate the working of the Security Council", instead of for the purpose of safeguarding the cause of peace and disarmament which has, from the first, been their aim, has about as much validity as his over-simplified comment that the Americans "supported us in 1940 when we stood alone and Russia supported Germany".

Is is nice to hear from a Labour M.P. that "if America raises fundamental issues on which we cannot as Socialists

* The reader may comment that "Goldring must have been a fool if he thought the *Times* would print that kind of thing". The answer is that he didn't.

agree with her our Government will take an equally firm stand". The most "fundamental" of all issues for humanity is the continued manufacture by the United States of atomic bombs and the development by scientists, working under the direction of the U.S. Navy Department, of new devices for bacteriological warfare which are claimed to be even more deadly in their effect.

These new weapons are weapons of aggression.

At a recent meeting of the United Nations Association, Lord Cecil observed that "a practical step towards the outlawry of war had been taken by the Nuremberg court judgment. It had been judicially declared that aggressive war was an international crime and that individuals helping their Government in waging war were criminal".

Judging by what has appeared in the press, neither Mr Bevin nor Sir Hartley Shawcross took the lead in opposing the manufacture of weapons of aggression, in time of peace, either on legal or on moral grounds. Nor has Mr Attlee yet made it clear that in no circumstances will this country ever support the United States in a so-called "preventive" war of aggression against our Russian Allies.

CHAPTER TEN

We Voted Them In.

I

IN a previous chapter I had the temerity to refer to the odd motives attributed by reviewers, both in the Socialist and Conservative press, to writers who feel the urge to protest against policies which they believe to be disastrous. Arguments, built up on irrefutable facts—and thus difficult to answer—are usually dismissed in Tory newspapers with the airy assertion that the author is "disgruntled". Much the same line is taken by some of the critics who review the books of Socialists for the Socialist press.

In the hope of putting paid to the nonsensical theory that anyone who, after reading his morning paper, cries "Blast Bevin!" is sick of his wife, facing bankruptcy or tortured by toothache, I must put on record the fact that the past year, as far as my purely personal affairs are concerned, has proved one of the pleasantest I can remember. Even my "ambitions", about which one of my critics showed himself so solicitous, have been modestly gratified.

All the same, I fear that this brief aside is only a preamble to what some of my Labour friends may regard as a "bitter-tasting" chapter.

The world we have been living in, since Hiroshima, has been more filled with the bitterness of blighted hopes, apprehensions and betrayals that it has ever been since Christ died upon the Cross to redeem humanity and show it how it might be saved.

It is not a bit of use blinking the facts or imitating, as we English are so prone to do, the habit of the ostrich. However much we may desire to remain on friendly terms with the American people, it is childish to shut our eyes to the fact that the present rulers of the United States, in their bid for world domination, have threatened the progressive half of the human race with a renewal of the economic slavery from which they fought to free themselves.

Why must we go on pretending that the British Labour Government has not accepted the position of satellite partner in an Anglo-American bloc? No one contests the American claim that the prodigious American production of planes and munitions, although carried out in perfect safety and without any sacrifice on the part of American labour of its standard of living, was an indispensable factor contributing to the defeat of the Nazis. But Lease-Lend, though lyrically described by Mr Churchill as "the most unsordid act in history" and believed by the American public to have been an act of unparalleled generosity was, in fact, no more than a characteristically American example of commercial realism. As President Roosevelt was well aware, American mothers, unlike their British counterparts, could not be trusted to stand for high casualty lists. Lease-Lend enabled the United States, at a cost of astronomical losses to her Russian, Yugoslavian and other Allies, to emerge practically unscathed, as the dominating world power. In four years' fighting the total number of Americans killed by enemy action was well under 400,000 out of a population of 130 millions. The real test of American "generosity" came when the starving world applied for assistance from her mammoth food reserves. How the United States responded is too sordid and too familiar a story to need recapitulation here.

What the results of the Election of July 1945 have revealed even to the blindest, even to the most politically inept, is that although we have two Parliamentary Parties, the ins and the outs, control of our destinies remains in the hands of a small section of a single class. It is rightly called "the governing oli-

garchy", and while it maintains itself in power, the decisions of the ballot box will continue to be ineffective and the public performances of the House of Commons will never be much more than a shadow-show. No doubt this conclusion will seem rather naive to the Marxist, but the facts on which it is based are incontrovertible and, indeed, obvious to many intelligent people who know nothing about "dialectical materialism".

When Labour won its resounding victory at the polls, it was impossible for a natural optimist like myself not to hope that the newcomers to Parliament would make their influence felt and stand by their election pledges. About the bosses of the Labour machine, who had collaborated with Winston Churchill throughout the war, I had, as the correspondence in the previous chapter indicates, very few illusions. All the same, I clung to the hope that the backbenchers would keep them to their programme. This hope was not shared by a friend of my own generation whom I met shortly after polling day. "Well, I voted for the Labour candidate", he observed, "having, like the rest of us, no alternative. But I trust Attlee and Bevin no more than I trusted Chamberlain and Halifax. If Labour wins and the politicians betray us again, all I can say is that our form of so-called 'democracy' is finished. It will be succeeded by some polite brand of Fascism disguised, no doubt, as a 'National Socialist Democratic Coalition' but in reality a dictatorship of the Right taking orders from Wall Street. The crucial test of the new Government will be its foreign policy. The Big Three signed a solemn pledge at Yalta to eradicate Nazi-Fascism wherever it exists. If Attlee & Co. get a working majority, that means, if they keep faith with the electorate, a reversal of our policy towards Franco and the Greek Fascists, a clean-up in the Foreign Office and Diplomatic Corps and the strengthening of our alliance with Soviet Russia as a bulwark against international finance controlled from America. If they rat on us, as they probably will, America, in a material sense, will have gained more than half the world and Britain will have lost her freedom of action".

It was a comfort, after leaving this depressed contemporary,

to come upon a bunch of enthusiastic young people, mostly servicemen, who had voted for the first time in their lives and were confident of the result. The candidate for whom they had been working with tireless enthusiasm was a young officer with a brilliant war record, a man typical of the British "resistance", with uncompromising Left Wing Socialist views. If they got him in, these innocent idealists had no fears for the future. All they wanted would be "in the bag". They *did* get him in, with a large majority, and he made an excellent maiden speech. The test of his sincerity came some months later when he—among a group of over a hundred backbenchers—protested against Mr Bevin's actions in Greece. Mr Bevin addressed a meeting of his critics, in March 1946, the Party machine "steam-rollered" them, and only six had the courage and common honesty to stick to their principles. He was not one of the six, and has not been heard of since.*

After Mr Attlee had formed his Cabinet, in which Trade Union figureheads and tired old men predominated, he had immediately to meet a crisis of such magnitude and complexity as might well have shaken the nerve of a Gladstone or a Disraeli. In spite of all the promises made to the U.S.S.R. by Churchill and President Roosevelt when the mighty Russian armies, at the price of millions of lives, were taking on the lion's share of the land fighting in Europe, the Americans withheld from Stalin the existence of the atom bomb and gave no intimation of their decision to use it in Japan. After Hiroshima, America, that is to say President Truman's group of advisers, which included anglo-phobe Irish Catholics and Wall Street money barons, intoxicated by the power conferred by her monopoly of the decisive weapon, suddenly rounded on her two major Allies. Keeping the "Bolshevik menace" in obeyance for the time being, the State Department proceeded to turn the heat on the new British Government, with a view to dissolving the Anglo-Russian

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* To do him justice, he abstained from voting against Mr. Crossman's amendment in November 1946.

alliance and attaching what remained of the British Money Power to the Wall Street bandwagon. With this end in view, without previous consultation or any of the usual diplomatic courtesies, the President announced the abrupt termination of Lease-Lend. This undisguisedly hostile action was directly aimed at embarrassing our new constitutionally-elected Government.

In dealing with this situation, which admittedly called for iron nerve, great moral courage, coolness and determination, the new Premier had the whole nation, except Mr Churchill and the defeated Tories, solidly behind him. In spite of financial bankruptcy due to our war-time sacrifices, we had some trump cards in our hands which, if boldly and skilfully played, might have enabled us to call the American bluff. In the first place our prestige throughout the world, particularly in the Dominions, then stood high. In the second place the Atlantic Charter with its "four freedoms", which Roosevelt had signed, was still believed in, while hundreds of millions of plain people in every country based their hopes of peace upon the embryonic United Nations Organisation. Thirdly the vast international campaign of calumny and misrepresentation had not yet been set in motion against our Soviet Allies. The situation was that after the "Big Three" powers had successfully carried through their joint enterprise, the most heavily armed of the three had signalised the joint victory by turning upon its two temporarily exhausted partners. What could have been more reasonable than that the two threatened powers should have closed their ranks and presented a united front to the big-stick-wielding bully? Fourthly, in regard to the post-war financial situation, Britain had an indestructible case for fair treatment which could have been stated in the simplest terms. Fifthly, she had it in her power, by honest and courageous action, to take the leadership in conjunction with Russia, of the liberated states of Europe. She had potential allies in France, in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Italy and, by reversing Churchill's iniquitous action, even in Greece. Moreover, was America really as strong, morally and economically, as she appeared to be? She had the monopoly of the atom bomb, and

she also had unrivalled productive capacity and a vast body of skilled workers. But she had lost the guiding hand and statesmanlike vision of Roosevelt. She had no economic policy and was at the mercy of ruthless pressure groups of gangsters capitalists. To keep her workers well-paid and fully employed, new markets for her exports were clearly necessary. But you cannot attract new customers by blowing, or threatening to blow them, to hell. A million corpses cannot swoon to the mellifluous notes of Frank Sinatra or fall in love with Lamour. The only kind of international business which yields to atomic threats and flourishes amid chaos and terror is black market stuff. As intelligent American industrialists, when sober, realise this perfectly well, there is little doubt that the "atomaniacs" could have been pushed aside and that reasonable conversations and adjustments could have been made had Mr Attlee stood firm, kept his head, and used all the methods of publicity at his disposal. There are occasions when secret conversations are justifiable, and when the press is well advised to exercise great restraint. This clearly was not one of them. This was a moment for banner headlines and plain speaking.

So Mr Attlee had his chance of proving the truth of the old adage that honesty is the best policy. His country would have stood by him had he seized it.

Unfortunately for Great Britain and the world, Mr Attlee did not rise to the occasion. Our nice little Chairman of the Cabinet Committee, still, like his Foreign Secretary, very much under the domination of his late boss, followed the routine of subservience and appeasement. In the United States, had he realised the fact, he had one powerful potential ally—the conscience of the minority of liberal-minded anti-Fascist Americans. He made no attempt to appeal to it although, to honest minds, Britain's case was overwhelmingly strong. If America was really an "ally", instead of only a part-time co-belligerent in a war in which her existence was at stake no less than our own, then the principle of equality of sacrifice could not be wholly repudiated without loss of face. The computation that on any equitable basis she

was in debt to this country to the extent of £26 thousand million had far more validity than any of the financial nonsense talked by Mr Vinson and the spokesmen of the Federal Reserve Bank.

While our American Ambassador, the most widely distrusted of the British Municheers, assisted by Lord Keynes and his staff of experts, was struggling with the Wall Street Shylocks, Mr Attlee flew to Washington to assure the President that British "Socialism" was no menace to American free enterprise. It may be conjectured that he asked forgiveness for his nationalisation baby by making the classic excuse that, after all, it was only a little one. He was photographed before the flight, standing in front of the plane which was to carry him on his momentous journey, precisely as Neville Chamberlain had been photographed before the Munich sell-out. The similarity of their expressions struck a chill into the hearts of many who noticed it.

One of the most extraordinary incidents in the Loan discussions was the "leakage" of information regarding the disparity, in proportion to our population and resources, between Britain's expenditure of blood and treasure and that of the United States. As a result many English people learnt the facts and figures for the first time. Why they were not officially published in this country and blazoned to the whole world before the Conference started, adds one more to the long list of "mysteries", into which our people are now too apathetic to inquire.

To take a backward glance at the results of Labour's first year of office is only a shade less depressing than to attempt to peer into the threatening future. A year ago all the Socialist rank-and-file of my acquaintance were filled with hope and bursting with enthusiasm, while all the middle-class Conservatives, Fascists and anti-Semites I met were depressed and taciturn. To-day, the situation is at least partially reversed. Geniune Socialists are tongue-tied and glum, while the Catholic Fascists, anti-Semites, British "America-Firsters", ex-Quislings and ex-Munichеers have crept out of their cellars and are actively preparing for a come-back. To quote Mr Bevin, they thought they were defeated and have

woken up to find that, thanks to him, they have won. Fascism and anti-Semitism are now spreading in the parts of the country I know best with the rapidity of syphilis in an army of occupation. The other day a prominent citizen, in a frequented saloon bar of a South-coast town, remarked, in order to liven things up, "Let's have a discussion! I say Heil Hitler! Apart from his regrettable errors, in some ways he did a damned good job of work". He looked round pugnaciously, but his audience was apathetic. "What! No takers? If I'd said that a year ago I should have been out on my ear". How right he was!

Analysing the performance of the Government during the past twelve months, a friend said to me that "anyone with a nose for a bad smell can detect the aroma of secret bargaining. Transport House never really expected to get in, except by a very small majority. So you can bet your boots they got round a table with Eden and Churchill and worked things out between them, before the Election results were known. 'Continuity' of Foreign Policy was traded for the long overdue nationalisation of the Bank of England and the coal mines, subject, of course, to the promise of lavish compensation for the shareholders. Coal-mining, though of paramount importance for the next ten years, is obviously a dying industry. Other and better sources of energy will be developed, so that the shareholders have made a rattling good bargain at the tax-payers' expense.

"Nationalisation of iron and steel, including armaments, and nationalisation of the land, are in a different category. These were essential points in the Labour programme of achieving real economic democracy in the lifetime of the present Parliament. But the steel barons and the landlords between them man the strongly fortified and closely-guarded citadel of our financial ruling-class which, through its control of the Foreign Office, still keeps its grip on the national steering wheel. The Tories evidently stood firm: our weak-kneed Social Democrats, like their German counterparts at Weimar and their much admired Léon Blum in France, have declined to make a clean break with the past on these controversial issues. 'Continuity' has once again triumphed. So here

we are, abetting Wall Street in waging a nerve-war against all our Socialist allies, supporting every Fascist régime that still exists and even, as in Greece, creating new ones. A new 'anti-Comintern pact' has been formed which, instead of being led by Hitler, Mussolini, Franco and the Japs is now controlled by the Federal Reserve Bank through Byrnes and Vandenburg and Churchill and Bevin. The Vatican, which helped to create the first, now fanatically supports the second. The American hierarchy is already discussing when and where to wipe out 'Communism' with atomic bombs. All that is needed to complete the picture", he added, with a genial grin, "is the appointment of Mosley to the Home Office in succession to Mr Chuter Ede".*

I quote these cynical exaggerations because they have a note of realism of a kind which only rarely gets into print. Since Mr Bevin indulged in his first anti-Soviet shouting match in the autumn of 1945, the line taken by most British newspapers, as well as by the B.B.C., has been alarming to those who understood it, not only on account of the methods adopted but still more so because of their success. One might well believe, when reading the daily press or listening to Catholic spokesmen spouting treason in the nine o'clock news, that the ghost of Dr Göbels was controlling all our public sources of information. Every Russian argument or contention brought forward at a Conference, is either suppressed altogether or deliberately distorted, every legitimate Russian claim, based upon the agreements signed at Yalta and Potsdam, is automatically denounced as "trouble-making", if it should conflict with the designs of dollar Imperialism. In justification of Anglo-American interference in the domestic concerns of liberated nations, now struggling to their feet, the charge is invariably brought forward that they are dominated by "Communists". This word is now bandied about to imply a term of reproach, like "dirty Jew", and is made to cover all democrats and partisans, however heroically they fought on our side, who desire to liberate their country from control by international fi-

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* This was the position as it appeared to some observers in July 1946.

nance, establish a planned Socialist economy and take the profit motive out of their basic industries. Yet it is only in these countries, in the U.S.S.R., in Jugoslavia, in the new Poland, in Czechoslovakia, in Communist China that we find the masses of working class people filled with hope for the future and engaged with furious energy in the work of reconstructing and rebuilding. How odd we should have thought it, in July 1945, had we guessed that it would be against the new democracies, and against the democratic elements in all the other allied nations, that the full fury of Anglo-American press propaganda, combined with open or concealed threats of hostile action, were to be directed!

In accordance with the recognised Fascist technique, the Anglo-American press day after day automatically accuses Russia of all the things of which the American reactionaries and their British satellites are themselves guilty. It is always Russia which is represented by the newspapers as seeking "world dictatorship", making impossible claims, causing difficulties and splitting the world into rival "blocs", in spite of the fact that, almost immediately after Japan's surrender, American Service Chiefs started shouting about "security" and began seeking to establish bases in every known strategical position throughout the world, from Iceland and Greenland to the Pacific. Security against whom or what? At what moment in the history of the U.S.S.R. have the rulers of the new Russia ever acted except on the defensive? All they have ever wanted is to be left in peace to develop the resources of their own vast territories. The American campaign against the U.S.S.R. was therefore, from the first, a reproduction of the methods used by Hitler in his bid for world mastery. It was built up on a colossal lie, in accordance with the formula explained in *Mein Kampf,* and like the lies of Hitler and Mussolini, it was enthusiastically endorsed by the Vatican and by the reactionary elements in Great Britain and every other country including, naturally, the Fascist powers which so many millions of brave men had given their lives to defeat. In Great Britain, the former "Munichеers" became British "America-Firsters" overnight. The Anglo-American General Staffs Committee remained

in continuous session at Washington. British Staff officers went about saying "Now Hitler is out of the way, at last we can have a crack at the Bolshies". The British press, including newspapers like the *Daily Herald,* and the *News Chronicle,* supposed to have a Leftish or "democratic" tendency, were scarcely less active in distorting or suppressing facts and howling abuse at our former allies than the organs of Lord Kemsley and the journals conducted by the "Pope's Brass Band."

The *casus belli* against the U.S.S.R., apart from the real one, the fact that Russia has demonstrated to the world the superiority of a planned Socialist economy, over the booms, slumps and recurrent massacres which are the concomitants of unrestrained Capitalism, is that she has consistently stood up for the principles of the Atlantic Charter and the rights of free nations to develop what economic system they consider most likely to conduce to the peace and prosperity of their citizens. She has refused to consent to the abrogation of the agreements concluded between the Big Three and the abolition of the veto which is the chief safeguard of world peace. All the other charges against her external, that is to say, her U.N. policy, are without foundation or proof, and merely form part of the long campaign of calumny which, except for the brief period of "Russian glory", has been going on since 1918.

If anyone now ventures to ask why it is supposed that a country which has lost many millions of her population, had two-thirds of her European territories completely devastated and much of her industrial potential destroyed—a country, moreover, whose foreign policy has always been consistently based on the principles of peace and security—should suddenly choose this moment to become an "aggressor", he is at once accused of being a "Crypto-Communist", as if that were a conclusive answer. Even the most prejudiced and reactionary judge, trained to examine evidence and to weigh arguments based upon it, would dismiss this charge as nonsense. As Mr E. S. P. Haynes remarks in his valuable pamphlet "The Genius of English Law", whatever may be the defects of our legal system, at least "the intellectual atmosphere

of the law keeps in being a spirit of fair play and a habit of precise thinking which is a valuable aseptic in public affairs. One cannot take up any English newspaper to-day without perceiving a continuous decline in any sort of dialectic or grasp of principles."

Led by the loud-voiced Bevin, the Labour Party joined with the Tories and the Catholic Fascists in denouncing the tiny group of British Communists who, at the Election, had worked with such indefatigable zeal to return them to power. When a few non-Communist Members of the House of Commons had the honesty to protest against our broken pledges to the people of Greece and to criticise a policy which has now culminated in the suppression of the Greek Trade Unions, the arrest of their leaders and the restoration of the Fascist monarchy, they received little support from the press of their own side. "Phineas", the Parliamentary correspondent of the *New Statesman and Nation,* in summing up the Parliamentary session ending in August 1946, observed that "it cannot be said that the critics have either shown themselves skilled Parliamentarians or offered any really constructive alternative to the policies of Mr Bevin. Zilliacus, despite his remarkable knowledge of international organisation and the steady improvement of his debating technique, has alienated the House by associating with the small and unimportant group of crypto-Communists." After mentioning two backbenchers who have, as he patronizingly puts it, been successful in dealing with external affairs, he adds: "But to name them is to remind oneself that Mr Bevin is still a colossus among the pygmies".
Evidently a candidate for promotion!

I remember that on the only occasion when I met Sir Richard Acland—it was shortly before the launching of his Common Wealth Party—I referred to one of the many incidents which were at that time alarming patriots of all Parties and of none. He crushed me at once with the remark: "Oh, that's what the Communists say".

This habit, common to all politicians, of applying party labels to simple moral issues, seems to me one of the many causes contributing to our present frustration. Where a majority of decent

people think alike on a particular question I cannot see why Socialists should automatically dissociate themselves if a "Communist" happens to be the first to give expression to the general view. One such issue was the panic haste with which the Loan Agreement and Bretton Woods was forced through the House of Commons. The consequences of that hurried surrender, particularly on the "colossal" Mr Bevin, are already alarming and, in view of the pronounced swing to the extreme Right in the United States, may well prove disastrous.

Owing to the muzzling of the press, "for fear of offending America", which was intensified after President Truman's abrupt termination of Lease-Lend, not one Englishman in ten thousand has had any means of finding out the essential facts on which the future existence of his country and the fate of the world now depend. At first we were led to believe that, since British scientists had made the initial discoveries which rendered possible the development of the atomic bomb, it was "our" secret. The evasive and disingenuous speeches, first of Mr. Churchill and afterwards of Mr Attlee, encouraged this delusion. It was not until Mr Byrness casually let the cat out of the bag by revealing that the process of manufacturing the bomb was a safely-guarded American monopoly, that any large number of Englishmen realised that the "secret" had been withheld not only from Soviet Russia but from Great Britain and Canada as well. Many people in this country, despite alarming proof to the contrary, still think of the United States in terms of President Roosevelt, the Atlantic Charter and the Four Freedoms, imagine that America is fitted to assume the moral leadership of the world and believe President Truman when he says that he regards his country's monopoly of the atomic bomb as a "sacred trust". How many realize that, under contracts signed by General Groves, the three "sacred trusts" which are engaged day and night in manufacturing and perfecting the weapon which gives the United States the power to threaten humanity are the International Radium and Uranium Consortium, Westinghouses and Dupont de Nemours, which controls the actual processes of manufacture? It is these mammoth industrial

combines, with their international ramifications and the backing of Mr Baruch and the Federal Reserve Bank which, in alliance with the American brasshats, form the pressure group which today directs the policy of the State Department and that of its British satellite.

What that policy is, has never been in doubt since the Japanese war ended. It is a policy after Mr Churchill's own heart. Indeed, he initiated it, in 1919, when he sent British Armies and quantities of British equipment to help the Czarist generals in their attempt to crush the Russian Revolution. Its object is to frustrate any attempt, by any nation, to advance towards peace and prosperity on the basis of a planned Socialist economy. As Russia was the first and greatest country to free itself from the yoke of international finance and has successfully demonstrated what a nation can achieve when it owns and controls the sources of production, Russia, from the standpoint of the protagonists of unrestrained Free Enterprise, is the enemy which must be crushed before it can offer effective resistance.

The first difficulty in the way of dividing the world into hostile groups, as a preliminary to dominating it, was the position of Great Britain, which had substituted what the electors imagined would be a Socialist Government for the reactionary anti-Soviet, pro-American régime of Mr Churchill. Owing to Mr Churchill's astuteness in nominating Mr Bevin for the position of Foreign Secretary, and the congenital subservience of Mr Attlee when "given the works", this initial obstacle was quickly overcome. The second difficulty was that of world opinion, for which U.N. made an inconveniently resounding public forum. Although U.N. has been manoeuvred into American territory, where its delegates can be subjected to every form of back-stage "pressure", it still, as I write, retains a promise of vitality. This was shown by the rapid climb down of the State Department after its 48-hour ultimatum to Jugoslavia. The evidence discovered on the high-ranking Turkish spy who "just happened" to be a passenger on the U.S. aircraft brought down by gunfire, after disregarding signals to land, if produced before the Security Council, would

have unmasked Anglo-American aggression and exposed the whole dirty business. Mr. Tom Driberg (*Reynolds News*, Sep. I 1946) quoted Mr Bartley C. Crum as saying, in the presence of another Englishman who was with him, "You know as well as I do that this Jugoslav incident is the end of a long series of reconnaissance flights in which we have been trying to photograph all the Jugoslavs' secret defences".

The greater part of the British press as usual gave no prominence to the Jugoslavian case, when reporting the high-handed action of the State Department, just as it hushed up the piratical seizure by the Americans, a year previously, of the Danube shipping belonging to Jugoslavia and other riparian States.

The people of this country, it cannot be too often repeated, have been fooled and lied to by their newspapers continuously since Hiroshima. There could be no more damning evidence of this than the spate of articles which appeared in support of the so-called "freedom of the press" when the proposal was first made in the House of Commons to set up a Royal Commission of Enquiry. If ever there was a case of "qui s'excuse, s'accuse", this was it. Owing to the suppression by our national newspapers of news from American sources which would have made clear how fully Russia's suspicions of Anglo-American aggression were justified and how close we were, in the autumn of 1946, to being dragged by Wall Street into a treacherous and, for us, suicidal conflict with our Russian allies, few realised our perilous position. I have not noticed in any newspaper that I have read in the past six months any objective discussion of the effect which the outbreak of a third war must have upon the harassed inhabitants of this congested island. Yet even those who swallow the Catholic Fascist and Foreign Office view of Russia's alleged iniquities must surely have their moments of misgiving. It is all very well for Irish Catholic stooges from "down under" to roar insults at Molotov at the Paris Conference. They live on the other side of the world, many thousands of miles from the European danger zone, while *we* live in the centre of it. *They* produce all the food they need and have a surplus to export. *They* live

surrounded by great open spaces: *we* are packed into an "advanced aircraft carrier", with no adequate means of defence. One might have supposed that if only one widely read newspaper had had the honesty to discuss these facts, even the most enthusiastic admirers of Mr Bevin might have developed a rudimentary sense of self-preservation. It is bad enough to be short of food, short of coal, short of houses and to have the demobilisation of our men deferred by Mr Bevin's power politics. If he continues, unrestrained, the horrors and austerities we shall be forced to endure will exceed anything we have, so far, even dreamed of. Every journalist knows this, but not one has been allowed to express it in plain terms. So complete has been the misrepresentation of the facts in British newspapers that in a letter to the *New Statesman and Nation,* Dr. Ernest Jones, the eminent psycho-analyst, was actually fooled into venturing the opinion that "no one in the Western world, except perhaps a Communist, considers that Britain and the U.S.A. are likely to attack the U.S.S.R."

The habitual passing of the buck between the State Department and the Foreign Office, and the skilful handling of the "colossal" Bevin by Mr Byrnes and his friends, has led to Great Britain being "sold" to the American public as being really the prime mover in the attack on the U.S.S.R.. Thus, if American plans mature and the catastrophe occurs, the United States will protest that it is only, once again, "helping" its British Allies to achieve "security". British activity in establishing air bases and munition dumps in Turkey and in restoring George II to the throne of Greece will be cited in support of this view. Moreover, some Americans will certainly point out that, after all, Mr Bevin is only one member of the British Socialist Cabinet and that his actons and speeches must have been approved * not only by the Prime Minister, but also by Sir Stafford Cripps, Mr Aneurin

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* Written before the publication of Mr. Henry Wallace's letter to President Truman and the subsequent letter addressed to Mr. Attlee and signed by twenty-one members of Parliament.

Bevan, Mr Dalton, Mr Herbert Morrison and the great majority of their supporters in the House of Commons.

If open war breaks out Great Britain, not only in American but also in world opinion, will, as usual, be made to shoulder most of the blame as well as suffering most of the casualties. In view of this possibility, it may be as well to record some of the stages in the American atomic nerve-war which have been either played down or completely suppressed in British newspapers.

Long before the Bikini "experiments" were staged as a warning and a threat to any peace-makers who failed to see eye to eye with Wall Street, American Service spokesmen had been boasting of their plans. At his sensational press conference, held in Washington on August 17th 1945, General H. H. Arnold, Chief of the U.S. Air Force, mentioned V-weapons guided by television, a 5,000 mile-range bomber, and the manufacture of more destructive atom bombs as among his plans for "making the world safe for Americans". He also insisted that it was essential to the "defence" of the United States, presumably against its former allies, to have bases far out in both the Pacific and the Atlantic. As General Arnold's remarks, had they been printed in England, would hardly have accorded with the picture being built up of Soviet aggression and "expansionism" our big circulation newspapers ignored them.

Not only has the manufacture of atomic bombs been carried on night and day since the Japanese capitulation, but according to the U.S. *Pharmaceutical Journal* it appears that U.S. scientists, directing a force of nearly 4,000 men, have worked out "precise methods" of unloosing clouds of "disease-producing agents" on men and plants, to be disseminated on the unfortunate victims of American wrath by means of manless stratosphere planes. News of this latest departure from the great Roosevelt's plans to free the world from fear coincided with General Schreiber's evidence at Nuremberg. According to Schreiber's testimony he attended a conference at Berlin in July 1943 (when the German situation was already becoming desperate) at which a bacterio-

logical warfare group was created under Göring. Schreiber said that he himself advised against the employment of the new weapon. The Court seems to have taken a poor view of the fact that the Nazis actually contemplated spraying bacteria from aircraft although, even to escape defeat, they never indulged in it. The United States Chemical Service, *in time of peace,* has been encouraged by America's war lords to continue and perfect the fiendish Nazi experiments, thus effectively ignoring the Nuremberg verdict.

The world has now grown numb to atrocities. When horror is too continuously piled on horror the human mind reaches saturation point. The English variety of the human body shrugs its shoulders and goes off in search of a Burton.

The final clarification of the aims of the American bomb monopolists comes from Professor Harold C. Urey, one of America's top-ranking experts engaged in atomic research. If correctly reported, Dr Urey stated that failure to use atomic energy properly would "lead to a civilisation-destroying war" and to prevent that the United States might be forced to declare war itself "with the frank purpose of conquering the world and ruling it as we desire, and preventing any other sovereign nation from developing mass weapons of war".

The operative words in this statement are "as we desire". This means as desired by the defenders of American Free Enterprise and the monarchs of international finance, who now possess the necessary weapons to destroy the Socialist half of the human race.

II

It is part of the Englishman's make-up, perhaps the best part of it, that he cannot be *inspired* except by nobility of purpose, courage and generosity of mind on the part of those who rule him. He still believes passionately in that ethical conception which the Victorians, with some confusion of thought, labelled "the gentleman". The conception has never appealed to the aristocracy or to the higher bureaucracy, and has long since been discarded by those to whom it used to be applied in a social or "class" connotation.

But "the gentleman" remains profoundly significant, as an ideal type, to the masses of the people, including the millions who are politically ignorant. The popular objections to such shaming episodes as the Hoare-Laval agreement, and our refusal to let the Abyssinians, and later the Spanish Republicans, buy arms for their defence, were largely based upon the fact that they were, in the common view, "caddish." Our rulers, in short, by refusing to give the victums of aggression a sporting chance, did not behave like "gentlemen". The ordinary decent man does not like his country to act like a cad. It makes him feel ashamed and uncomfortable. The belief, only too well supported by a long succession of similar actions, that "caddishness" is a British Foreign Office tradition, and that its spokesmen in the House of Commons are almost invariably men who conceive it their duty to tell lies in defence of their Department, is largely accountable for the distrust in which it is now universally held. In my lifetime the only Foreign Secretary who clearly demonstrated that he possessed "the instincts of a gentleman", and who acted like one, not only in his private life—we may be sure that all our Foreign Secretaries do that—but also, which concerns us most, as the representative of his country in world affairs, was the late Arthur Henderson. To the perfect manners which our diplomats, except, of course, when dealing with "Reds", usually display, he added the quality of moral integrity, which they too often appear to lack.

By a coincidence, the return of Mr Bevin from America has coincided with the publication—not, it need hardly be said, in *The Times* or other "national" newspapers—of the statement on Foreign Affairs issued by the Spelthorne Labour Party. This document, which is likely to become historic if our civilisation survives, sets out in clear and simple terms the situation created by the Labour Government's repudiation of their mandate in favour of "continuity".

After pointing out that in the atomic age we must face the fact that a third world war will smash civilisation, that the world's greatest need is for a just and lasting peace, it argues

that foreign policy, upon which paece depends, must therefore take first place in our thoughts. "Real world power, with its supreme responsibility for peace or war, rests in the hands of three countries—the United States of America, the Soviet Union and Great Britain". No one, it may be interpolated, realised this more clearly than President Roosevelt, who drew op the formula for the much discussed "veto". "The United States", the statement continues, "is now the world's most powerful capitalism. It has entered upon a period of imperialist expansion which is pressing with growing power on the rest of the world. Unless it is neutralised, the logical end of this process must be a bid for world control. In addition to effective commercial and strategic power over the New World, she has acquired numerous ocean bases, particularly in the Pacific, she controls Japan, she occupies important parts of Europe and is developing a position of political and military influence in China". The Moscow view of the U.S.-China Treaty, signed in Nanking in November 1946, expressed in *Pravda,* is that it makes almost a semi-colony of China and, in exchange for military aid (against the Communists) openly and ruthlessly tramples China's sovereignty underfoot. Unfortunately for the Chinese quislings and their American overlords, there is believed to be a heavy seepage both of material and man-power from the forces of Chiang Kai-shek to the Communist side. The prisoners taken by the Communists appear to need only a brief period of "re-education" before being effectively used against their former commanders. Washington is already discovering that in the present state of the Far East, the progress of dollar imperialism is not so easy as it looked.

The statement continues by pointing out that alongside this imperialist expansion must be considered America's refusal either to share the secrets of the atomic bomb or to promote an atomic policy which would not leave the world largely dependent on American good-will and intentions.

Turning to Russia, the second of the Big Three, the statement points out that it is a federation of Socialist republics in which the economic sources of power are owned by the people and

production is planned for public use and not for private profit. "The point to remember is that the expansionist tendencies of capitalism which result in wars for the redivision of the world do not exist in a Socialist society. The Soviet Union stands on the side of peace because she has no capitalist class to profit out of war. The British working-class movement should not forget that the pre-war efforts of the Soviet Government to build a system of collective security against aggression were defeated by the capitalist governments of the western democracies". This bleak bedrock fact should be carefully pondered, in this writer's view, not only by the "working-class movement", but by every father and every mother who lost a son or sons in the recent war. The ghosts of the dead, in spectral voices, murmur in their parents' ears the question: "Why was I killed?" The parents, unless they are utterly selfish and indifferent, must use their brains and discover the answer.

The Soviet Union "had to play a disproportionate part in the victory over the Fascist powers. She suffered in men and material, and in devastation, more than the rest of the Allies combined and in a largely hostile world is naturally preoccupied with the question of her security".

What of our own country, the third of the big world Powers? The statement shows, with irrefutable logic, that "in international affairs Britain stands politically, economically and geographically, between the imperialism of the United States and the Socialism of the Soviet Union. It is a position of decisive influence and unparalleled opportunity... What is Britain's choice? Briefly we can line up with the present policy of American imperialism or with the Soviet Union. The former course has attractive short-term advantages, but in the long run we should be driven into a position of economic and political dependence on American world power. We should give a fatal impetus to the aggressive designs of American imperialism and, at the same time, weaken the struggle of American Labour against the monopolists. Such a policy must lead sooner or later to a third world war...

"The alternative is a policy of a genuine political and economic collaboration with the Soviet Union and the new democratic States of Europe.

"Such a policy would itself be welcomed by those powerful liberal elements in the United States which are deeply disturbed by the present trends of American imperialism.

"From this policy would flow support for the liberation movements everywhere. The political stability of Europe and the orderly advance of Britain towards her Socialist goal would be assured.

"Above all, the peoples of the Old World, led by Britain and the Soviet Union, in a mighty peace bloc, would present such a grouping of power that none could hope to challenge it successfully. Such a policy would encourage the American people themselves to face up to their giant trusts and monopolies. U.N.O. would be transformed from a battleground of power politics into a real and vital instrument of world co-operation. The chances of establishing a just and enduring Peace would be enormously increased.

"And now the question must be asked: Which course of foreign policy has the Labour Government so far pursued? The Labour movement must face the truth. The Churchill policy of appeasement of American imperialism and of hostility to the Soviet Union and to the liberation movements has not only been continued but developed.

"The Anglo-American line-up has turned U.N.O. into a political weapon against the position of the Soviet Union in world politics.

"In Poland and other countries bordering on the Soviet Union the British Government consistently opposes progressive measures and supports reactionary minorities.

"In Greece, British occupation troops have actively helped the monarchist reaction to kill democracy, to suppress the Trade Union movement and to establish what is, in effect, a Fascist régime.

"Britain opposes any policy which threatens Fascism in Spain.

'In Egypt, in Palestine and throughout the whole Middle East, Britain sponsors reaction and opposes the liberation and nationalist movements.

"In Indonesia and in Indo-China, British arms are used to restore the power of allied imperialisms. In particular, Britain's policy toward Germany, conditioned by the fear of Socialism, has so far blocked any hope of agreement with the Soviet Union on Germany's future.

"All this, and much else of a similar nature, is a travesty of the policy for which the British Labour movement stands and on which the General Election was fought and won".

The statement concludes by urging that the issues raised in it should be discussed by every Labour Party and Trade Union branch, and saying that the movement must insist on the removal of Tory officials and advisers at the Foreign Office and in the embassies. "Ultimate power rests with the rank-and-file, who must measure up to their responsibilities before it is too late." The reader of the Spelthorne document, quoted above, who may have been accustomed to consider himself a Conservative or a Liberal, must reflect that as a British citizen, he or she must also measure up to a citizen's responsibilities, in this period of crisis. The first of his responsibilities is to pay no attention either to the "national" newspapers which supported the policies which led to the Second World War, or to the bickerings of the politicians who so signally failed to avert it. Let him use his own brain, think for himself, develop his powers of imagination and consult his own conscience. Let him ask himself, to take what seems, at the moment, a minor point, whether more than a small fraction of the electors who cast a vote on either side at the last General Election, ever contemplated the possibility that Sir Oswald Mosley would be permitted openly to revive his Fascist and anti-Semitic propaganda. Let him draw his own conclusions, from the known facts, as to the extent of the control which the new Government exercises over "old gang" permanent officials. In the House of Commons on December 20th, a solitary M. P., Mr Austin, Labour Member for Stretford, asked for steps to

curb the renewed activities of the Fascists. He gave a long and detailed account of such activities and suggested that there might be Fascists in industry, in the Services, and in the House of Commons. He asked for the names of Captain Ramsay's Right Club to be published.

Was this country not to have knowledge of those who had traitorous intents towards its defence? Was somebody being sheltered? Mr Austin asked why the police should not be empowered to enter private premises where Fascist meetings were being held? From Mr Oliver, Under-Secretary to the Home Office, Mr Austin received the usual dusty answer. Disregarding matters of common knowledge, to everyone who keeps his eyes and ears open, Mr Oliver complacently observed that if the Government handled the political and economic problems of the day successfully, Fascism was dead for all time. He refused to disclose the names of the members of the Right Club on the ground that it was "dead as mutton."

After this it is hardly surprising that at the Paris Peace Conference the British Labour Government, to the consternation of the delegates from democratic countries, was not in favour of the suppression of Fascist organisations in Italy.

III

The extent to which the Labour Government, without any mandate from the electors or any discussion in the House of Commons, has committed us to a military alliance with the United States has not, as I write (Christmas 1946) been officially revealed. Older readers will recall the similar Anglo-French military understanding that was denied by Sir Edward Grey up till the last moment before war broke out in August 1914. The following detailed account of the preliminary negotiations, received from their Washington correspondent, appeared in the *Sunday Express* on September 8th 1946. It aroused no comment in any of the newspapers which I habitually read and produced no outcry in the House of Commons. The general public, in fact, appeared to take no parti-

cular notice of it and to have totally failed to grasp its significance. If some of us wrote letters to the press to call attention to what it portended, they were doubtless consigned, for safety's sake, to the editorial waste-paper baskets. One might suppose, from the "hush-hush, don't waken the baby" attitude of most British newspapers that their editors were determined not to let the country realise what was on foot, until it was too late to protest. In printing the Washington message the *Sunday Express* acted in the public interest by supplying its readers with an important item of news presented objectively. That the warning conveyed by it passed unheeded was an alarming indication of our national apathy and unawareness.

Sunday Express. September 8th, 1946

Washington. Saturday.

"Top priority item on the agenda when General Eisenhower visits Britain this month is likely to be discussion of an Anglo-American guided missiles programme, it is learned here. Eisenhower, it is announced, will have an important series of conferences with Britain's Imperial General Staff.

"Many informed people here think the significance of this news will serve notice to an unsettled world that the two great English-speaking peoples stand together for all essential purposes. Pointers to the technical shape of things to come are seen in three other reports just made public:

1) Field-Marshal Lord Montgomery, C.I.G.S., is expected to get one of the biggest welcomes given to a foreigner in American history when he visits New York and Washington next week, says Reuter.

The U.S. State Department is known to be particularly pleased "His visit presents a remarkable parallel with the constant Transatlantic exchanges between British and American war chiefs during the war", said one State Department official.

"Montgomery is expected to discuss the inter-changeability of British and U. S. weapons, and any conversions necessary to

achieve this. He will study the matter with members of the Combined Chiefs of Staff.

"Monty goes to the U.S. after his visit to Canada, and another matter likely to be discussed is the Arctic defences of the American continent in relation to Canada and Alaska."

2) Indefinite postponement of the third atom bomb test, which was to have taken place next spring, has been ordered by President Truman, it was announced in Washington yesterday.

Mr Charles Ross, the President's secretary, said: "The Joint Chiefs of Staff are extremely gratified by the conduct and the results of the atomic bomb tests, and consider the entire operation an unqualified success."

The White House states: "The information obtained from tests 'A' and 'B' together with the knowledge derived from the original experimental test in New Mexico and from a study of the results of the explosions in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, will enable our scientific and military experts to make a proper evaluation of the effects of this weapon".

"Test C" was to have been an underwater detonation.

3) The United States already is building the world's first Atomic Age capital ships, armed with main batteries of robot bombs instead of guns, says A.P. in another Washington message.

"The Navy disclosed this tonight in a somewhat terse announcement, that the 45,000 ton battleship Kentucky and the 27,000 ton battle-cruiser Hawaii would be 'guided missile warships'.

"Both ships began as conventional-design vessels, but construction was arrested when rockets and the atomic bomb came along.

"The meetings in England will come after Eisenhower on the U.S. side and Montgomery on the British side have between them covered half the world or more on what might be called 'strategic tours'. Already, too, exchanges of secrets between the British Empire and the U.S. on the subject of guided missiles are believed to have been more extensive than either admits.

"Information released to the Press in the past few weeks has given little information of what is actually going on out on the

white sands of New Mexico, where U.S. rockets experiments and the like are being carried out on a fairly extensive scale.

"As for Montgomery's visit to the United States Washington officials repeatedly emphasize that it is purely one of courtesy. It is believed that he will also discuss informally with the highest military authorities the Arctic defences of the American Continent.

Same Weapons?

"The U.S. is deeply involved in this question because of the strategic position of Alaska, and of U.S. responsibilities on the continent generally.

"Montgomery has been discussing the question at official levels in Canada, and he is expected to make some of the results of his work there known to both his British and American colleagues on the Combined Chiefs of Staff.

"The discussions will be informal but of the highest significance.

"As Canada's armed forces are part of the British Imperial defence system, any conversion and adaptation of Canadian equipment to the American system would depend on corresponding changes being made by the United Kingdom Armed Forces.

"The Combined Chiefs of Staff have been discussing this question directly as between the British and U.S. armed forces for some time."

The first awakening of Labour M. P.'s to the facts, of which the *Sunday Express* had given so accurate a forecast, came after the publication by American and Canadian newspapers of a statement on the proposed Arms Pact, issued to the Associated Press by a member of the Publicity Staff of the War Office, Major H. Le Provost. This material was cabled to the Associated Press bureau in New York on October 30th and accepted by them as having full official authority. Its publication created something of a sensation, particularly in Canada, where the disclosure seems, from the political standpoint, to have been regarded as premature.

In the House of Commons on December 17th, Mr Zilliacus asked the War Minister on what authority the War Office, through its usual publicity channel, had told an American news agency about the U.S.-British Arms Pact. Mr Bellenger replied: "My Honourable Friend is misinformed. My Department issued no such statement". As no one would wish to impugn Mr Bellenger's good faith, the only conclusion to be drawn from this is that the Service chiefs regard him as they did his predecessor, Mr Lawson, merely as a figurehead, and do not bother to keep him informed as to their acts and intentions.

That the Service Chiefs, ever since the nominal end of the war, have been more or less openly planning for a renewed outbreak of hostilities is indicated not only by the continuous U.S.-British Staff talks, but by War Office land-grabbing of military training-grounds and the presence in our midst of a large and fanatically anti-Soviet Polish army. These troops were brought to our shores as a result of a decision made by Mr Churchill, apparently without consulting his Cabinet colleagues. That this Army, underneath all the "resettlement" nonsense, is intended for use as first-line shock troops in a war already planned, is not only believed by the Poles themselves but is also obvious to anyone else who bothers to consider the matter. The Polish generals regard our country as a temporary base for an eventual armed crusade against the new Polish Government and against Soviet Russia and, to do them justice, have never been dishonest enough to conceal the fact. Hence the complaints from Warsaw.

In the summer of 1946, when a large American fleet had entered the Mediterranean, Mr Walter Lippman published a forecast in an American newspaper, of the combined operations against the Soviet "under-belly", the Crimea, for which the Anglo-American General Staffs are believed to have worked out the plans. This hazardous military project, about which the British public has been as usual kept in the dark, would involve the passage of armed forces through the Dardanelles, with Turkish co-operation. The role of Great Britain would be to supply the man-power—at least in the opening stages—and to suffer the casualties.

In a cautious letter to *The Times,* Mr R. H. Crossman, M.P., the most half-hearted and correct of "rebels", observed: "We are proposing to maintain an 18 months' period of conscription in peace-time. The Americans have at present no such intention . . . Under present arrangements, therefore, in the event of a major war, against a third Power, our armies, supplied in part from American factories, would have to bear the brunt of the fighting while America mobilised. Our conscript Army would play the role of the French Army in the first and second world wars. It was against the acceptance by a Socialist Government of this Churchillian thesis that I protested . . . But my main contention is that an Anglo-American *entente,* which many Americans ardently desire, so far from preventing war would in the long run make it more likely".

One of the major reasons, apart from the patience, tenacity, moral courage and conciliatory attitude of Messrs Molotov and Vyshinsky, why, after months of Anglo-American sabre-rattling, some gleams of light are now as I write appearing in the international sky, is the world publicity accorded to the eight weeks session of the United Nations General Assembly, which ended in New York, on December 15th 1946. Soviet newspapers devoted half their space to reports of the speeches, so that the entire Russian people were fully enlightened as to what took place. It can safely be assumed that the rest of the world press, with the exception of the British, adequately covered these momentous proceedings. The British national newspapers, throughout the historic eight weeks, as usual devoted half their space to "sport", football, test match cricket, gossip about American film stars, and magazine-page "features". Even Molotov's final speech at the Paris conference, on October 14th 1946, though adequately reported in *The Times,* was practically ignored by the large circulation newspapers. The full text was only made available in the *Labour Monthly* for November! Thus, safeguarded by the ignorance of most of those who heard him, Mr Bevin was able to make his emollient oration after the nine o'clock news on Sunday December 22nd. Safeguarded by the same ignorance, which many

rank-and-file Socialists share with the non-political "general public," Transport House has announced its intention of "declaring war on the rebels who are linking up with the Communists in the constituencies . . . Transport House believes that a widespread movement is being fostered by a Communist "Fifth Column" infiltrated into the local Labour parties". This means, dear reader, that although you may have been a Conservative or a Liberal all your life, the mere fact that you want your son demobilised and do not want your younger children to be sacrificed in a third war which must blow Western civilisation to perdition, you are, unknown to yourself, part of a Communist "Fifth Column". Perhaps M. Henri Spaak, the able Belgian Chairman of the General Assembly, is also a "crypto-Communist". In his concluding speech in New York he said that "a great hope was brought into the world. If we can give this hope reality, humanity will indeed have entered a new era". He added that "special thanks are due to the Soviet Delegation for having the courage to bring up the question of disarmament". He could hardly have paid a similar tribute to the Anglo-American bloc, in view of the fact that the Russian proposals evidently caused them embarrassment if not consternation.

Mr Bevin's Catholic stand-in, Sir Hartley Shawcross, with the exquisite courtesy characteristic of British spokesmen when addressing their Russian Colleagues, began by describing the proposals as "humbug". The eventual compromise was only agreed to after the Soviet demands for information about British troops serving abroad and for the inspection of all armaments, including atomic bombs, were dropped.

Thus, in the eyes of the millions of ordinary men and women who desire not only peace but freedom from the fear which the United States monopoly of the atomic bomb must arouse so long as it continues, the Soviet Union has assumed the moral leadership of the world. Russia wants disarmament. The British Labour Government prefers a U.S.-British Arms Pact and the preservation of the American monopoly of the atomic bomb.

IV

What the reader must ask himself is whether Mr Bevin's fanatical hostility to our Russian Allies, which has earned him the approval of Messrs Byrnes, Vandenberg and Conally, serves British interests as well as it undoubtedly serves those of the unpredictable United States. The Americans are a hard-boiled people as their national slogan "there's no friendship in business" sufficiently indicates. As the frequency with which British Ministers have to fly to the United States to beg for food deliveries has painfully proved, they neither keep their promises nor honour signed agreements, unless it suits them to do so. Their whole national outlook, their every action, is dominated by the greed for Profits. Thus, should they at some future date come round to the view that international co-operation is likely to *pay* better than a "preventive" atomic war, they will switch their policy in accordance with it, without considering the feelings of poor Mr Bevin. An indication of the lines on which the United States and the U.S.S.R. may find it possible to live in future harmony is the recent sensational growth of trade between the two countries. Russia can provide a steadily increasing market for American manufactures, while the United States is obviously in a position to provide all the necessary credit for such a development. If American industrialists are already alive to these possibilities, the policy of the State Department in helping to exacerbate Anglo-Russian relations becomes logical and far-seeing. The British Empire, apart from being America's "hereditary enemy", is her greatest trade rival. British and American interests are normally in conflict throughout the world, from South America to Japan and China. Between Great Britain and the U.S.S.R., except on artificially exaggerated ideological grounds, there is no clash of interests whatever. Thus the State Department, in using its influence to enlarge the breach between Transport House and the U.S.S.R., is fully justified, from the American standpoint, in any foreseeable event. If the industrialists and Money Barons decide on large-scale trade with Russia, they will get in first and secure

the lion's share of the Russian market. If, on the other hand, the American Service chiefs retain control and decide on a "preventive" war against "Bolshevism", Great Britain will be called upon to supply the cannon-fodder while American munition makers, at enormous profits to themselves, supply the standardised equipment. It is a case of heads they win and tails we lose. Such is the position to which Mr Ernest Bevin's diplomacy, with the full approval of Mr Churchill, the Conservative Opposition and his Socialist colleagues in the Cabinet, has for the time being reduced us. The undemocratic constitution of the Labour Party provides no adequate machinery by which its leaders can be called to order. Its official organ, the *Daily Herald,* publishes attacks on the Spelthorne statement but dare not print the full text. As for the "plain citizen" he is just a "crypto-Communist" or, in other words, a poor dumb sheep. Perhaps, before these lines are printed events may show that he is not quite so dumb as the professional politicians of all Parties suppose.

One of the greatest disservices which the present Labour Government, with the active support of the national newspapers and the B.B.C., has rendered to the nation in general and to the electors who voted them into power in particular, is their continuance of war-time secrecy. Not only are the "top secrets" of the six years' war still hidden by blanket censorship but practically nothing is known about either the military operations in which we have been engaged since V.J.-day or the policies which they are designed to enforce. Parents of sons clamouring for demobilisation are only too well aware that our troops are spread all over the world, but what purposes they serve, what aims they pursue, what tasks have been assigned to them and what policy they are supposed to implement is hidden behind an iron curtain of mystery. All we know for certain is that our post-war military "commitments", besides inflicting upon us a huge financial burden which we cannot long afford, are keeping our industries dangerously short of man-power. Interesting to a certain nit-wit section of our population as may be the short stories, sporting items, film gossip and women's features with which our national

daily and evening newspapers are replete, this hardly excuses their failure to supply their readers with accurate information about current affairs. No really factual account has ever been given to us about the campaign in Indonesia, which appears to have ended. Were our troops encouraged to loot Sourabaya and was the R.A.F. required to bomb unprotected Indonesian villages? When facts are censored, rumours spread and multiply. What have our troops really been engaged upon in Greece? What regiments are stationed there and who commands them? What are our troops *actually doing* in Trieste, North Italy, Basra, Japan, Egypt, Indo-China, India, Burma, and, above all, in Palestine? Is it really true that the name of our Sixth Airborne Division is "mud" throughout the Middle East and has acquired a reputation in America similar to that of their predecessors, the Irish "Black and Tans"? We know that the alleged "iron curtain" does not exist in any of the countries where Mr Bevin complains of its operation. Accredited journalists and Members of Parliament have wandered at will through Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and the Balkans and published factual reports of what they saw and heard, much to the embarrassment of the Foreign Office. Why then have no accredited journalists visited all our forces overseas and cabled full reports about their morale, about the tasks on which they are engaged, and the manner in which they are being carried out? Is it supposed that parents do not care to read about the situations with which their sons are required to cope in distant countries, and are more interested in long accounts of Australian test-matches? Or is it the truth that a strict censorship has been imposed because Mr Bevin and his Cabinet colleagues do not wish the facts to be revealed?

As regards the British zone in Germany, it has been admitted that our military Government has involved us, in the current year, in an expenditure of £100 million, while the French contrive to administer their zone at a modest profit. Apart from this basic fact, all the rest is rumour or unproved assertion. Humanitarians report that while Nazi industrialists are living in comfort, anti-Nazi working people and their children are starving. Other

observers say that our Military Government has permitted 60 % of the German harvest to be either withheld from legal distribution or sold on the black market. Many of us have encountered in public houses men on leave from the B.A.O.R. who indulge in pro-Nazi sentiments, imbibed apparently from their superiors, and boast of the money they have made in black market trading. What is the truth? Most of it must be known to readers of the European press. It is only the British who are fooled and kept in the dark.

If we are kept in ignorance as to the tasks on which our overseas armies are engaged, still more effective is the iron curtain which shrouds the doings of our diplomats and secret service agents throughout central Europe, the Balkans, Palestine and Transjordania. A strong aroma of oil, anti-Soviet strategy and Vatican intrigues blends with the romantic Victorian tradition, which cast a glamour over Arab sheiks, in insanitary nightgowns, who fire their muskets while galloping across deserts. In the atomic age, the appropriate body to discuss the sharing-out of the world's oil supplies is surely the Security Council of the United Nations. Until a conference has been held, and failed, there can be no excuse for shedding one drop of English blood for greedy "Anglo-American" shareholders.

The most alarming feature of Mr Bevin's tenure of the Foreign Office is the fact that, so far as the public has been informed, there have been no changes in the permanent staff, no dismissals, no purge. The same "experts", the same experienced professional types who served the nation through a period of unparalleled disasters, for which they themselves were at least partly responsible, still remain entrenched in their "key positions".

The failures of our Foreign Office, after 1918, were due to the same causes—lack of imagination and ignorance of human nature, including the power of mass emotion—as its failures at the present day. The coercion of Southern Ireland, the breaking of our war-time pledges to India, combined with strong-arm methods of which Amritsar was a ghastly example, were, like Mr Churchill's attempt to set the clock back in Russia, actions

doomed to failure from the start because they were based upon profound misconceptions. They could not, owing to the human emotions aroused by them, succeed. They offended the conscience of the world, put decent folks in England to shame because of their "caddishness" and inhumanity and constituted a chapter in our history on which we cannot now look back without a shudder.

The major mistake of Messrs Churchill, Lloyd George and their associated Service chiefs and permanent officials after the First World War are being repeated by Mr Bevin and his Cabinet colleagues after the second. Our intervention in Greece, like our attempt to suppress the aspirations of Southern Ireland, is bound, sooner or later, to end in ignominy. The same is true of our under-cover support of General Franco, our subservience to the most dangerous and reactionary group in the United States, our persecution of the remnant of harassed, tortured and exasperated Jews. The over-all criticism that has to be made of Mr Bevin's diplomacy in every field is that, taking a long view, *it cannot succeed.* The underground intrigues in favour of Catholic Fascist reaction, in pursuance of Big Business interests and out-of-date imperialism, in which the British Foreign Office has specialised for generations, cannot halt the tidal movement in human affairs for more than a transient moment. Czechoslovakia will not collapse because Wall Street refuses it a loan; Jugoslavia, after defeating Hitler, will not succumb to Anglo-American bullying; Poland will not disintegrate because the British Government hangs on to its badly-needed gold and Foreign Office saboteurs intrigue with its internal enemies; the advance of India to freedom cannot much longer be impeded by Mr Churchill's orations; Burma will regain the liberty of which his father robbed it; the Chinese "Communists", who fought Japan, will not be suppressed by quisling generals however lavishly their troops may be armed with American quick-firing rifles. Franco, in spite of his English Catholic supporters, will not last forever, nor will Dr Salazar, notwithstanding Mr Attlee's cordiality, long continue to rule our "oldest Ally". The stream of anti-Soviet and pro-Vatican propaganda which the Labour Government encourages the B.B.C. to

put out, by refusing to exercise control, will never turn Great Britain into a Catholic Fascist state. The exhibition given on Sunday December 22nd 1946, during the nine o'clock news, was indeed an eye-opener to the alert, but probably passed over the heads of the majority of listeners. On that occasion, it may be recalled, the B.B.C. gave what purported to be an impression of the Christmas Season in Moscow. "Another American impression, this time of the holiday season in Moscow", said the announcer, "comes from the Columbia Broadcasting System correspondent from there". The speaker, a gentleman called Hottelet, informed the British public, to advance the cause of Anglo-Soviet friendliness, that in Moscow "the birthday of Stalin on December 21st overshadows the birthday of Jesus Christ on the 25th". Shortly afterwards, by way of marking the contrast between "godless Russia" and holy Rome, the B.B.C. respectfully reproduced the improving Christmas message of His Holiness Pope Pius XII.

What the B.B.C. announcer omitted to make clear was that Columbia did not have a correspondent in Moscow. Mr Hottelet's message, like those of Dr Göbbels, came from Berlin. He also omitted to remind us that the Russian Orthodox Church observes the birthday of Jesus Christ not on December 25th but on January 7th. This very characteristic example of B.B.C. anti-Russian and pro-Vatican propaganda made a significant prelude to Mr Bevin's "peaceful" oration, which followed a few minutes later.

It may be that, long before these observations can be read, Mr Bevin will have received an almost unanimous vote of confidence from the Labour Party, before yielding his place to some other Minister pledged to continue "continuity". Anything may indeed happen, except one thing. The "preventive" war, for which the Anglo-American General Staffs have been so long preparing, may indeed prove to have been foreshadowed by Mr Churchill's Fulton oration and the Labour Cabinet's endorsement of it. American spokesmen at least do not mince matters. In a speech before the American Legion in Buenos Ayres Mr Messersmith, the U.S. Ambassador to Brazil, declared categorically that war between the U.S. and the Soviet Union was *imminent* and urged the countries

of Latin America to be ready to help the United States. So, in spite of the wave of optimism caused by the Russian effort, at the United Nations Assembly, to promote peace and disarmament, the "Anglo-Americans" who have stepped into the shoes of Hitler and Hirohito may bring about yet another holocaust of innocent blood, yet another tornado of destruction. But on one thing the human race can safely rely. That one thing is the inevitable, fore-ordained, and irresistible action of the tide in human affairs. No threats on the part of our modern Canutes, armed with their murderous playthings, can prevent it from flooding in. The East is awakening and neither the object lesson of Hiroshima nor the calculated threat of Bikini can more than momentarily arrest the liberation of its thousand millions. Imperialist policies, both of the American and the British variety, are doomed to failure, because both are spiritually bankrupt. In its period of usefulness, no one should be foolish enough to deny that the British Empire had a great deal to give to the populations under its rule and control. It is equally true that individual American missionaries, both medical and Christian, have worked heroically in China and elsewhere. No one will wish to underestimate what they have accomplished. This, however, does not invalidate the contention that the present ruling group in America are operating in a spiritual vacuum. Wherever their influence penetrates they have nothing to offer except mass-produced goods and debased entertainment on the one hand, and mass murder for those who will not accept and pay for them, at America's price, on the other. From the present rulers of America who, if I may be forgiven a cliché, "know the price of everything and the value of nothing", comes no spiritual message, no uplifting conception, which can appeal to that half of the world in which all religions have their origin. Nor has America anything in the way of tradition which it can call its own except that of cheating its indigenous population of their land and shooting them at sight. All the rest, including its Declaration of Independence and Lincoln's Gettysburg oration, it derives from its European ancestors, chiefly from Britain. Taking a long view, therefore, its comparatively negligible popula-

tion, in spite of their restless energy and present overwhelming material power, can hardly fail to be absorbed in due course by the teeming millions of China and Japan, when allied with Soviet Russia and a free India.

Nor must we forget Brazil which, by holding fast to one of the tenets of a primitive Christianity, has preserved itself from racial intolerance and thereby holds the promise of a great accession of strength. Such characters as Senator Bilbo and the late Governor Talmadge, so ominous for the future of the Southern half of North America, could not long exist in Brazil.

The policy of the present British Government, in alienating not only Soviet Russia, but all the members of the great family of civilised European nations to which we belong both culturally and geographically, in favour of a military and economic alliance with the United States, the most unstable, politically backward and least integrated of the Great Powers, cannot but be viewed with alarm. Should it involve us in another world conflict our eventual defeat, with that of the United States, can be predicted as surely as we can predict the oncoming of the night, the breaking of the dawn, the advance of the tides.

V

The British people, after two long and harassing wars, for which the mistakes of their ruling class were primarily responsible, have not (we may hope and believe) deserved to be led into any more avoidable disaster. Whenever, during the past twenty years, the voice of the people could make itself audible, it has proved its political wisdom, common sense and right feeling. At two historic elections within ten years, the British people have crowded into the ballot boxes to give the professional politicians a mandate to pursue a course which would make peace obligatory. No one could, to-day, seriously attempt to deny that Hitler and Mussolini could have been rendered innocuous without the loss of a single British life, had the Conservative leaders kept the promises to which they owed their return to power. Nor can anyone to-day deny that the months of tension through which we

have passed are due in large measure to the fact that Mr Bevin and his colleagues have preferred to follow Mr Churchill rather than to carry out the programme, in regard to Foreign Affairs, which the nation authorised them to pursue.

Something has gone wrong. Why is it, we may ask, that career politicians of all Parties completely ignore the electorate, the moment they assume office, and proceed to "discipline" those of their Parliamentary supporters who develop the rudiments of a conscience? The Conservatives sent Mr Churchill more or less to Coventry for nine years for trying to avert the impending war with Hitler. The Labour Party, in 1938, ejected Sir Stafford Cripps for trying to form a Popular Front against aggression. In 1940 they ejected Mr Pritt for pointing out the suicide folly of spreading the war to Finland and attacking the U.S.S.R. To-day, a hundred "rebels" in the House of Commons and the authors of the Spelthorne Statement, are in danger of similar disciplinary action.

On no occasion during my lifetime has any leading politician, however directly responsible for the shedding of innocent blood, ever been threatened with Impeachment or ever shown, at all events in public, the slightest sign of repentance or of shame. It is an accepted theory that, whatever may happen as a consequence of their failure to follow the lines of policy marked out for them, Cabinet Ministers can do no wrong. Their armour-plating, provided they avoid financial or sexual scandal, is impermeable.

I was taught, in my childhood, to regard Judas Iscariot as the most double-dyed villain in the history of Christendom. But what strange new standards of villainy have been created by modern politicians! Judas, at least, repented and hanged himself. But when has one of our statesmen ever shown the least sign of remorse at betrayals which have caused the agony and death of innumerable innocent victims? As the Bible is now so little read, I quote the following passage from St Matthew's Gospel because of its modern implications:

"When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders

of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death. And when they had bound him, they led him away and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor.

Then Judas which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders.

Saying I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us. See thou to that.

And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple and departed, and went and hanged himself.

And the chief priests took the silver pieces and said, It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood.

And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in.

Wherefore that field was called The Field of Blood, unto this day".

And here is another biblical quotation, which has its special application in an age of peace-making.

"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another".

And the Devil's disciples? We shall assuredly know them by their atom bombs, bacteria-spraying rockets, and behaviour at the Peace Conference. As for the Chief Priests, some of them are already discussing which of the cities, in the only land where Fraternity is widespread, they shall destroy in the name of Jesus Christ.

Judas Iscariot has, indeed, been much too severely judged. It is strange that our standards of political morality are now so low that we would be thankful if some of our rulers could rise at least to the Iscariot level, by saying to themselves: "I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood".

CHAPTER ELEVEN

The American Impact

ADMIRATION of the United States, their foreign policy, their dollars, their film stars and their "way of life", is strongest in Great Britain at two levels: the highest and the lowest. The governing clique of politicians, bankers, industrialists, socialists, Irish Catholics and "bolshie-baiters" still pin their faith to Wall Street and applaud Mr Byrnes and his senatorial watch-dog Mr Vandenberg. Lord Halifax, in his farewell speech from Washington, became lyrical about the solid rock of Anglo-American friendship. Mr Bevin, at a luncheon in honour of the retiring Ambassador, Mr Winant, "rose, and in a voice shaken with emotion, said: 'I give one more toast—to the eternal solidarity of our two peoples, the United States and the British Commonwealth, for ever and ever'." As there is, in one way and another, a lot of money to be made out of Anglo-American co-operation by certain financial groups, it is hardly to be wondered at that the members of these groups are all for it. The Socialite good-time seekers, always ready to gush at those who will pay for their pleasures, adore the dollars of American snobs. Every reactionary who hates "Reds" is naturally jubilant at each fresh example of American "toughness" and has perfect confidence that wherever atomic bombs may fall, it will not be on us. Generally speaking, Britain's "America-firsters" are the same crowd that used to fawn on Hitler and Mussolini, thought Mr Chamberlain a superman and General Franco a "Christian gentleman". To-day, their admiration for Chamberlain has been transferred to Bevin, and his buddy Mr Byrnes.

At the lowest level, the teen-age nitwits who swing to hot music, gape at Hollywood stars displayed in glorious technicolour, bathe in synthetic romance and celluloid glamour and swoon at the voice of Sinatra constitute a huge market for cheap and pernicious entertainment which is now almost entirely in American hands. The effect of dollar infiltration on the finance of film distribution and the dance band industry has been to give Hollywood and the New York equivalent of Tin-Pan Alley such a dominating position and enabled them to put forth so much propaganda for the "American way of life" that a large section of our population has been dangerously contaminated by it.

In between the two extremes are the great mass of ordinary people who may, without unfairness, be described as the "real" English. They are the millions who either fought overseas or stayed at home to toil in our factories, offices and fields, and to bear the worst of the blitz. They are the millions who, because they made no money out of the war, now find themselves at the far end of the queue for flats and houses, priority in this matter, as in 1919, having been accorded to the profiteers. Although the representatives they sent to Parliament have for the most part knuckled under to the Party bosses, although the newspapers pay little attention to their views—and they, in turn, pay little attention to the newspapers—and in spite of the fact that, as in 1919, those who did the fighting are allowed no share in the peace-making, they nevertheless form a considerable, perhaps a preponderant, body of public opinion. It is among the "real" English, who have a first-hand knowledge of the American way of life, derived not merely from the cinema but from actual contact during the war with the American forces stationed in our towns and rural areas, that a spirit of resistance has developed. They have had altogether "too much Texas," and Missouri, "in their hair."

Unlike the politician and the bureaucrat, the independent Englishman, who possesses more intelligence and commonsense than his rulers suppose, does not think of America in terms of the Personified State, but in terms of the 130 million individuals who compose it. That many of these are generous, charming,

progressive, humanitarian and liberal-minded is no more denied than the no less obvious fact that many more have manners and morals which are repugnant to civilised Europeans. What these manners and morals are like has been displayed with remorseless iteration, day after day, in every cinema in this country for more than twenty years. The fact revealed by the movies is that, good or bad, the American is a totally different species from the European, has totally different conceptions of what constitutes right and wrong and, whatever may be his command of English, does not *think* in the same language as ourselves. The pretence that Hollywood productions "libel" the American people is one of the silliest ever put forward. The astute dollar-crazy gang of business chiefs who run the industry, in what Mr Tom Driberg, in a happy phrase, once described as "the world's cultural midden", have brought the study of box-office reactions to a science. They know all there is to know about the requirements of their home market, on which they rely for their production costs, however much they may rely on Britain and the outside world for their profits. They, therefore, represent America to America, on the celluloid, in a manner which their audiences are best calculated to appreciate, understand and pay for. The films they produce are thus completely reliable guides to the American way of life, to American ideas of sex, commercial morality, pleasure and social intercourse, to American humour, American sentiment and American "ideals". Everything is there, the synthetic "glamour", the romance, the sentimentality, the depravity, the terrifying lack of principle, the energy, the vigour, the debased standard of values, the nauseating commonness, and the technical efficiency. What the "American Century" will be like, if Europe is dragged down into the whirlpool of American decadence, can be observed for a shilling by every man, woman and child in this country.

Before the arrival in our island of some millions of uniformed American citizens from all States of the Union, Negroes included, the movies represented a form of escape into an unreal, exciting, and rather horrifying fairyland. The sojourn in our villages and provincial towns of American armies—part of the audience for

which Hollywood caters—led gradually to a grim awakening. Most English people had heard vaguely about the racial intolerance in the Southern States: during the war years they were made eye witnesses, in their own streets, pubs and dance halls, of this unpleasant phenomenon, manifesting itself in scenes and actions which grossly offended their sense of decency. They had heard of American gangsters and American graft, from films and cheap magazines which shed a romantic light on tough characters, crooks and bad men. During the war years they saw the—by their standards—overpaid and overfed "Allied" armies, which enjoyed the privilege of extra-territorial rights, plunging into highly-organized black market operations, and spreading among our population, civilians and soldiers alike, such a plague of corruption and dishonesty as may take generations to eradicate. They had been taught to believe that Americans were chivalrous to women, glamorous "lovers", Gary Coopers and Cary Grants, great-hearted "gentlemen", protectors of innocence, generous to a fault. In practice they found a considerable proportion of them inconceivably coarse, foul-mouthed, mean and lecherous. Obviously, all armies, since they are a cross-section of the people from whom they are recruited, contain good and bad characters, civilized and intelligent men as well as the reverse. Numerous G. I. Joes, especially those who belonged to the combatant branches of the U.S. Army—I understand it took twelve non-combatants to put one American soldier in the firing line—were polite and friendly to their limey hosts and were in consequence received in English homes with cordial welcome and generous if restricted hospitality. These decent fellows must have suffered considerably from the behaviour of some of their compatriots, of which practically every English civilian had experience.

The novels of Mr Henry Miller, "Tropic of Capricorn" and "Tropic of Cancer", unconsciously reflect the attitude of the American slum-dweller towards the female half of the human race. As they are sprinkled with the filthy language with which, for three years, the ears of our women and children were constantly assaulted, their admission into this country is, I think

rightly, prohibited by the police. Copies, however, have been brought over from Paris and for those who are sufficiently strong-minded to risk being overcome by nausea, a study of them throws an interesting light on American sexual pathology. It is not the practices described in them which call for remark, but the contempt for women as *persons,* common to Mr Miller's characters, which is calculated to arouse the disgust of any European *bon viveur.* These arrested adolescents, who seem to spend all the time they can spare from boozing in "laying dames", like so many eggs, become so brutalized in their attempt to "get a kick" out of sex that they are fitting subjects for the investigations of a Havelock Ellis. They even derive enjoyment from bilking prostitutes and robbing the handbags of trusting amateurs who have permitted themselves to be "laid". From both these novels, the "realism" of which can hardly be questioned, the mephitic odours of a cesspool rise and hit you in the face. Obviously Miller is only dealing with one section of the products of the American melting-pot. The New York cosmopolitan slum-dweller is merely one of a hundred, perhaps a thousand, contrasted American types, many of whom are ultra-refined in their approach to the opposite sex. Nevertheless, the consensus of opinion in France, where knowledge of the "art of living" may be regarded as indigenous, seems to be that the "average American", if there is such a person, no more knows how to make love than he knows how to eat and drink and behave himself in public.

Much the same impression was formed by English civilians during the war years. The sallow-cheeked drug-addicts who used to loaf about Soho and Trafalgar Square with their hands in the pockets of their puce-coloured military pants, could hardly be regarded as successful ambassadors for their great country. Whenever I went to London I used to see these dame-chasers, many of them officers, accosting tired typists on their way to work. No woman was safe from their "prahpositions."

An example of their attitude towards English "dames" was given me by the proprietress of an extremely "select" hotel in a small seaside resort, whose husband was an officer in the British

Army. She came into her saloon bar one night and, after exchanging a few conventional civilities with an American major who was drinking there, was startled to be offered three pound notes over the counter as the price of her favours. "If only I'd kept my wits about me", she remarked, with a ripple of laughter, "I'd have accepted them for my Red Cross box"!

In many parts of London, as well as in the provincial towns near which American troops were stationed, it was impossible for respectable women to go about their business, by day or night, without the risk of being subjected to insult.

There are, of course, a certain proportion of sex-maniacs in all armies, our own included. No doubt the infection of a child of eight with syphilis, a case reported from a Wiltshire village, was exceptional. No doubt the behaviour of many of our teen-age girls, for whom Mr Morrison and Mr Bevin provided no adequate protection while their fathers were fighting and their mothers engaged in war work, was partly responsible for the cases of VD and premature pregnancy which occurred wherever G. I. Joes were stationed, among children below the age of consent. "Going Yanking" was a recognised evening pastime in many provincial towns and there is little doubt that the pernicious influence of Hollywood was largely responsible for it. When this has been admitted, however, the fact remains that the sexual practices of some of the American troops touched a level of brutality never before encountered in the British Isles. When a G. I. Joe, on leaving our harassed, war-worn country, fired his parting insult by saying that "the only cheap thing in England is the limey girls", some mothers actually permitted themselves a little muted resentment. They did not want to be "unpatriotic"—and it was represented to them that it was unpatriotic to criticise our "Allies" —but they had their feelings. These were displayed in a classic instance when a villager was asked what she thought of the Americans and replied that on the whole they were pretty decent fellows but she "could not say as much for the whites". It was the hard-working civilian population of the country who had to bear, as resignedly and as "patriotically" as they could, close

association wtih a cross-section of the moral leaders of the world. General McNarney's recent admission that 25 per cent of the soldiers under his command in the American zone of Germany are suffering from venereal disease, is an indication of what they had to put up with. It is improbable that any complaints from British mothers were ever allowed to penetrate to the high-ups in Whitehall or Grosvenor Square. When, in response to protests from his constituents, a Member of Parliament had the temerity to call attention, in the House of Commons, to the situation in the town he represented, he was immediately castigated by the press and his charges publicly repudiated by a sycophantic mayor. As a result all genuine public opinion on this topic went underground, where it still remains.

That the whole character of the war changed when the American armies poured into Europe is true in two senses. Undoubtedly, in spite of Mr Churchill's still unexplained reluctance to relieve the pressure on our Russian Allies, it made the defeat and liquidation of the Nazis inevitable. At the same time, it effected a complete alteration in the nature and purpose of the struggle in which we were engaged. The illusion that it was a people's war against Fascism which, when Victory was secured, would result in a "people's peace", was blown sky high. When, against all General Eisenhower's arguments and entreaties, Churchill refused to open a second front in Europe, and the American-directed expedition to Northwest Africa was substituted for it, the principles for which we thought we were fighting had immediately to be abandoned to conform with the long-term objectives of American big business. As these coincided with the secret intentions of Mr Churchill and his obedient yes-men, Messrs Attlee, Bevin and Morrison, this betrayal presented no difficulty at the highest levels. The Tories had never pretended that they were fighting "Nazi-Fascism". Their sole aim was to defeat the rival financial group represented by the Axis powers, and to re-establish, over as large a portion of the earth as possible, the unrestrained pre-war capitalism and Free Enterprise which they labelled "Democracy". The Americans, General Eisenhower es-

pecially, can hardly be blamed for the consternation caused in the minds of every honest patriot in France and England, when they realised what had happened. President Roosevelt had candidly admitted that Americans were fighting "in defence of the American pocket-book", and the object of American negotiations with Vichy quislings was quite clearly stated to be the "saving of American lives". How successfully this policy of expediency was pursued by the American General Staff, throughout the ensuing campaigns, is revealed by a comparison between the number of American casualties and those of the Russians, the Jugoslavians, the French, the British and other anti-Fascist allies. From the American standpoint the war, like its predecessor, was primarily fought for the attainment of clearly defined commercial and financial advantages. In spite of the democratic and statesmanlike outlook of President Roosevelt, there was nothing "ideological" about the American participation in the world conflict on the part of the astute Wall Street tycoons who directed it. There can be little doubt that there were many occasions where that great soldier, even greater diplomat, and by all accounts charming personality, General Eisenhower, was made painfully aware of this. No one doubts that he and many thousands of the first-rate soldiers under his command understood what we were fighting for and hated Fascism as much as their British and Russian comrades. The fact remains, however, that a considerable proportion of the American armies, from leading generals to the humblest G. I. Joe, kept a sharp look-out for business openings and for opportunities to indulge the national passion for chasing dollars. Wherever the United States armies went, swarms of commercial travellers dressed as captains, majors and colonels, accompanied them. No sooner were the American forces established in Algeria, with the loyal assistance of de Gaullist patriots (who were promptly thrown into gaol for their pains), than rumours of American commercial negotiations with notorious French quislings began to poison the air. Even before the Darlan bombshell, the Vichy intrigues of Mr Robert Murphy and Admiral Leahy had aroused justifiable suspicions. After Darlan, the war stank in the nostrils of anti-

fascists, and Mr Churchill himself suffered a loss of prestige from which he has never wholly recovered, in England or in France.

In his world broadcast on April 24th 1942, Mr Churchill had given the French partisans a solemn pledge, in words that could neither be misunderstood nor explained away. "Lift up your heads, gallant Frenchmen", he cried, in his juiciest tones, "not all the infamies of Laval and Darlan shall stand between you and the restoration of your birthright." Yet by November of the same year, he had agreed to make use of, or be used by, one of the very figures he had previously denounced. For Britain, the "anti-fascist" period of the war, though both the American and the British forces fought with great heroism and endurance until their enemies were crushed, came more or less openly to an end as soon as the United States armies took the field.

The deaths in quick succession of those three great Americans, Wendell Willkie, Roosevelt and Harry Hopkins, was a tragedy not only for the United States but for the world. It left only Eisenhower and the solitary, but honest and resolute figure of Mr Henry Wallace to carry on the Roosevelt tradition and to attempt to moderate the grandiose ambitions of the dollar imperialists and Service chiefs who seized power under President Truman. What followed Roosevelt's death, in Great Britain no less than in the United States, has revealed the dangers inherent in the American form of capitalist-controlled "democracy". Such a "democracy", if exported, indeed forced upon unwilling Asiatics and Europeans, is more likely to lead to chaos, massacre and destruction than to a united world.

The American people form almost the only large section of the human race which has emerged victoriously from two great wars without having had to pay the price of victory in bloodshed, devastation, austerity and terror. Their national character has been required to stand up only to one form of endurance test, that of having, in the familiar phrase, to "learn to carry their oats". The rest of the world now waits with anxiety, to see how well they will come through it.

Thanks to their written Constitution, a document admirably

idealistic in its day, American politics, with which we are now so closely concerned, are the most complicated and in some ways the most corrupt of any nation on earth. In their political thinking, it has been made evident that the majority of Americans are at least a century behind the majority of Europeans. As regards their cultural life, apart from a group of writers and scholars, small in number and relatively limited in achievement for so vast a population, they remain sterile and unproductive, contributing little in the way of music or art except what is debasing to the older civilizations. In the cinema industry, their inability to compete with European artists has forced them to resort to every kind of financial pressure, including even "cannibalism", to destroy the threat of competition. A recent example of Hollywood "cannibalism" was the purchase—in order to destroy it—of Carné's admirable picture "Le Jour Se Lève". But for American influence over the B.B.C.—how acquired, pending a Judicial Commission of Enquiry, no one yet knows—there is little doubt that the British public, now saturated with the glutinous products of America's Tin-Pan Alley, would quickly turn to other sources for their songs and dance music.

That the United States is heading for internal troubles in the way of slumps, inflation, strikes, race riots, political heresy hunts, possibly civil war, seems to be the belief of many apprehensive American citizens. We may well sympathise with the millions of progressive and liberal-minded Americans who dread the disasters which their reactionary ruling group may bring down upon them. We in England have bitter reasons for knowing what suffering and misery can be caused by the deeds of that handful of politicians, bankers and permanent officials, whom we have been too lazy or indifferent to eliminate. We are still paying, today, for the Irish Black-and-Tans; we shall pay, perhaps for generations, for sending a similar force to Palestine under the command of a general whose utterances inflamed world-opinion against us. The honour and conscience of our people have been outraged by what we have allowed to be accomplished in Greece. Our blitzed homes, our lost sons, our long years of austerity and suffering

are visible evidence of what we have had to pay for the errors of such statesmen as Chamberlain, Simon, Halifax and Hoare, for Non-intervention and for Munich. We have paid and we are still paying for the apathy and indifference with which we allowed such men to cover us with shame and to frustrate our expressed intentions. We shall pay for allowing the Government we elected in 1945 to repeat the betrayal of the Government we elected in 1935 by breaking its election pledges and continuing the policy it had a mandate to reverse. When our chosen representatives forsake the path of honour and probity, betray democratic allies and lend support to Fascist régimes, we know only too well that it is the common people who have to suffer for it. But when all is said that can justly be said against the Governments we have endured, there is much which cannot be removed from the credit side of our national balance sheet. At least we voted, twice in ten years, for programmes and policies which, if carried out, would have made peace secure and international co-operation, on a scale never before achieved, a possibility. When we had to fight, we fought first, we fought alone, we did not give in, and the great majority of us, as we showed in July 1945, held firm to the principles in defence of which we forced the reluctant Neville Chamberlain to take up the Fascist challenge. When Victory came, and starvation faced both victors and vanquished, we did all we were permitted to do to share our scanty rations with those whose need was greater than our own. If there is a law of Karma for nations as for individuals, it is on these actions that we must base not only our claim for survival but our hope once again to play a glorious part in the struggle for human progress.

The leadership of the world in wealth, in military power, in productive capacity, in all material things, has passed now to the United States of America. No nation in the history of the world has ever had so splendid an opportunity to revive the hopes of stricken humanity, to advance the cause of peace, justice and international co-operation, to give effect to the principles of the Atlantic Charter, to help free the world from fear. American citizens, if they can forego the escapist pastime of blaming others

and reflect upon the actions of their Government during the past fourteen months, may well shudder with apprehension. None can deny that from the moment the smoke had cleared from the ruins of Hiroshima and Nagasaki the United States has used its overwhelming power to threaten, and coerce its financially impoverished allies. With callous inhumanity, it has used its immense food reserves as a political weapon to force starving peoples into making trading concessions which will rob them of their economic liberty. It entered the Peace Conference with an atomic bomb in one hand and bacteria-spraying rockets in the other.

Fortunately for the world, though disconcertingly for Messrs Byrnes and Bevin, Russia and her "satellites" declined to be intimidated. All that American "toughness" has demonstrated is that the nation least fitted to have the monopoly of atomic power, most certain to use its strength to push the human race back into misery and chaos, if not to destroy it altogether, is the United States under its present rulers.

The outlook for the future would be more alarming than it is were it not for the fact that the hysteria, political fluidity and violence of the too rich, over-fed, too alcoholic and sex-mad section of the American population is balanced to a large extent by the courage, outspokenness and commonsense of liberal minded Americans. Moreover the conditions of American life make it easier than in England for good men as well as bad men to get a hearing and to appeal, as Roosevelt did, to the hearts and minds of their compatriots. It is one of the many things for which the British press will have to answer, if a Royal Commission of Enquiry is set up, that it has consistently suppressed the voice of "liberal" America on which, to-day, our hopes of avoiding a suicidal conflict so greatly depend. On September 17th the text was released of the important letter which Mr Henry Wallace had addressed to President Truman in July. This was front-page news, affecting the lives and hopes of every man, woman and child in Great Britain. The *News Chronicle* completely ignored it. The following extracts, compressed through lack of space, appeared in the *Daily Worker*.

"We must recognise that the world has changed and that today there can be no one world unless the U.S. and Russia can find some way of living together".

This is the keynote of the letter which Mr Henry Wallace, U.S. Secretary of State for Commerce, sent to President Truman last July. The letter was released to the press last night. Referring to the State Department's stand on the internationalisation and defortification of the Danube and the Dardanelles, Mr Wallace wrote:

"We would be horrified and angered by any Russian counter-proposal that would involve also the internationalising and disarming of the Suez or Panama Canals.

"We must recognise that to the Russians these seem to be identical situations."

Criticising "military men and self-styled realists", Mr Wallace asked: "How do American actions since V.J. Day appear to other nations—concrete things like the 13,000,000,000 dollars to the War and Navy Departments, the Bikini tests of the atom bomb and continued production of these bombs, the plan to arm Latin America with our weapons and the effort to secure air-bases spread over half the globe from which the other half of the globe can be bombed?

"We should ascertain from a fresh point of view what Russia believes to be essential to her own security as a prerequisite to the writing of the peace and to co-operation in the construction of a world order", Mr Wallace says.

"We should be prepared, even at the expense of risking the epithet 'appeasement' to agree to reasonable Russian guarantees of security.

"We should not pursue further the question of the veto in connection with atomic energy.

"We should prepare to negotiate a treaty which will establish a definite sequence of events for the establishment of international control and development of atomic energy.

"We should make an effort to counteract the irrational fear

of Russia which is being systematically built up in the American people by certain individuals and publications."

Were not these salient words, even in a paper restricted to four pages, more worthy of being brought to the attention of adult readers than "Miss B.O.A.C. at air fashion display" or "Tomtopia delegates arrive" or the trivial gossip which that first-rate journalist, Mr Ian Mackay, is apparently reduced to including in his "Diary"? What excuse can there be for news-editing of this description, when our country is at the very brink of the abyss?

The credit for being the first English periodical to give the text of the letter in full belongs to the *New Statesman and Nation* which printed it in its issue of September 29th 1946.

I write these lines three weeks before the re-opening of Parliament. Before they can be printed, we shall know whether Mr Attlee's Cabinet contains one man with sufficient courage and patriotism to follow the example of Henry Wallace, obey the dictates of his conscience and appeal for justice and for peace even at the risk of having to resign.

CHAPTER TWELVE

No More Tirades

BY the time this book appears, if I am still alive, I shall have reached the age of sixty: the age at which successful politicians may expect to attain Cabinet rank. I am thankful that I am not a politician, successful or otherwise. I dislike work; I am tired of trying to discourage enthusiasts for national suicide and getting insulted by fellow-Socialists for my pains; I have abundant uses for my leisure.

For the past thirty years or more I have been chided by reviewers and admonished by friends for being "too political", by which, of course, they mean having the wrong kind of political outlook for social and material success. (No writer can be "too political" if he is thoroughly "sound" from the standpoint of the upper-middle-class Conservative and West End clubman). In spite of this well-meant advice, I have preferred to be what W. B. Yeats termed "aristocratic", and I call "independent", in my thinking; to say what I believe to be true and not to count the consequences. As a sexagenarian, however, I propose, like Candide, to retire and cultivate my garden—at least until I am vaporised, poisoned by bacteria or die from natural causes. Except when it has been savagely impinged upon by public events I have, on the whole, enjoyed my private life enormously. As regards the essentials which make for happiness and contentment I have been fortunate, far beyond my deserts. If in the so-called "ideological", but more properly moral or thecal conflict in which, through the accident of our having been born in an age of transition, all of us except the living dead are now involved, I have

made enemies and lost at least one cherished friend, there has been the compensation of finding a number of new comrades. Those whose weapon is the pen are as much entitled to take it easy, after many years of campaigning, as those who use the sword. Neither veteran, in my view, deserves the charge of being an escapist if he withdraws from the fray. In the present era there can be no real escape for anyone possessed of the normal human attributes— a mind, a heart, a moral sense, a measure of imagination—this side of the grave. Very few writers who say "goodbye to all that" and withdraw from controversy for a period of contemplation, are able to refrain from an occasional outburst, even if nobody listens and, knowing myself by this time, I do not expect I shall be one of them. All the same, now that I have reached the last chapter of a book of what many will describe as "perpetual disagreement" I look forward to a period of well-earned peace. I want to play with my white kitten, enjoy my pictures and old prints and, perhaps, revisit my beloved France. There are plenty of other people, more talented, more active, more eminent than myself, to defend Britain's right to exist and to help to preserve the continuity of our civilisation. Personally, in the little time I have left, I intend to enjoy what remains of "traditional" England to the limit of my capacity. The younger generation who would normally have a reasonable expectation of many years of life, must fight for their future as, within my limitations, I have tried to fight for it. I wish them luck. I hope they will win the struggle ahead of them. I hope they will manage to get together, form a compact majority of those who have the will to live and join up with the youth of other countries. At least the class barriers, so frustrating a feature of pre-war England, are breaking down.

Taking stock of my position, as I retire from active conflict, I can find scarcely one point of agreement between myself and the average member of the class in which I was born and brought up, and in which I have been accustomed, through similarity of educational background, to look for friends and acquaintances. Most of those I meet, in pubs or clubs, think Mr Bevin as "wonderful"

as they previously thought Mr Neville Chamberlain. Most of them, infected by American hysteria, obediently abuse the Russians, without making the slightest effort to find out what crime our war-time comrades-in-arms are supposed to have committed, or what they are actually doing or saying. Well, I can't help it, I disagree with them. To my mind, is seems indecent for Englishmen to round on their allies at the bidding of newspapers which have been repeating the same old lies for nearly thirty years. I agree with the American liberal newspaper "P.M." when it describes Messrs Byrnes and Bevin as spokesmen for the "new united reactionary front of the press, the diplomats, the monopoly kings, the Army".

Most of my fellow-owners of "old school ties", good easy men, automatically believe Mr Churchill when he says that "the atomic bomb is still only in the hands of a nation which *we* know will never use it except in the cause of right and freedom". *I* know nothing of the sort. On the contrary, I believe that if the "new united reactionary front", which has President Truman in its clutches, is ever mad enough to start bomb-dropping it will be in the cause of dollar imperialism, fascism and injustice; that its use will be directed by sub-human industrial gorillas and controlled by irresponsible Service chiefs into whose hands American scientists have thrust their murderous playthings. My belief is based upon a number of indisputed facts of which the following, from the *Star* of September 19th 1946, is an example.

"A new deadly poison, claimed to be the most potent known to man, has been developed by the Special Projects Division of the U.S. Chemical Warfare Service," Dr Gerald Wendt, Editorial Director of *Science Illustrated* said in a broadcast at Schenectady. "Although an innocent-looking crystalline toxin, this poison is so powerful that an inch cube, roughly one ounce, could kill every living thing in the U.S. and Canada swiftly", Dr Wendt said.

I write within a week of the day when sentence is to be passed on the Nazi war criminals who have been solemnly tried at Nuremberg before Allied judges, one of them American. How

can an American judge, without hypocrisy, condemn these men when his own Government, in the middle of a "peace" conference, has set up a "Special Projects Division" of a "Chemical Warfare Service"? What viler atrocity has any nation, even Nazi Germany, ever been guilty of plotting against the human race? Chemical Warfare! Against whom and for what purpose? How can the cause of "right and freedom" be advanced by the mass annihilation of entire populations? If Mr Forrestal, Admirals Standley and Leahy, Mr Churchill, Messrs Byrnes and Bevin and their Service friends attempt an answer to this question it is safe to prophesy that it will be on the lines that Hitler, Franco and the Church of Rome have already made familiar. They will tell us that the new diabolical devices they have perfected—and you don't spend millions of dollars in setting up a "Department of Chemical Warfare" unless you are prepared to use its products—are only to be employed in the liquidation of those wicked people, those apostates, those "Communists", "Socialists" and "Reds", who have dared to harbour "un-American ideas". If some innocent folk are wiped out with the guilty, it will not matter because, as was argued during the massacre of the Albigenses, "God will easily be able to sort out his own".

No. I do not see eye to eye on a great many subjects with most of the highly respectable members of the Conservative middle-class, including those who have now gone "Labour".

In regard to the prolonged wrangling of the Peace Conference, during which British "America first" newspapers have automatically taken for granted that the U.S.S.R. and its "Satellites" are always wrong and their objections merely "aggressive", cantankerous and time-wasting, I disagree fundamentally with the average Labour Conservative. As I see it, the Russian delegates, with magnificent honesty and courage, have stood up for the principles for which the war was fought, in face of all the pressure brought to bear on them by the American dollar imperialists and their British yes-men. The Russians, when they sign treaties or enter into agreements with allied powers, have an outstandingly good record for keeping their promises and honouring their obliga-

tions. The Americans and the British, on the contrary, have given an odious exhibition of chicanery and bad faith, particularly in regard to the solemn covenant, signed by the Big Three, to eradicate Nazi-Fascism wherever it still exists. The Americans have allowed Goering to cheat the hangman and in the British and American zones of Germany many of the Nazi industrialists who were Hitler's most powerful supporters have been allowed to retain their privileges and power, in spite of repeated Russian protests. Mr Bevin, Mr Philip Noel-Baker, and the entire British Cabinet share with America and the Vatican the responsibility for maintaining the Franco dictatorship in Spain. Mr Attlee, Mr Bevin, Mr Noel Baker, Mr Dalton, Sir Stafford Cripps and their colleagues share with Mr Churchill the responsibility for the martyrdom of Greek democracy. No doubt my standards, in regard to our behaviour in Greece, are old fashioned. By the Varkiza agreement, signed in February 1945, we made solemn promises to the Greek Republicans. These promises we broke. It is even doubtful if we ever intended to keep them. To me it seems as if the honour of our country has been sullied, our soldiers prostituted, and the consciences of decent Englishmen outraged by this shameful episode. Nothing can purge our guilt and prevent similar crimes except the trial and punishment of the men responsible. Once more I find myself in disagreement.

Throughout the Anglo-American disputes with Russia and Jugoslavia, over Trieste, the Dardanelles and the Danube valley, it seems to me, after ferreting out the available evidence and reading the speeches of Molotov and Vyshinsky, that the Americans have resorted to naval demonstrations, 48-hour ultimatums, desk-banging and diplomacy by loaded pistol, because, morally, they have not a leg to stand on. The Russians have as much right to exercise joint control over the Dardanelles as the British and the Americans have to protect the Suez and Panama canals. The Jugoslavian claim to Trieste seems to me, on every ground of statesmanship and equity, unassailable. The violently hostile attitude of the United States to Marshal Tito, in view of the latter's war record, I consider outrageous and indecent. If the Americans had incurred

comparable losses with Jugoslavia, their casualties, in soldiers and civilians, would have amounted to more than fifteen millions dead.

The American operations in China, exactly comparable to the armed intervention in Spain of Hitler and Mussolini in 1936, may well constitute the curtain-raiser to a Third World War. The Americans started it: no other nation shares their responsibility. American-trained Kuomingtang forces, aided by American bombers, stiffened by a force of American marines, armed with the latest American quick-firing rifles and supplied with enormous quantities of American war material, are now attacking the only part of China which is honestly and efficiently governed in the interests of the people. They are, moreover, attacking the only Chinese armies which, for seven years, heroically and successfully stood up to the Japanese invaders. That this tragic fratricidal struggle which the United States has provoked has not even been considered by the U.N. Security Council is, to my mind, sufficient indication to the world that the Security Council is now regarded as safety under "Anglo-American" control.

The only thing which worries Americans about U.N. as I suggested earlier is the fact that its deliberations are held in public and the press of the world cannot yet be prevented from reporting them.

Writing on the American ultimatum to Jugoslavia, the *Observer* says (Sept. 29, 1946), "The threat attached to the time limit (in the ultimatum) was not unilateral action but submission of the matter to the U.N. Security Council. It could not be made clearer that America intends to exert her power in future, even if directly attacked, only through the U.N.; she would even more certainly do so if her power were to be exerted in the defence of others against aggression. The U.N., whatever its imperfections, remains the one link by which American power is tied to the cause of world security. America's sheer physical power, however, is not only the paramount factor in the twentieth-century world, it is for most nations to-day the only guarantee of their safety against aggression, indeed of their continued existence".

In view of the indisputable fact that to-day the only nation which has the wish or the power to embark on a war of aggression, which has made active and worldwide preparations for such a war, whose population has been conditioned by a newspaper campaign of unparalleled virulence to accept the idea of a "preventive" atomic war as justifiable, is the United States of America, the *Observer's* argument seems to me to prompt the question *quis custodiet ipsos custodes?* At a recent meeting of the Security Council, the Russians made the reasonable request that America and Britain should give details of the number and situation of the armed forces maintained by them outside their own borders. The Russians, in other words, asked for the cards to be laid on the table face upwards. Sir Alexander Cadogan characteristically dismissed this proposal as "propaganda"! It is significant that in all the flood of vituperation which has been poured out on Soviet Russia during the past year or more by the press barons of America and Great Britain, not one allegation has been made which, if proved, could be regarded as an act of "aggression", or a legitimate *casus belli.* The most that can be said against the U.S.S.R., which has been consistently occupied in trying to persuade its two major allies to adhere to arangements already agreed upon between them, is that "cet animal est très méchant, quand on l'attaque il se défend". If there is any English or American politician who thinks that there is any other basis for Soviet policy except the desire for peace and security he must be either a fool or a knave.

What is, we hope, penetrating the mind of Wall Street is the fact that you cannot bomb an economic theory which has proved its practical advantages, or destroy a political ideal merely by killing large mumbers of people who have already shown themselves ready to die in its defence. The results of unrestrained Free Enterprise, monopoly capitalism and dollar imperialism, even when displayed to musical accompaniment in glorious technicolour, make little appeal to ordinary working men especially when the blackmailer's weapon of withholding food supplies is used to enforce their acceptance. The belief that the world

can be forced into submission by means of starvation and the terror caused by the manufacture of weapons capable of annihilating millions in a few moments—and these are the threats which form the background of Messrs Byrnes and Bevin's atomic diplomacy—has been shown by the fate of Hitler and his associates to be based on an illusion. "Communism" can no more be destroyed by dropping bombs on the Kremlin than Catholicism can be destroyed by dropping them on the Vatican. The teeming millions of the East, for example, are awakening to new political conceptions and after rejecting British imperialism have no burning desire to accept the dollar variety in place of it. Wall Street has the means to effect changes of Government, in defiance of the people's wishes, similar to the changes which Messrs Bevin and Churchill have, for the moment, effected in Greece. It has the power to vaporise or poison with bacteria many millions of Chinese peasants and Russion workers in its attempts to "make the world safe for unemployment". But in the long run it will come up against the minds and hearts of men, a more powerful force than any weapon that man's evil ingenuity can possibly invent; and it will be defeated. The armed might of the United States is exclusively destructive in its potentialities, for its sole aim is the enslavement, not the liberation of the common man It can make deserts and call it peace; it can make millions of martyrs; it can frustrate the hopes of tens of millions more. The one thing is cannot do, and this is where it differs from the progressive economic theories it seeks to eradicate, is *to persuade.*

Sooner or later, as certainly as night follows day, the financial pressure which America is now turning upon Russia, Jugoslavia and Czechoslovakia will be turned again with renewed intensity upon Great Britain and on France. These ancient civilised races, tried and tested by adversity throughout the centuries, capable of amazing solidarity and endurance in hours of national crisis, endowed with a genius for scientific invention and animated by something higher than material values, will in all probability survive the onslaught. The future of the United States is far less predictable.

It is only too evident that by indulging in these lines of thought I am completely out of step with the majority of my compatriots. I am "too political": I indulge in "tirades". I strike a note seldom heard in our press and never from the B.B.C. I am perhaps a "Bohemian", or one of these artist types who drink beer in public bars instead of cocktails in "lounges". I may be, as the *New Statesman and Nation* has suggested, an "anarchist" and a "revolutionary". On the other hand, what is much more likely, I may be nothing more exotic than just an elderly Edwardian public-schoolboy who has declined to modify or throw overboard the system of reasoning and the rough and ready code of ethics inculcated in his youth. A "born" Conservative, in short; suffering, as regards his ideas of public morals and what constitutes a sense of decency, from arrested development. If this is true, then it is this more than anything else which brings me into collision with so many more up-to-date Conservatives who, while marching with the times, have accommodated themselves to the methods of argument and standards of public morality of their American counterparts. In a recent book, Mr William C. Bullitt, an American millionaire "playboy" who has filled important diplomatic posts, says that the aim of Soviet foreign policy is constant: to establish Communist dictatorship throughout the earth. "All Governments except the Soviet Government and its puppet satellites are", he says, "working for peace. The Soviet Government is working for conquest... The United States," he continues, "should not hesitate to use the atomic bomb to stop the new crimes of Soviet imperialism. To execute a murderer is not an immoral act. And the more certain the Soviet Government is that we shall use the atomic bomb against it if it continues its career of aggression, the more likely the Soviet Government will be to refrain from aggression—at least until it has the atomic bomb. At the present time we have only to be ready to use our power, and let the Soviet Government know that we are ready to use it. The Soviet Government will refrain from starting any war if it knows that... The Russians understand well the sequence of crime and punishment". Dr Göbbels

himself could hardly have put it better. A great many British Conservatives and Catholic converts applaud this kind of thing. I have heard R.A.F. staff officers, taking their cue from their superiors, loudly echoing Mr Bullitt's sentiments. Well, as usual I disagree. *I* say that those Americans who have continued the manufacture of atomic bombs, staged the Bikini demonstrations, instructed American scientists to perfect devices for the annihilation of their fellow men by spraying them with deadly poison and provided arms and equipment for fratricidal civil war in China, are branded with the curse of Cain. *I* say that the British Labour Government, by permitting Staff talks with these *tristes messieurs,* by subordinating our foreign policy to theirs, are making themselves partners in their guilt. I say, moreover, that to shift all the responsibility for this on to the shoulders of the rather pathetic Mr Bevin, is a cowardly evasion on the part of his Cabinet colleagues. It is not only Mr Bevin whom we should blame either for his automatic support of Mr Byrnes, or for what has happened in Greece. Mr Bevin knows no better, he has never been more than the mouth-piece of our half-American ex-premier whose period of absolute power seems, to put it mildly, to have confused his judgement. The Ministers most responsible are those who know the perils into which we are drifting but have, so far, refrained from following the example of Mr Henry Wallace. They have acquiesced in preparations for a war for which men like Mr William C. Bullitt and the Hearst and McCormick Press are so actively preparing a large section of the American public. If it should happen—and when Mr Wallace intervened we had come within measurable distance of it—that a Socialist Government should send our boys overseas to fight against their Soviet comrades for the benefit of American gangster capitalism, it will not only be Mr Churchill's former collaborators who will stand condemned in the eyes of honest Socialists. On the contrary, it will be the men we trusted; the men whom we believed were on our side; the men who said nothing and did not even resign.

Evidently, it is high time that I started cultivating my garden,

and left off shouting or murmuring my endless "disagreements"! The problems which have so often kept me awake at night, have left my neighbours unperturbed. Now, at last, I propose to take comfort from their enviable tranquillity and imitate, as far as I can, their absorption in their own affairs.

The years which followed the Four Years'War were years of hope which, thanks in large measure to the Labour Party's leadership, gradually turned into disillusion and despair. The hopes aroused by the results of the General Election of July 1945 were almost extinguished by the Labour Party's leadership in less than five months. Our first year and a half of "Peace" has been a period of despondency, frustration, and growing alarm at Mr Bevin's endeavour to involve us, on the wrong side, in America's quarrel with the U.S.S.R. The tolerated re-appearance of Mosley's Fascists, actively preaching the gospel which has so recently caused some twenty million civilian deaths, apart from a perhaps equal number of military casualties, is an indication, which no one can misunderstand, of the kind of Government we have brought to power. Whereas the French Chamber of Deputies has unanimously agreed to set up a commission of enquiry into all the events which led to the downfall of the Third Republic, no demand has been made in the British House of Commons to set up a similar enquiry into the events which led us, step by step, from the Hoare-Laval agreement to the disaster of Dunkirk. Mr Morrison during his term as Home Secretary pampered the interned Fascists, and released their leader, on the ground that he was suffering from phlebitis. He also declined to publish the names of the four hundred members of Captain Ramsay's "Right Club". Since then, Mr Attlee and his colleagues have similarly protected the highly-placed British friends of Hitler, whose names and dossiers were discovered in Berlin when the Allies took over. The nation has thus been deprived by the Labour Government of the elementary security which could have been provided by the identification and punishment of its public enemies. What powerful pressure, exerted behind the scenes, brought about this disgraceful concealment? No wonder the very air we breathe is

poisoned by suspicion, no wonder the Munichеers are cock-a-hoop and Mosley and his followers are openly concerting their plans to defile the graves of our dead by undermining all that they fought to achieve.

As it would be hard to imagine a worse situation than that in which we find ourselves, after fifteen years of political and military effort, first to free our country and then the world, of Nazi-Fascism and its reactionary supporters, it may be that fairer weather lies ahead. The courageous stand, in the United States, of Mr Henry Wallace, followed by the statesmanlike utterance of Stalin which has, in turn, evoked a twitter of sanity from Mr Anthony Eden, may herald a break in the clouds. I hope I shall live long enough to see a bit of blue sky above my enclosed garden and a shaft of warming sunlight on my fig tree. I hope the gales of freedom will disperse the present fog and, like the mistral, blow the accumulated poisons from the tainted atmosphere. I hope I shall live to see England regain the liberty which the Labour Government, with such cowardly haste, pawned to American finance. I hope we, as a people, will recover our good nature, recover the spirit of fraternity which united us in the summer of 1940, recover our freedom of action and with it our pride and self-respect. I hope a squad of sanitary engineers will get to work on some of the Augean stables inherited from the old régime, particularly the Foreign Office, the Home Office and the Colonial Office. I hope the present snob-ridden British Army, which the atomic age has made a costly and dangerous anachronism, will be honourably and respectfully liquidated, and its place taken by entirely new formations, officered by the sort of men who led the International Brigade in Spain and later organised the partisans in countries overrun by Nazi-Fascists and betrayed by native quislings. We can no longer afford the non-political type of Service chief any more than we can afford the "non-political" type of diplomat. Such men have proved themselves to be instinctively opposed to the policy of any progressive Government employing them and incapable of preventing their class loyalties and their class prejudices from impeding

the fulfilment of their duties. We can no longer afford the sort of generals and Foreign Office chiefs who saw "nothing wrong" in dining and wining with highly placed Fascists during a war to end Fascism. We can no longer afford the type of officer who provoked the Kluang mutiny. I hope that in pursuit of liberty and justice we shall take the same measures to suppress the growth of anti-Semitism, Fascism and racial intolerance as we are now taking to suppress syphilis, cancer and tuberculosis. I hope that Catholics and other Christian bodies will come to realise again as they did in past ages that the basic principles of Christianity and Communism are, in reality, identical. The Roman Catholic Church has owed much of its vitality to its great communities, the Benedictines, the Cistercians, the Franciscans, in which the principles of Communism have been put into practice for many centuries. To be "anti-Communist" is to be "anti-Christian". No Catholic can deny this fact without repudiating the New Testament, and nothing would do more to promote the peace and progress of the world than its acceptance by the Catholic hierarchy. Perhaps that will come with the dawn of the Aquarian age of which we may be permitted to dream, although we shall never live to see it.

Meanwhile I hope, with all my heart, that before old age and infirmity prevent me from participating, my compatriots will rise up and insist on being allowed to enjoy themselves. I would like to live to see Englishmen once again drinking as much strong beer at twopence a pint, as much whiskey at 3/6 a bottle, as much good wine as they desire on their social occasions and liberating their racial genius in the process.* England will never truly be herself while her workers are too nerveless to exert their right to behave themselves as civilised adults without being subject to childish regulations. It is the business of the police to suppress crime, not the legitimate pleasures of industrious citizens. A people which permits a tiny minority of fanatics, like the Lord's Day Observance Society, to veto Sunday games and enter-

*) I note that "Margaret's father" agrees with me in this!

tainments, is already half-way on the road to Fascism. The penal taxation of the poor man's pleasures such as the excessive duties now charged on tobacco, beer and spirits, are relics of a barbarous age, as indeed are all the laws conceived in a kill-joy spirit from which we still suffer. In the middle of the late war the Government introduced a Bill permitting the Sunday performance of stage plays for the benefit of the troops. It was left to a free vote of the House of Commons and rejected by a small majority of Members who presumably held the view that beer-drinking and womanizing were the only appropriate relaxations for soldiers on Sunday evenings. Analysis of the Members who voted against the Bill reveals a number of notorious Munichеers, together with a group of reactionary Tory landlords, Nonconformist wowsers and other political undesirables. It is no use grumbling, in private, about the actions of such people, and hopping over to France to escape from their persecution. We should make it our business to drive them out of public life by refusing to vote for them, either as candidates for Parliament or for municipal government. The sort of people whose sexual repressions urge them to seek power in order to impose their ideas of social behaviour on their neighbours, and the various types of cranks whose chief object seems to be to make our island as depressing as possible for the natives and equally uninviting to visitors from abroad, constitute a definite menace to our national health, prosperity and happiness. They play into the hands of the black market operators and the night club racket and add to the many temptations of our underpaid police force. The complexes from which they suffer, if analysed, would almost certainly show many points of similarity with the prevalent mental disease of Fascism. Like producers of the worst type of B.B.C. Variety shows and so-called "music-hall" performances, with their agonising Victorian cross-talk, punctuated by the heartbreaking cacchination of hired applauders, these kill-joys are the arch enemies of our life-giving native humour. Nathaniel Gubbins's creation, "Margaret's father", Tommy Handley's Colonel Chinstrap, Gert and Daisy and Hermione Gingold are

among the heroes and heroines of an important branch of our national resistance movement. The traditional British "belly-laugh" is the best reply our comic lions can make to the mirthless roars of their M.G.M. rival and the puritanical refinement of Mr J. Arthur Rank's Anglo-American "eagle".

Unless we intend to forego the much-needed foreign currency which a properly-organised tourist industry could attract, we shall have to drop our commercially-imposed American accents and mannerisms and develop sufficient pride and courage to be ourselves. Neither visiting Europeans nor transatlantic tourists, who come to look at the land of Shakespeare and Charles Dickens, will feel they have had their money's worth if all they find is a synthetic American colony, blighted by austerity, thirsty, depressed and made ill-tempered by a mass of unnecessary restrictions. A wholly new set of men, with an entirely different outlook and method of approach, will have to take our licensing laws in hand and apply themselves to the problems of catering and public amenities, if we are to gather in our fair share of other people's money. The visitor who arrives at a British airport must be able to get a drink when he wants it, at any hour of the day or night. We shall have to transform, as a matter of urgency, our infamous railway refreshment rooms, curb the rapacity of certain types of hotel-keepers, improve the cooking and the service provided by others, and not be above taking a few hints from our more progressive European neighbours. This would not have the effect of making us "less English" but more so. The improvements suggested, but for the frustrations of misgovernment and unenterprising capitalism, would have been carried out half a century ago in accordance with the popular demand. No one could be a more staunch defender of our country inns and public houses than myself. But their traditional character and charm would not be threatened if we supplemented them by the development of the Continental type of café. The appropriate places for cafés are in large urban centres, on the banks of rivers, on seaside promenades and in public parks and gardens. If the brewers raise their usual ob-

jections and talk nonsense about our climate—as though a café *terrasse* cannot be as well roofed, screened and heated in London as in Paris—the Government should nationalise one or two famous breweries, such as those of Bass and Worthington, and set an example to competitive private enterprise. Something of the kind was, I believe, done in Vienna under the pre-Dollfuss Socialist Government, with marked success. Municipal cafés have for decades been a feature of progressive Continental countries, such as Sweden, so there is nothing either novel or startling in my suggestion. The only reason why we lag so far behind other countries in these matters is because we have been misgoverned by a long succession of unimaginative politicians whose desire to improve the lot of the people, if it exists, does not include making them happy.

The present Government's policy of selling the bulk of our Scotch whisky to the United States, which can do without it, in order to earn the dollars to pay for inferior Hollywood products which debase and demoralise the popular taste and do competent Englishmen in the film industry out of their jobs, is a characteristic example of Labour "continuity".

It is in no spirit of hostility to the United States, but merely out of a legitimate anxiety for my own country, that I hope to live to see a cessation of the one-way traffic in American films, plays, books, songs and cheap periodicals. British singers and musicians have been banned from the American air by the American Federation of Musicians in a characteristic gesture of American "friendship". We have everything to gain and nothing to lose, except opportunities for bribery and palm-greasing, by following suit. At present the B.B.C. continues night and day to deluge us with Yankee sentiment, with crooners and swooners who infect our young people with their hideous jargon and debased mentality. There is neither reason nor excuse for it.

I hope I may live to see our home market banned to transatlantic vulgarity and the export-import trade in films, songs, books, plays, and periodicals put equitably on a fifty-fifty basis.

Let us increase our imports of cultural commodities from France, Russia, and other civilised European countries, which will gladly take the best that we can send them in exchange.

One of the most sensible political actions in my life-time was the offer made by Mr Churchill to the French, in 1940. How I should like to see it renewed and accepted; how I should like to see our two countries linked in friendship and confederation! The goodwill, the mutual sympathy and respect are already there, as far as the people are concerned. Only Mr Bevin and his Foreign Office mentors, who, through their subservience to America, are leaving us without a single friend in democratic Europe, have kept us apart. As the staid *Economist* put is, "If the British wagon is hitched too closely to the American star, it will be given a very dizzy ride, and may be pitched into the Milky Way at the end... When American policy runs to an extreme, as it tends to, there is no reason for the British to follow, or even to refrain from opposing it. Nor is there any excuse for British pusillanimity in being scared off what they think is the right path by a frown from Washington. There has, for example, been far too much timidity in the British approach to France and the other countries of Western Europe to seek a measure of political accord and economic integration".

I suppose that all my life I have been consciously and unconsciously looking ahead, staring enquiringly at the future, and I shall go on doing so until I can look and stare no more. So far, all my worst nightmares have been surpassed in horror by the realities which followed, and all the gloomiest prognostications which I have been scolded for venturing upon have been fulfilled to the letter. But my gloom, paradoxically, has been the gloom of the incorrigible optimist. I recall that years ago I used as an epigraph on the title-page of a forgotten novel, Tennyson's lines: "Oh yet we trust that somehow good will be the final goal of ill..." Tennyson is out of fashion now and I suppose few young people read "In Memoriam". But as I am no longer young and care nothing for literary fashions, I confess I derive great comfort from Tennyson's far-ranging speculations and per-

haps over-simplified philosophy. I cling to the Victorian belief, in spite of all we have seen and lived through, that there is:

"One God, one law, one element
And one far-off divine event
To which the whole creation moves".

I like to dream that this one world will, in time, be inhabited by one "crowning race" composed of all human beings that:

"... eye to eye shall look
On knowledge; under whose command
Is Earth and Earth's, and in their hand
Is nature like an open book;

No longer half-akin to brute,
For all we thought and loved and did,
And hoped, and suffered, is but seed
Of what in them is flower and fruit".

I like to believe:

"That nothing walks with aimless feet;
That no one life shall be destroy'd,
Or cast as rubbish to the void,
When God hath made the pile complete;

That not a worm is cloven in vain;
That not a moth with vain desire
Is shrivell'd in a fruitless fire,
Or but subserves another's gain".

And, bless my soul, after a lapse of fifty years, I have come upon yet another bit of Tennysonian uplift which thrilled me as a child and, to-day, wakes the strangest echoes and provokes the oddest mixture of laughter and tears. At school we had to

learn the stuff by heart, for "English rep", and, even then sophisticated older boys used to sneer at it as claptrap. The passage I refer to begins "Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky" and here are the last two quatrains, which must sound naive indeed to ears accustomed to the exotic wood notes of Messrs T. S. Eliot and Dylan Thomas.

"Ring out old shapes of foul disease;
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be".

At the risk of adding "Victorian Radical" to such labels as "anarchist", "revolutionary" and "Edwardian Conservative" which have been applied to my numerous deviations from the norm, I conclude with this confession of a simple faith which my Victorian predecessors shared with their contemporaries. It is a faith which, amid outward turmoils, wars and controversies, at least confers on those who hold it a measure of spiritual confidence and inward peace.

APPENDIX

Lest We Forget

The passages quoted in this appendix have been selected for their continuing significance, from the mountainous pile of press cuttings which has accumulated in my study during the past ten years. It seemed a pity to consign all this material to the waste paper basket. Some readers, who enjoy controversy, may find in these extracts evidence to support their favourite arguments or facts to stimulate new trains of thought. Others may find them useful as reminders of happenings which they had either forgotten or never knew. In Arnold Bennett's phrase they are "things which have interested me". They have been collected for convenience under various heads and I regret that, in some instances, dates are missing.

I

BRITAIN AT WAR

PRELUDE

At last.

The Prime Minister announced the Government's intention to bring the agreement with Italy into effect.

Here we are, then, setting right at last what has long been wrong.

And, of course, it is the old story. It is a story retold in the pages of history so often that it is astonishing public men do not learn by experience.

We made the trouble

We made the trouble with Italy. We raised all the storm about the invasion of Abyssinia. All that took place under the leadership of Lord Baldwin—if leadership it can be called.

Then, after making all the trouble about Abyssinia, where the Italians certainly had special interests, we made the Hoare-Laval agreement, which provided for a partition of Abyssinia. It was a wise project, based upon humanity and common sense.

Lord Baldwin was a party to it. He told us that his lips were sealed, and that, therefore, he could not divulge the reasons impelling him to accept the agreement.

Midsummer madness.

But the moment that others whose lips were not sealed raised a clamour Lord Baldwin ran away from the agreement. And, in running away, he dished this country.

Then there was a design to put on something called oil sanctions, denying to the Italians the fuel they needed for their airplanes and motor transport.

But Mr Chamberlain had the good sense to dismiss the whole business as "the midsummer of madness". That put an end to it, saving us from the folly of an unnecessary war.

Praise for Hoare.

Now Mr Chamberlain is putting right what ought to have been straightened out long ago.

In acknowledging his good sense, let us not omit to say a word of praise for Sir Samuel Hoare, who went so far as to resign from the Government in his efforts to get a settlement with the Italians.

Follow that man

It will be long before relations between ourselves and the Italians are on the same footing of trust and friendship as they once were. The scars are too many. The differences are too deep.

But now, please, can we leave the Italians to run their own empire and devote our energies to the development of the vast territories controlled by us?

One last word of praise for Mr Chamberlain.

Follow that man. Work for him. When you get the chance, vote for him.

Exalt his name. And tell your neighbour of his good deeds.

Leader in the *Daily Express*. 3-11-1938

PROTEST

"Perfidious Albion"

To the Editor, *The Manchester Guardian*.

Sir,

The record of the Baldwin-Chamberlain "National" Government must surely be unique in the annals of England. The pursuit of what some call "British interests" and Mr Chamberlain now calls "appeasement" has led us into a morass of ignoble folly. For this narrow materialism, and it is nothing else, has lost us the greatest of all British interests—viz. British honour, credence and faith, i.e., reputation.

During the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries we, being Protestant, supported the Protestant cause in Europe with our diplomacy, money and, when necessary, with men and armies

and leaders. Why are we not supporting the democratic cause in Europe to-day?

1) In Abyssinia we betrayed a weak member of the League of Nations into the hands of its destroyers. We refused even to supply the means of defence to a people rightly struggling to maintain their independence.

2) We have allowed, and are allowing, the democratic cause in Spain to be imperilled and strangled by foreign Fascist invaders.

3) We have allowed our own creation, Czechoslovakia, to be sacked, violated, and murdered. More, we compelled it to submit.

4) We have refused both arms and money to China, rightly struggling to repel an invader.

Have we ever asked ourselves what will happen to us if in the next war the United States gives us our own medicine?

Every small nation that was our friend, that believed in England, if in nothing else, has hidden its head in fear; and every great nation laughs in derision; and the whole world echoes to-day with the accusation "Perfidious Albion". And now when he is shown up Mr Chamberlain wants to muzzle us like a dictator. No wonder!

Yours, etc.
Edward Hutton.

J'ACCUSE

Who is doing Göbbels's work?

... This accusation I make, and make in the plainest terms. In this country, as in France before reaction threw aside all pretence, a deliberate and systematic intimidation of liberal-minded foreigners is going on.

So that even while we are actually at war with the Axis powers, and their subjugated "allies", people in positions of authority and advantage in this country are allowing the collection, internment, and ill-treatment of all those disaffected subjects of our enemies who would be most willing and able to organise internal resistance in their own countries on our behalf.

This Nazi work is being done openly in this country, in the

name of this country. Everything these people do is calculated to convince their victims who have sought our aid and protection that the fate that has overtaken their fellow refugees in France may come to them in their turn, that Britain is willing to betray them and will betray them, as France has betrayed its Spanish and German refugees, and that the best prospect of safety for them is to make their peace with our enemies quickly now, and do whatever is required of them here against us. This is not a case of administrative stupidity; that is my point; it is a case of "doing Göbbel's work", of enemy activity in our midst.

From an article by H. G. Wells in *Reynolds News,* 28-7-40

PRINCE VON STARHEMBERG

The position of Prince von Starhemberg as a lieutenant in the Free French Air Force was again raised in the House at question time yesterday.

Colonel Wedgwood: Is it not rather indecent that this man, who assassinated democracy in Austria, should now be allowed to fight on our side and should be paid by us in the war for democracy and against all that Prince von Starhemberg has stood for?" (Labour cheers).

Captain Balfour: I reject that suggestion wholeheartedly. To anyone who is willing to risk his life in the air and fight in our cause we owe a debt of gratitude (Cheers).

Mr Woodburn (Lab.-Clackmannan): Is there any suggestion that we are going to impose him on Austria at the end of the war?

Mr Silverman (Lab.-Nelson and Colne): Does the Under Secretary suggest that Prince von Starhemberg is more worthy to fight for democracy than many of our internees in this country? (Labour cheers).

Colonel Wedgwood, speaking with some warmth, asked: "Why will you not allow other aliens from Austria to fight?"

The Speaker rose to call the next question, but Colonel Wedgwood did not give way. Above the loud cries of "Order" raised by Members, he continued, "You keep them in prison but allow a scoundrel like that to fight for democracy. I want an answer from the Government." No reply was given.

From the *Manchester Guardian,* 24-10-'40

OIL FOR JAPAN

Mr Mander: In view of the fact that the Dutch Government is one of our allies and Japan has joined our enemies, can the Under Secretary give an assurance that the British Government will use all their influence to prevent oil and other warlike supplies going to Japan?

Mr Butler said he realised the importance of the point, but any decision of a general character must rest with the Netherlands East Indies Government.

Mr Mander gave notice that he would raise the matter again.

Mr Noel-Baker (Lab.-Derby) asked whether, in view of Mr Matsuoka's declaration that if Germany and Italy were in danger of being beaten it would be necessary for Japan to help them, could the Government not now decide that British-controlled companies should not sell oil to Japan and therefore avoid our experience with Italy.

Mr Shinwell: Would it not be disgraceful if British finance was utilised for the purpose of providing oil for Japan? Can the Under Secretary give the House some specific reply?

Mr Noel-Baker: Is not the best hope of avoiding war with Japan in the prevention of sales to Japan and their purchase for ourselves?

There was no further reply.

From the *Manchester Guardian,* 24-10-'40

ARMS WORKERS 'NO' TO JAPAN ORDERS

By Bernard Harris, City Editor

The night shift of the grinding department of one of Britain's largest engineering firms have refused to handle an order for Japan. A foreman walked into the department recently, threw some blueprints on a table and shouted: "Look at these. They are marked: 'Subject to Japanese Army inspection'."

Immediately a deputation protested to the management.

Because they believed their work was of national importance, they said, they had willingly given up their holidays and were working a ten-and-a-half-hour shift in a black-out factory.

But they were not going to work for any member of the Axis.

The secretary of the company replied that this work was of national importance.

The country badly needed the foreign exchange which Japan would pay for military equipment, and the Government had granted an export license.

The men would not accept this explanation.

From the *Sunday Express*, 22-12-1940

OFFICER AND PRIVATE.

To the Editor, *The Manchester Guardian.*

Sir,

In a train recently leaving Euston, well laden with passengers, there was difficulty in obtaining seats, especially in the coaches bound for Manchester. In one of the first-class compartments there were two vacant seats. A private soldier, looking tired and ill, came in and, having chosen one, arranged his kit on the rack. A young naval officer then came in and occupied the one seat which had remained vacant. When he noticed the soldier, without asking for an explanation or waiting for one, he complained of a "common soldier" being present and demanded that he should leave the compartment, insisting that a private could not be allowed to travel with a naval officer under any circumstances. The soldier apologised and explained that there was standing room only elsewhere, also that he was ill and going home on sick leave. Such an excuse, however, did not mollify the officer, and the man was obliged to stand in the corridor for about four hours until the officer left the train.

I have since established certain facts with regard to the soldier which are not without interest. He is forty years of age, a man of good education, an employer of labour, and a successful Manchester business man, who socially and financially, holds no mean position. Some months ago, he decided that it was his duty as a patriot to help his country, and, leaving his business to be managed by others, he voluntarily enlisted as a private.

The incident presents a number of features which puzzle my civilian mind, and I should be grateful if someone can inform me

whether the action of the naval officer was in strict accord with the King's Regulations and, if so, whether the regulations are so rigid as entirely to exclude all human sympathy and consideration in the circumstances which existed in this case.

Yours etc.
Patriot
22-2-1941

THE CAMP SCANDAL

A Letter to the War Minister

To Capt. David Margesson.

Sir, — As Editor of the *Sunday Dispatch* I would like to bring to your notice a matter which concerns you not only as War Minister but as a taxpayer.

In October 1939, an engineer officer—obscure, except, perhaps, for his D.S.O., M.C., and Croix de Guerre—was dismissed from his Army employment.

His name is Major Alan Reid-Kellett. He had previously read, and been impressed by a statement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer which invited anyone who knew of waste in public expenditure to bring it to the Chancellor's notice.

Major Reid-Kellett was employed in militia camp construction. He wrote to the Chancellor alleging that the state of affairs in militia camp construction was disgraceful.

As, according to Major Reid-Kellett, no action was taken, he wrote again "very strongly".

Dismissed

He was dismissed from his post, or, as was stated subsequently, "his employment was terminated".

In the House of Commons on April 9, 1940, Mr. Oliver Stanley, then War Minister, stated that the major's allegations were judged, *on enquiry by the War Office,* to be entirely without foundation. He added that it would not be in the interests of good working that Major Reid-Kellett should be re-employed on work upon which he had made unsubstantiated allegations.

In the Commons a month later Sir E. Grigg, Financial Secretary to the War Office, answered further questions concerning Major Reid-Kellett.

No Wider Inquiry

He said Sir Cyril Entwistle (Conservative Member for Bolton) had been asked to make a preliminary inquiry to consider whether a *prima facie* case could be established for a wider inquiry which the Major wanted.

Sir Cyril Entwistle had decided there was no such case. That answer has had to be sufficient—up to a few days ago.

But now the public is reading the report of another inquiry into the construction of militia camps in 1939. This time the inquiry was held not by the War Office but by a House of Commons Select Committee.

This report severely criticises the methods employed in the construction of the camps, the lack of effective supervision, and the waste of public money involved.

It states that the final cost in almost every case has exceeded the original estimate by a very large sum, sometimes by as much as over four times.

"Prison, Or"

Major Reid-Kellett is not known to the *Sunday Dispatch*. But the *Sunday Dipatch* warmly approves one passage in a letter which he wrote in January last to the present Chancellor of the Exchequer.

He referred to other engineers who, he said, had corroborated his allegations, and added:

"I and my brother engineers contend that we acted in the national interest in reporting the waste and malpractice which was rife.

"If our allegations are true, then the guilty should be punished with the utmost severity. If on the other hand it is proved that we have made unwarranted charges and sown the seeds of distrust in the minds of millions of taxpayers, we should be punished by imprisonment, as being guilty of conduct likely to cause alarm and despondency".

Major Reid-Kellett is entitled to demand that his own case should now be judged against the background of the Select Committee's report.

And the tax-paying public is entitled to demand that you, Sir, should tell them what was the procedure at the War Office inquiry, what was the evidence on which Major Reid-Kellett's charges were refuted and, perhaps more important still, who were the officers who held the inquiry and returned the judgment.

Yours faithfully,
The Editor.

From the *Sunday Dispatch,* 9-3-41

SHIPPING PROFITS

Speculators in shipping company shares cleaned up several million pounds in Throgmorton-street during the past seven days. Five stocks alone went up £1,181,500 in value during the week, and there are 65 dealt in on the Stock Exchange.

The excitement began when the Indo-China Steam Navigation Company which escapes E.P.T. by being registered in Hongkong, paid off four years arrears of preference dividend at one go.

Then the Cairn Line of Steamships paid a dividend of 4 per cent., the first for 10 years. This was followed by the Union Castle's 5 per cent. dividend, the first for 11 years.

During three years of the last war, according to Sir Arthur Salter, now Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Shipping, shipping companies made profits of £262,000,000. Speculators, with last week's figures to guide them, are wondering if that total can be exceeded in this war.

From the *Sunday Express,* 15-5-41

PRIESTLEY OUTBURST

"Labour is Not Helping"

Mr J. B. Priestley, Sunday night Postscript broadcaster, told Labour, "You are being sold", when he spoke at the National Trade Union Club in London yesterday.

"I am walking on a tightrope every Sunday evening", he said.

"I doubt if it will be possible to continue, because you people give me no assistance. It is time you all wakened up. You are being sold." .... He went on: "They did not like my Sunday night broadcasts because I was trying to warn the people that this is no war like the last war and that when it is over there will be no going back to 1939.

Gestapo.

"They did not like my suggestions that this is as much a social revolution as war and that it must be met in that way.

"When I was told my Sunday broadcasts were to end, I knew that this decision was reached by the B.B.C. because a Conservative Central Office deputation—members of the political Gestapo in this country—had insisted that my broadcasts should be stopped.

"Now I am broadcasting regularly again, but between you and me I don't think I'll last much more than another two or three weeks.

"I have had to fight the whole time to put my point of view because I know it is the point of view of the people.

"I have had attacks from the Right, but I have not had the slightest assisstance from the Left, and not one word from the Labour or Trade Union Movements. You are being out-manoeuvred all the time".

From the *Daily Herald*

THE LABOUR REVOLT.

... Suddenly, without warning, the House of Commons is in a state of political ferment. Anything may happen. After 18 months unwavering support of the Churchill Government the Labour Party has kicked over the traces.

... The cause of the trouble is simple yet fundamental. The rank and file of the Labour Party are not opposed to compulsion, but they are not prepared to accept it unless the Government also conscripts property, in the form of national control of transport, mines and war munitions industries. An amendment to this effect has been put down and supported by 36 members of the Party. The revolt is not led by the Ginger Group, but by staid members like Dagger and Parker. They are not making these proposals and a demand for substantial improvement in service

allowances in any doctrinaire spirit, but purely on the grounds that they will further the war effort.

All sorts of rumours are floating about the Lobbies. It is said that Attlee cuts a sorry figure in face of the revolt, and that he bluntly stated the Government had no mandate to conscript property. He was promptly faced with his own statements when he carried the measure to give the Government, at the outset of its career, full powers over all persons and all property. Churchill's speech introducing the motion for increased compulsion fell flat. It was obvious to Members that he failed to recognise the social implications of his proposals and was out of touch with the realities of the production situation . . . In putting up John Anderson at the end of Wednesday's debate to mollify the Labour Party, he made a profound mistake. Anderson simply made the situation worse by stonewalling. Churchill's position is prejudiced by the fact that he is Chairman of the Conservative Party. The Chamberlain Conservatives, discredited and demoralised when their misdeeds came home to roost at the time of Dunkirk, are once more in full control of the machinery of Government. The Labour leaders inside the Government have become the cat's paws of the Tory Party, and are being used to impose conscription upon the men and women of the country without being given any *quid pro quo* in the form of national control of industry. However, the rank and file of the Labour Party in the House are not prepared to allow their captive leaders to destroy the Labour Party at the behest of their Tory colleagues.

From the *New Statesman and Nation,* 6-12-41

THE SAME OLD GANG.

. . . Winston obtained an overwhelming majority in the Commons last week—but really because there is no one to take his place. The nation feels that he is our only possible leader, and that while he remains the will to victory will be there.

But the fact remains that, after two days of talk, in which terrible admissions were made by Oliver Lyttelton in one of the worst displays ever put up by a Minister of the Crown, and after exposures of our many blunders, the same people still remain in charge of things of which, so far, they have made a mess.

The men who ordered the wrong tanks are still there. So are the men who ordered guns smaller, and slower, than those suddenly brought into action by Rommel. So are the men who opposed the dive-bomber. So are the men who allowed ship-yards to be closed down and have not re-opened them, even yet, when our need of tonnage is desperate.

"Look at the facts of our shipping losses", said Lord Woolton to a public who did not know them. Yet the losses in tonnage, bad before, have grown worse.

While, in Egypt, our troops are fighting with a courage worthy of the Army's highest traditions, they still have tanks and guns inferior to those which Rommel possesses.

... What will our workers think? They were urged to expand all their efforts. Almost all of them have slaved unstintingly for months—and now the Minister of Production himself admits they have been making tanks so small that only a midget could get into them!

"Perhaps they were meant for the Japanese?" said an M.P.

It is a national scandal that our soldiers should have been sent into battle with inferior weapons. It is a crime!

Hannen Swaffer in *The People*

TANKS AND DIVE-BOMBERS.

Politicians have never won a battle, but statesmanship can win or lose a war. The Government would do well to ponder this truth, for, though it has scored a technical victory in the debate just ended, even its staunchest defenders would not now pretend that its position is "satisfactory and more than satisfactory". The "No Confidence" motion was rejected by a large majority of the House, but how many Ministers, one wonders, have solid confidence in themselves and some of their colleagues?

... Emerging clearly from the debate as a whole, there are certain facts which cannot be explained away. One of these is that our tanks in Libya were no match for the German Mark IV, though this same Mark IV was used by the enemy in the Spanish Civil War and our authorities knew its specifications!

Again, our tank and anti-tank guns have neither the power nor the range of Rommel's. But we knew about that, and we had

two production years in which to turn out weapons of the right type and calibre.

And we *still* have no more than a small frst consignment of dive bombers! Yet these were ordered as far back as June of 1940 and, no matter how some of our "experts" may disparage them, the Germans have been using these machines with deadly effect ever since the war began.

Other damaging admissions have been made, but perhaps the gravest fact of all is that the Government—or the Premier, or both—has been repeatedly misled into thinking a position satisfactory when, in truth, it was nothing of the sort.

To suggest that Churchill was not misled is to imply that he deliberately misled the country. Nobody has implied, or would imply, that, but what the country wants to know is: "Who led *Winston* up the garden?"

From *The People*, 5-5-42

SECOND FRONT DEMANDED.

... Mr Tanner did not mince his words while attacking the Government and the employers for frustrating the arms speed-up.

He was equally frank with his own followers and urged the Minority to stop slacking and carping criticism.

"We need to open a second front in Europe now", he said, "not only in response to the demand of the Soviet people but in response to the desires of our own people and our armed forces.

"It is well for Mr Churchill to speak of the Russian glory, but the people of this country want to share in the glory that will result over the defeat of Hitlerism this year.

Output is Up.

"Lord Beaverbrook has stated that we have the equipment today for a second front. We know, as the union most vitally concerned, that production has increased and improved most vitally in the last six months, but we still have much to do".

Mr Tanner went on to trounce the profit-making interests which, he said, "are still able to hold the country to ransom". "Blackmail is still part of these chance business methods".

"We know, too, that these companies who are exploiting the national need for private gain and deliberately withholding necessary war production unless they get their price are being shielded by the Government, which has refused to publish their names".

... They now had a say and they had to use it to overcome the muddle and confusion, the overlapping and the red tape. They had now to take their share of responsibility.

"Our task is plain—there must be full co-operation to speed the war effort wherever it is possible, and, where it appears impossible, an organised fight to obtain it in which we shall have the full support of the trade union movement and public opinion".

Mr Tanner supported the admission of women into the Union, saying they could not look on them as intruders into the industry.

From the *News Chronicle,* 16-6-42

DARLAN.

Members of Parliament have heard in secret session the Government's explanation of the collaboration between the American and British armies and Admiral Darlan.

If the Government is convinced that this information must be given in secret, we cannot challenge the decision. Nor do we deny that, in war, military expediency,which saves lives and furthers our cause, can be justified.

But the unsavoury pact with Darlan goes further than either of these contentions. Its implications reach to the very root of the cause for which we fight.

The British people, who have willingly borne the heavy burden of war, are entitled to know what is being done in their name. Their Prime Minister joined with Premier Stalin in a declaration describing our joint struggle as a "just war of liberation". For the first time since that declaration was signed British and American troops have landed in a country oppressed by a Fascist régime little removed from the system of Nazi Germany itself.

There has been no liberation. The infamous anti-Semitic laws which Vichy France copied from her Nazi overlords still operate in French North Africa. Frenchmen who rallied to our cause in the darkest hour are still in Darlan's gaols. Internment camps

still hold thousands of Spanish Republican soldiers and men of the International Brigade who fought in the deathless war of the Spanish Republic against the same Fascist enemies.

The Fascists of Vichy are flocking to fill key posts in Darlan's Government. Simultaneously, Franco, while benefiting to the full from his neutral status, openly applauds the Nazi régime and calls for victory of German arms.

Hitler has by no means abandoned the struggle for North Africa. He looks to his friends to save him. Among them are Darlan and Franco.

Throughout Europe the common people struggling for freedom in the Nazi prison house are bewildered and disheartened. The people of Britain, who will shirk no sacrifice in the sacred cause to which they have devoted themselves, are alarmed and dismayed.

From *Reynold's News*, 13-2-46

GERMANS OR NAZIS?

I consider it my duty as a political journalist and a Liberal to protest against the words used by Lord Halifax when he said the other day that "a hideous philosophy... has been imposed upon a great people (the Germans)"...

I might add that this statement of Lord Halifax is on a par with the opinion of which he delivered himself about a year and a half ago. He declared, after a visit to Germany, that Marshal Hermann Goering possessed "a high human quality". As it is Marshal Hermann Goering who organised the Nazi Secret Police and the system of concentration camps; who blandly announced the shooting of Frau von Schleicher for resisting the murder of her husband, an ex-Chancellor; who, it is universally believed, plotted the Reichstag Fire and certainly carried out the bloody "purge" of 1934; who complained to Sir Nevile Henderson that the main trouble with the British was that "they had become de-brutalised"; who boasted, long before this war, of the way in which he would conduct it ("At one order, Hell will be turned loose on the enemy; with one quick blow destructiontion will be complete"), it seems to me that Lord Halifax's powers of psychological analysis are somewhat limited.

From a letter by Odette Keun, in the *News Chronicle*

"I wonder if the Home Secretary has been in consultation with the Service Ministers to establish how many decent Englishmen have been unnecessarily brought to their deaths by the activities of the Honourable and Gallant Member for Peebles?"

That was the question Mr D. N. Pritt, K. C., M. P., put to Mr Herbert Morrison when he told the House of Commons that he was going to release Captain Ramsay. It was no rhetorical question.

Just three weeks before, Mr Joseph Kennedy, former United States Ambassador to Britain, in a statement made in New York, had disclosed just what had been the activities of a man who was probably the most dangerous spy of the whole war—and who was befriended and assisted by Captain Ramsay.

The former Ambassador's statement doubly underlined the gravity of the statements made about Captain Ramsay by Mr Justice Atkinson in the course of the libel action which Captain Ramsay brought against the *New York Times* in 1941.

For when Mr Justice Atkinson spoke of the Ramsay-Kent association, he possibly did not know what Mr Kennedy has since revealed.

"As code clerk in the American Embassy", said Mr Kennedy, "Kent had an unbreakable code book at his elbow. That is what did the terrible damage.

"In the period after England declared war, Mr Churchill was very complete in revealing to me, and through me to Mr Roosevelt, England's unpreparedness.

"Mr Churchill and other high British officials gave me the whole picture—figures on Britain's land, sea, and air forces, disposition of British forces everywhere, England's home inventory of war material, her prospective war production, and the fundamentals of Great Britain's strategic plans... We had to assume that week by week this same data went to Berlin by way of Kent, who decoded each message as it went through his hands...

"Kent used the Italian Embassy to reach Berlin. For the most part he passed our secrets out of England in the diplomatic pouch".

Captain Maule Ramsay, M. P. was awarded one farthing damages in the libel proceedings. Below are extracts from the judgment.

"... At the end of 1938 or the beginning of 1939, Captain Ramsay formed what he called a club, but what seems more properly described as a secret society, known as the Right Club ... There was not a word in writing, there was nothing to disclose its real purpose...

"The only thing that existed was a book of members, with a lock upon it, and that book contained the names of some 200 men and about 150 women. Among the earliest members was Joyce, known, I suppose, as 'Lord Haw-haw'.

"There was the name of the convict Anna Wolkoff, of the convict Tyler Kent, and of the convict Hiscocks.

"When first asked about some of these people, 'Then it is said that both William Joyce and Anna Wolkoff were members of the Right Club?' his answer was 'Yes, latterly, just for a short time. They were at the end'.

"The truth was that Joyce's name is the eighth in a list of 200, and he must have been among the very earliest members. Wolkoff's name comes 56th out of a list of some 100 or 150 names of the women, and later on, in cross-examination, he admitted that she was one of the earliest batches of members...

"Early in 1940 (the Judge went on) Anna Wolkoff met an American named Tyler Kent. He was a decoding confidential clerk in the employ of the American Embassy. Then she found that he was abstracting—to use a word which will not perhaps offend Captain Ramsay—confidential documents from the Embassy, and that he was ready to disclose them.

"... When Anna Wolkoff found out what he was doing, she brought Kent to dine with Ramsay. To her Ramsay was 'Jock', to him she was 'Anna'. Why did she bring Kent to Ramsay? Dared she, would she, have brought him to anybody to whom she could not have brought him safely?

"Within a week or two, he tells me that he was visiting Tyler Kent's flat in order to read highly confidential documents which he was quite sure had been wrongfully taken without authority from the American Embassy.

"He said there were four or five such visits, but of course he

saw Tyler Kent more often than that. Straight away Tyler Kent became a member of the Right Club. Kent was arrested on May 20, Ramsay on May 23 . . .

"In April, during this very time, Norway had been invaded, we were fighting there, and there were stirring events taking place. While those events were going on, Ramsay was keeping company with this treacherous thief and absorbing confidential documents, and I have to determine what the real purpose of all that was, whether it was not his real object to see if he could find out anything which would help him to 'queer the pitch' of those who were fighting for victory.

"Two or three weeks before the 20th May he deposited this locked book in a locker in Tyler Kents rooms for safety (he said) against burglars. It came out later that the attraction was the idea that those rooms would have the benefit of diplomatic privilege. I have yet to learn that burglars pay any respect to diplomatic privilege, but the Police, of course, do.

"I am convinced, as I believe any jury would be convinced, that his claim to loyalty is false.

"He, on behalf of this so-called club, enrolled . . . the thief Tyler Kent, as a reward, I suppose, for what he was doing, and enrolled him knowing that confidential documents had been wickedly stolen from the American Embassy; he took advantage of that crime, and I am satisfied that he took advantage of it in his endeavour to discover something which he could use to further his views.

"He knew perfectly well that anything which was of value to our Government would have been already in their possession. He was seeking something which he knew neither our Government nor the American Embassy would willingly have disclosed, something which would help him in his efforts to convert a people intent on victory to appeasement and the preservation of Nazism.

"I do not know what, exactly, 'Fifth Column' means, and I do not know that it has any precise definition, but I am convinced that Hitler would call him friend. He was disloyal in heart and soul to our King and Government and our people, a people fighting, and dying, not for appeasement, not for the preservation of Nazidom, but for victory and its destruction.

"He was ready to further, and did further, and would have continued to further, propaganda of the German type. There was nothing constructive about his efforts; they were purely destructive, intended to be destructive, of that will to win which is essential above all else for victory.

I believe that any jury would find ... that the expression 'Fifth Column' applied to him beyond question".

From the *Daily Worker*, 16-9-44

WASTE OF MAN-POWER

While workers were wanted for production for trade, 1,790,000 workers were making munitions of war.

"These figures", he (Mr Oliver Lyttelton) said, "are a scandal. It is the outstanding monument in this story of waste of man-power".

No doubt we were still making jungle-equipment for the war in Burma.

By June 1946, one out of every seven of our working population would be engaged either in the Armed Forces or making munitions. This was a very serious figure.

"I hope democracy will be able to stop preparing for the last war. Stuff is being turned out as munitions which is as obsolete as the blunderbuss the moment it leaves the production lines.

"I have been told that the Stirling aircraft, which has been obsolete on service for some years, has been quite recently produced and scrapped as soon as it left the production plant."

From the *News-Chronicle*, 28-2-46

THE NEW MUNICH

That Mr R. T. Paget, Labour M.P. for Northampton, could, after all the evidence of the Nuremberg trial, call Nazism simply "a matter of political opinion", and add, "my conception of democracy is liberty—liberty to disagree and liberty to be a Nazi", shows how far we have come from the days when the three great Allies pledged themselves at Yalta to extirpate Nazism and Fascism.

It is against this orgy of sentimentalising, from both Conservative and Labour benches, over the fate of the local and national

leaders of Nazism that the Government's moves toward "integration" of the British and American occupied zones of Germany must be judged.

From the *Daily Worker*

BOYCOTT OF TRAITORS.

The Jersey Loyalists, only effective resistance movement during the German occupation, have just met for the last time. They are dissolving their underground organisation.

One year has elapsed since their island was liberated. Yet men and women who rollicked with Heinrich Wolff, Gestapo chief, and his men, go unpunished.

Only "Treason or Treachery" charges will be taken up by the competent authorities, is the reply given by the Director of Public Prosecutions in answering a petition by the Jersey Loyalists specifying charges of transporting arms and ammunition for the German troops; acting as informers; consorting and cohabiting with the German forces; engaging voluntarily in work for the enemy, and entertaining in their own homes officers and men of the enemy occupation troops.

The islanders have devised their own punishment—social ostracism. No longer are those known to have helped the Germans invited to any social function. Traders, and neighbours, boycott them.

From the *Evening Standard,* 30-5-46

MOSLEY.

Extracts from letters by Count Grandi, former Italian Ambassador in London, alleging that Sir Oswald Mosley, when associated with the British Union of Fascists, received £60,000 a year from Mussolini, were read in the Commons last night.

The matter was raised by Lt.-Col. G.M. Sharp (Lab., Spen Valley), who asked the Home Secretary, Mr Chuter Ede, if he would make a statement on the evidence found in documents captured from the enemy that a foreign Government was subsidising the British Union of Fascists.

Mr. Ede then read from letters by Count Grandi which had

been found among Mussolini's papers. He said the relevant portion of one letter, dated January 30, 1934, was:

"Mosley has asked me to express his gratitude to you for sending to him a considerable sum which I have arranged to hand over to him today. He also spoke with gratitude of the simple generosity with which you accepted, as a future commitment, his request for material aid".

Mr Ede read from another letter dated March 1, 1935:

"At the moment you are spending a great deal of money in England. At any rate until a few days ago you were giving Mosley about 3,500,000 lire a year in monthly instalments of about 300,000 lire.

"All this money, believe me, Duce, even on the best supposition, simply goes down the drain. (Laughter).

"At the present time we should concentrate our efforts in a different direction. With a tenth of the money that you give Mosley I feel I could produce results ten times better".

Mr. H. Hynd (Labour, Hackney Central) asked what action Mr Ede proposed to take "in view of this very startling exposure".

Mr. Ede replied that unfortunately it was not illegal for Sir Oswald Mosley to receive these sums of money.

The Home Secretary did not reply when Mr. W. N. Warbey (Lab. Luton) invited him to say that there was evidence here of traitorous activity.

Mr Gallacher (Com. Fife West) suggested that Mr Ede should follow up his statement by publishing the names in the book which was found in Capt. Ramsay's flat. Mr Ede replied that he did not think there was much connection between the two, and that he had no evidence that Capt. Ramsay received any money from outside this country.

E. Clephan Palmer in the *News-Chronicle,* 7-6-46

FACTS ABOUT MALAYA.

What is going on in Malaya? Most British people know there are tin and rubber there. But what of the people?

The Malay peninsula, plus Singapore, has a land area approximately equal to England but a total population of only five and a half million. Before the war we controlled it in part directly and in part indirectly.

... Came the war in the Pacific, and the Japanese overran Malaya. The Malayan Communist Party at once set about organising a Resistance Movement. At first those who joined were mainly Chinese, for China and Japan had been at war for many years, and they were more aware of the Fascist nature of Japanese aggression than either the Indians or the Malays.

As time went on, however, they were joined by volunteers from the other races. So came into being the Malayan People's anti-Japanese Army (M.P.A.-J.A.) whose heroic deeds can only be appreciated by those who understand something of the difficulties under which guerilla warfare has to be conducted.

The end of the war came suddenly, and for a brief period the M.P.A.-J.A. came into its own and was officially in control of Malaya.

Then the British troops arrived and were given a most generous welcome, for the peoples of Malaya knew of the anti-Fascist struggle in Europe and believed that democracy had triumphed.

They believed also that the declarations of the Atlantic Charter and of the United Nations at San Francisco would apply equally to them who had sacrificed so much in the world struggle. They are now being rapidly disillusioned.

Old Laws Remain

For seven months Malaya was kept under a British Military Administration (B.M.A.) and, as month succeeded month, relations between the people and the administration grew steadily worse.

At first the B.M.A. recognised the leading role played by the Communist Party and invited representatives to sit on its Advisory Council. It also permitted the establishment of trade unions, but when those trade unions began to function the attitude changed.

There was an acute shortage of consumer goods (including food), together with very high prices and very low wages. For some time the workers bore it patiently, but it was impossible for them to live on the wages they received and they began to go on strike.

Unfortunately for them the authorities had two alternative sources of labour to call on—Japanese prisoners and British Ser-

vices personnel. The strikers organised a demonstration; it was broken up forcibly and several workers injured.

Then began a whole series of raids, arrests and imprisonments, directed chiefly against ex-M.P.A.-J.A. men.

The people were reminded that the old laws had never been repealed, that political parties were still really illegal, that the Sedition Ordinance made criticism of their rulers dangerous, that Banishment Warrants could still be invoked . . .

Puzzled, but not yet without hope, they awaited the return of the civil Government. Its return was marked by the announcement of the deportation of 10 Labour leaders.

Responsibility

Now, what happens in Malaya is the responsibility of the British Crown, that is to say, of you. Administrative changes are being discussed, one hears of a "Malayan Union", and of a "Malayan citizenship", but there is no mention of democratic rights, and executive councils are still to be nominated and not elected.

Must we really make it necessary for the Malayans to fight us before they win through to freedom?

From the *News Chronicle,* 13-5-46

II

VICTORIOUS AMERICA

AMERICA "A FOREIGN NATION".

...Sir Cecil Spring-Rice, British Ambassador in Washington, writing to Lord Newton in 1916, said:—

"We have no right to count on the goodwill of Americans. They could count on ours, but we cannot count on theirs. The reason is that we wrongly suppose that because they talk our language they are Anglo-Saxon people. As a matter of fact they are a foreign nation, or, rather, several foreign nations. None of these nations is particularly friendly to us, and those of them who are of our race have very particular reasons for disliking us. It would be wise to bear this in mind and to treat the American people not as cousins, still less as brothers, an attribution which they would greatly resent, but as English-speaking foreigners, some of whom make most agreeable companions and talk a most sympathetic language".—*The Letters and Friendships of Sir Cecil Spring-Rice,* page 320, Vol. I. (Constable, London 1929).

U.S. ANTI-TRUST LAWS.
Big Chemical Firms Indicted.

Washington, January 6.

Imperial Chemical Industries of Great Britain and the American Dupont de Nemours Company are two of several defendants named in an anti-trust suit which was filed in the Court in New York to-day.

The suit will be of a civil character and the defendants will be accused of violating the Sherman anti-Trust Act, and it will ask an American Court to break up an alleged international combination. It is alleged that the two companies made a cartel agreement under which they divided up the world markets in certain chemical products. Other defendants are Mr Lamont Dupont, chairman of the Dupont de Nemours board; Mr Walter S. Carpenter,

president of the Remington Arms Company, and Mr Charles K. Davis of that company; Lord McGowan and Lord Melchett, of I.C.I., and I.C.I. of New York, Limited, the American agent of I.C.I.

The Attorney-General, Mr Francis Biddle, announced this morning that the Government's complaint filed to-day involved a charge of continuous conspiracy since before 1920. He said it alleged that this conspiracy affected thousands of products, ranging from explosives to paints and varnishes. Mr Biddle alleged that the defendant firms reached agreements providing that Dupont and I.C.I. would not compete with each other; that competition between Remington and I.C.I. should be eliminated; that Dupont and I.C.I. should be assigned certain exclusive marketing areas; and that in non-exclusive territory they should sell products in accordance with agreed quotas and prices.

It is further alleged that the agreements provided that Dupont and I.C.I. should exchange exclusive licenses under all patents and processes for their exclusive territories; that they should attempt to obtain benefits agreed upon with third parties for allocating world markets and acquiring technological developments; and that they co-operated to eliminate other competition throughout the world. Another assertion is that I.C.I., having a virtual monopoly of the British chemical industry, was formed by the merger of four major British companies with the intention of monopolising the industry in the United Kingdom and of joining with other world chemical manufacturers, including the German *Farbenindustrie* and Dupont, to safeguard its position.

From *The Times*, Jan. 7, 1944

BRETTON WOODS.

In the years that followed the return to gold, denunciation of the Gold Standard, of the Conservative Government which put us back on it, and of Churchill, who was the instrument of that policy, formed part of the stock-in-trade of every Socialist speaker in Britain. If anyone had said then that, within 20 years, a Socialist Government with a clear majority in Parliament would put us "back on gold", he would have been characterised as a blazing lunatic.

But the Great Debate is over! Within ten days of agreement

being reached in Washington we have been harried, hustled and bustled "back to gold". Socialism has sold out to American capitalism. A heavy blow has been struck at the bonds which unite the Commonwealth. Agriculture in Britain has been betrayed. And Britain passes into 50 years of bondage.

Three issues arise. *Should we have done it?*—the moral issue. *Need we have done it?*—the practical issue. *Why have we done it?*—the political issue. I will consider all three.

But first let me dispose of the denial that we have returned to gold. As to that I will content myself with quoting Mr Ernest Bevin as witness.

"Neither Anderson, nor Keynes, nor Halifax"—declared he quite recently—"will ever convince me that Bretton Woods does not mean the return to gold".

Nor me, little one, nor me! For a Gold Standard with a 10 per cent margin of flexibility is still a Gold Standard, just as a bill with a margin of discount is still a bill, as the creditor knows to his cost.

Should we have done it? No! For what is morally wrong is never politically expedient. And this thing is morally wrong throughout.

It is morally wrong that, having spent our resources more completely than any other nation in the defence of the world, we should be required, and by an ally, not only to pay interest on what we borrow to rehabilitate our economy, but to accept limitations on our freedom, as an Empire and Commonwealth, to live our collective life in our own way.

I wonder what the Americans would have said if we had made the divulging to them of the knowledge of our scientists of the atom bomb dependent on their breaking up of the 48 States of the Union into separate fiscal units?

It is morally wrong that we should ever submit to "vile pressure wrongfully applied". It is morally wrong that we should allow poverty to drive us to desert our poor friends in order to make an accommodation with the rich. It is morally wrong that the productive processes of mankind should be dependent upon, or conditioned by, the "dull, base metal" of gold. *We should not have done it!*

Need we have done it? No. The Government does not like

the prospect of being without the loan. Nor does it like the conditions of the loan. What then? If I don't like Elizabeth, must I therefore marry Mary, whom I like but little better? Surely not! There is another factor in the equation. It is *time*. Bide a wee. Before long Jane will turn up.

We may need a loan to help us to get straight again. *But the Americans need our debt more than we need their credit.* One half of the productive power of the world is centred in the States. They cannot themselves consume what they produce. They must export their surplus. For if they do not their goods will rot in warehouses and dumps. And, what is more, their own internal economy will break down.

Within a year they would have been constrained, not for love of us, but for self-preservation's sake, to press on us, free of interest and free of conditions, the loan we now accept on such onerous terms. We need not have done it!

Why have we done it? To save our people from starvation, or at least considerable hardship? Does the Government believe that the Dominions would allow us to starve? Do they believe that *the American people themselves*—as distinct from their politicians and financiers— would allow us to starve?

And if we are not going to starve, can we not, at a pinch, do without American tobacco, American films, and the rest? If this is the motive, it is a weak and unworthy one, which profoundly misconceives the spirit of the British people. Is there another? I think there is.

It is fear on the part of Labour that the Tories would exploit, for their own political purposes, the continued austerity which the loss of the loan would entail. And that is base. When a man or a Government refrains from doing the right thing for fear that his enemies will exploit it, that man or Government is morally defeated already, with the only defeat that finally matters, defeat within the sould itself.

W. J. Brown in the *Evening Standard,* 14-12-'45

THE GREAT SELL-OUT

The present loan is a loan—a line of credit—from a Government to a Government, but the Bretton Woods Agreement, to which we are now committed, whether we get the loan or not, makes it

quite clear what is to be the normal future form of international lending. The Final Act of Bretton Woods is an unashamedly capitalist document. Behind the International Fund is the International Bank, and the purpose of the Bank, to quote the words of the Final Act, is "to promote private foreign investment by means of guarantees or participations in loans and other investments made by private investors".

The future policy of what we may now call the ex-Socialist Government will then be a policy dependent for its finance and for its approval upon foreign private capital.

It is true that political activity by the Bank is in so many words forbidden but Mr Dalton must unsay the whole traditional apologetics of Socialism if he is going to ask us seriously to believe that it is possible to wield overwhelming financial power without having political influence at the same time.

Nationalisation under such a system will not mean "taking over for the nation". This is now but a packers' Government, tying up the bundles so as to hand them over more conveniently to its foreign financial masters.

That is the "stream-lined legislation" that Mr Dalton has put through—the only stream-lined legislation that he is ever likely to put through. Like an inverted Julius Caesar, he came, he saw, and he capitulated.

The Labour Government has extruded the domestic capitalist, whom we can tax and can control, and has put in his place the foreign capitalist whom we cannot tax and cannot control.

We used to be told at the General Election that up till then Labour had only been in office. Let us wait and see what would happen when Labour was in power. We have waited and we have seen. When Labour was only in office it was nearly two years before it sold out on its own programme. When it is in power, it only takes four months.

Christopher Hollis, M.P. for Devizes
in the *Evening Standard*, 7-1-46.

FOOD CRISIS AND DOLLAR IMPERIALISM.

(Extract from a broadcast by James Guthrie, B. Sc. on 17th February 1946, as reported in the *New Times*, Australia.) The food situation in Great Britain is serious, and everything we can do as a community or as individuals should be done immediately.

The British people put vastly more into the war in proportion to their numbers than any other nation; this was done at a colossal cost in treasure and human effort. The people of Great Britain are very tired, very hungry, and very bitter at the way they have been treated. For the second time they have been treated as a defeated nation by the United States, with the British Dominions looking on helpless, or, shall I say, paralysed by their Governments.

To continue fighting the National Socialist armies of Germany pending the time the other nations had their minds made up for them, and also to conserve shipping, even old men and women and women with children had to work long hours in the factories while their houses were being bombed. Surely after six years these folk are now entitled to a decent meal?

Dollar diplomacy.

America forced Great Britain to give up all her overseas dollar assets, and probably, if the last war is any guide, a great deal of valuable assets in England itself, and now, having got hold of those valuable assets from a nation in its hour of peril, and having got hold of all the gold, and having watched Great Britain turn her country upside-down and pour her blood and treasure and her great genius into the common pool—now, America withholds food from an ally because she has no dollars! Where is England to get these dollars?

America is using the food situation to force her own terms on the British Empire and other countries, but especially on the British Empire. Her terms are embodied in the terms of the Bretton Woods Agreement, which is probably one of the most dangerous documents ever signed. The British Labour Government signed that document under pressure, no doubt, but in so doing it signed its own death warrant.

The Australian Labour Government cannot be starved into sub-

mission, but it will probably sign, too, unless the people protest loudly enough. Judging from the ease with which the State Premiers sold their States for a promise, the Federal Labour Government should prove chicken-feed for the Big Boys of New York.

Uncle Sam Shylock.

If America carries on with her methods of intimidating her gallant ally and demanding her pound of flesh nearest the heart, she will become one of the most despised nations in the world.

I have no doubt many informed Americans are more disgusted with the whole sordid business than are the people in England; but they are in the minority. Judging by conversations with American officers, they seem to be doped in their schools in the same way as the Germans were doped; and, reading their popular history books, one can see why they remain so ignorant of the world they live in.

The Americans have probably as little say in the government of their country as Australians have—which is practically none. The United States is in the control of a gang, mostly German in origin, and largely the same gang which used Germany to destroy the world peace—and, incidentally, destroyed Germany. The Americans should read the writing on the wall and wake up before the same gang uses her and her wealth to destroy the world and herself. This gang, of which Bernard Baruch is the spokesman, is probably the present guardian of the Atomic Bomb.

Any listeners who have friends in America or have access to American newspapers or who buy American newspapers should write to America and say what they think of America's action towards England. A little pressure here and there may work wonders.

Sinister Food Control.

Great Britain, in spite of the wishful thinking of Professor Laski and his Leftist friends, is still a powerful nation; she has been sold by her politicians, but she will come back with the added strength gained from the knowledge of who are her enemies. But it is still a terrible thing to realise that such a powerful and resourceful nation can be forced to submit after a victorious war to sell her heritage and her freedom in order to get a square meal for her people.

This control of food is a terrible thing, and it is being used as a very powerful instrument of coercion. This control of food by a few men becomes more terrible when you consider that the whole position must have been known long before the end of this war, and there is not the slightest doubt that the cutting off of England's food supply has been done for a very definite reason. The position becomes more sinister when you realise that the Federal Labour Government has paid the West Australian wheat-farmers more than one million pounds to *not* grow wheat; that in the Argentine mountains of wheat have been burned; that the Australian Government has said that it is short of shipping, yet America has more "Liberty Ships" than she knows what to do with.

One wonders, too, what has happened to the mountains of food that were prepared for Australian and American armies. According to the Government, the war stopped a year before it was expected to stop: where, then, is all the food that was prepared for that year of war?"

Printed in *Reality*, May 24, 1946

MR CHURCHILL'S RESPONSIBILITY

... The position we are in now, short of food, loaded with debt, and committed to all the dirty jobs, was all agreed to by him (Churchill) and his colleagues and behind the back of Parliament and the country. It is plain that our "splendid" Prime Minister sold the English—their sacrifices, their sweat, tears and inventions—very cheaply indeed. If we were really awake in this country to our national interest, the people would insist on an enquiry into these secret agreements and how they came to be made. But though the Labour Ministers of the present Government do not like Mr Churchill, they would not stand for any enquiry into his stewardship. Why? Because, if such a precedent was set up, later on a similar enquiry might be made into their own.

Anybody might think we are ruled by a secret society, mightn't they? Well, the answer is, we are.

From *Reality*, May 24, 1946

BRITISH INVENTIONS HANDED TO AMERICA.

Under an agreement just signed in Washington, Britain loses all chances of gaining any dollars on the many British inventions handed over to America during the war.

The agreement was signed by Lord Halifax, British Ambassador in Washington, and Mr Dean Acheson, U.S. Under-Secretary of State on March 27.

It is called "an agreement concerning the inter-change of patent rights and information". Behind its highly technical language lies the following pact:

The British Government will settle all claims made by British inventors for royalties due in the war on British patents used by America. All claims made direct to the U.S. Government by British inventors will automatically be referred back to Britain.

Pact in 1942.

Likewise, the U.S. Government will settle all claims by Americans against the British Government for the wartime use of their inventions.

An agreement about patents was signed originally on August 24, 1942. The new pact is the direct outcome of the earlier one, except that the 1942 agreement did not include an undertaking that the U.S. Government would settle their countrymen's claims against Britain.

It is generally accepted on both sides of the Atlantic that far more British inventions have been used by America, than vice-versa.

An expert on international patent rights told me to-day that hardly any American inventions had been used over here, but British contributions number more than 3000.

They include: Radar, jet propulsion, rocket projectiles, the Bailey bridge, the Mulberry harbour, penicillin, the major share in atom bomb research, and various kinds of landing craft used for invasions.

President Roosevelt, in a report on Lease-Lend operations to Congress in March 1944, said:

"These figures do not represent the value of the vital information of military equipment freely turned over to us by the British, who had over two years of battle experience before we entered the war".

Their Worth.

A conservative estimate of the value in royalties of British inventions would be not less than £100,000,000. Under this agreement the equivalent amount in dollars will never cross the Atlantic.

From the *Evening Standard*

U.S. TROOPS BACK AGAIN.

Thousands of American troops are soon to be stationed in the Warminster district of Wiltshire.

It is understood that they will be part of the new intake of the U.S. Army and that they will undergo intensive military training on Salisbury plain and then form part of the Occupation Army in Germany.

The Americans—at least 6,000 are expected—will live in camps now empty. They may take over a part of the School of Infantry at Warminster.

Local councils tried to take over the empty camps for housing but were told they were needed for a long-term military programme.

From the *News Chronicle*, 8-4-46

"LOAN REFUSAL WOULD HARM U.S."

Senator Arthur Vandenberg last night urged approval of the U.S. loan to Britain because refusal might jeopardise U.S. leadership in world affairs, the cause of free enterprise and the "American way of life".

"If we do not lead, some other great and powerful nation will capitalise our failure and we shall pay the price of our default", he said.

"If Britain were forced, either by the U.S., or her own minorities to 'join the trend to State trading', they might be confronted by bloc arrangements and trade alliances".

From the *Daily Worker*, 27-4-46

MEN OR BEASTS?

... According to the White Paper recently issued on the food shortage, the world deficit of wheat in the first half of this year, is eight million tons. The availability or otherwise of those eight million tons spells the difference between life and death in half a dozen countries.

At the same time, it is estimated that North America will feed 114 million tons of grain to her livestock in 1945-46, including about nine million tons of wheat. This is just over double the amount of wheat which America fed to livestock in an average pre-war year. Surely there is a way here to reduce the wheat deficit?

It may be argued that what America does with her wheat is America's business—but the fate of millions turns on its use. The people of the United States justly enjoy a reputation for responding generously to great human need. They would probably never forgive themselves if they realised, too late, that they had pampered their beasts when millions of men were starving.

From the *News Chronicle*, 9-5-46

U.S. SHIPS HOLD-UP HAS TURNED DANUBE INTO FROZEN RIVER.

Bratislava, Slovakia, Saturday.

For more than an hour to-day I watched the swift current of the blue Danube run past this Slovakian capital. All that time not a single craft of any kind came up or down this once great waterway of Central and South-East Europe.

... There is no traffic because when the Germans retreated they took most of the Danubian shipping into the Austrian part of the river, now occupied by the Americans, and the Americans refuse to release the vessels, even to allies like Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia.

It is estimated that 20,000 tons of Czech shipping is held up in the U.S. zone. The reasons for this make a grim commentary on the disagreement between the Powers. They have been frankly stated this week by a U.S. State Department official at U.S. Army European headquarters at Frankfurt:—

"We have the boats, they have the river, and the boats can be traded for concessions".

The U.S. demands international control of the whole river down towards the Black Sea, with American participation, because it wants free trade in Central and South-Eastern Europe and intends to check the tendency toward State control of trade—as Dewey frankly declared a few days ago to be his reason for supporting loans to Europe.

Czechoslovakia has just voted in free elections for a programme supported by all parties, which includes not only nationalisation, but its logical corollary, State trading.

Nevertheless, it now seems that the U.S., which is boycotting other Danubian countries because they have had no democratic elections, is now prepared to blockade Czechoslovak shipping, even though the Czechs have democratically chosen State planning and trading.

British Films.

American film monopolists have already refused to sell Hollywood films to the Czechs because they object to trading with nationalised enterprise.

The Czechs say they want only the best American films, not rubbish, but the Hollywood magnates say they insist on freedom to sell direct to the cinemas anything they like.

Lest this be interpreted as a Czech attempt to extend the so-called "iron curtain" to prevent the spread of Western ideas, let me add that British films are in vogue here.

David Raymond in *Reynolds News*, 2-6-46

UNRRA BARTERS RELIEF FOR POLITICAL CONCESSIONS.

The former head of the Unrra mission in the Ukraine, Mr MacDuffy, has explained his recent resignation.

He resigned because he did not desire to become a party to the breach of faith constituted by the amendment adopted by the House of Representatives on the Unrra appropriation, which means an actual cessation of Unrra deliveries to the Ukraine and White Russia.

"I want to be dissociated from any such broken covenant and bartering of relief for political concessions", he said in a message to Mr La Guardia, Director-General of Unrra.

Mr MacDuffy pointed out that the U.S. undertook to contribute a certain sum to the Unrra fund, and, therefore, Unrra agreed to provide the Ukraine with 189,000,000 dollars' worth of supplies and White Russia with 61,000,000 dollars' worth by June 30, 1946—less than half of that had been shipped.

"The two Soviet Republics", Mr MacDuffy's message went on, "carried out their part of the agreement to the last iota.

"The Unrra programme is but a drop in the ocean compared

with what is needed . . . The only thing that can even be compared with the devastation in the Ukraine is Warsaw and some bombed-out German cities".

From the *Daily Worker*

THAT "AMERICAN CENTURY"

Washington, Sunday

. . . Other nations may be starving, but America is almost the only country where people can feed and clothe themselves without producing coupons. They need not resort to black markets for a single necessity, although they do. And few luxuries are unobtainable.

But discontent is rising and the country is in a turmoil . . . Strike follows strike. Politicians wrangle interminably, while pressure groups move in for big profits for the few at the expense of the many.

The bright picture of "An American Century" is fading. Victory found the Americans without a policy and no one to unite them in peace as in war.

They have failed to give leadership to the world or to solve their own internal problems. Byrnes and other spokesmen are sniped at incessantly while international conferences are in progress, and even before the ink is dry on agreements, opponents threaten to tear them up.

That alone is sufficient to wreck American prestige. It is a sure way of continuing the world chaos when other nations cannot rely on the carrying out of pledges given after months of negotiation.

Ratifying legislation can be rejected simply because it is good electioneering. Like one British leader of a past era, American politicians are prepared to "Damn the Consequences", even if their countrymen are hit with a boomerang.

There are some American politicians who give lip-service to their country—and what jingoistic speeches they can make! But they do little to promote its well-being.

They often adopt the tactics of the gangster and the vernacular of the bully. They would rather be tough than just—even with their own countrymen.

Indeed, half of America's present troubles can be traced to Con-

gressmen devoting more thought to getting re-elected next autumn than to solving the problems that are the aftermath of war.

Arthur Webb in the *Daily Herald*

SPOTLIGHT IN HOLLYWOOD

"A few days ago a friend of mine, fresh from Hollywood, said to me: 'When I left, they were getting ready to give Cummings the works'. I replied: 'Surely he's too shrewd a journalist to be taken in by that old-fashioned ballyhoo?' But I was wrong.

"Mr Cummings's article about the kind-hearted film moguls welcoming British competition and stretching out the glad hand of reciprocity is as 'phoney' as the average Hollywood film.

"These shrewd, hard, money-crazy business men are just waiting to do to the British film industry what they have recently done to the French in a forced loan agreement. There, the Americans have been given a free hand to swamp the local product out with reduced French quotas and no limit to dumping."

Harry Watt

"I have followed Mr Cummings round Hollywood with great interest, but cannot agree with his estimate of Hollywood's 'sense of responsibility' to the public in its codes of censorship which 'govern the morals and standards of motion pictures'.

"Much more damage is done to public morals by their acceptance of the false values which lie implicit in many films than by much that may be banned because it is obviously indecent."

Claire D. Watson

From letters in the *News Chronicle,* 21-6-46

HOLLYWOOD AND THE FRENCH FILMWORKER.

. . . From French film people—producers, artists, businessmen and workers—comes a lot of indignant comment about the condition attached to the American loan for France, under which French films have been guaranteed only one-third of the performance time in French cinemas. A few days ago the author of the loan agreement M. Léon Blum's called a Press conference to explain the effect of the loan on the French film industry.

He argued that under the new agreement the French film industry would get a better deal than before the war. True, French films get only 30 per cent. of the time. But the Italian films in Italy get only 17 per cent. Even the British film industry is worse off than the French—is has only 22 per cent of the time guaranteed in British cinemas.

But M. Blum's argument has failed to assuage the indignation of French film workers. They suspect that Hollywood—with the free-trade banner unfurled in its hands—is out to conquer the cinemas of the world and to corrupt the taste of the French public.

One speaker at a protest meeting stated: "What is at stake here is the very survival of dramatic art. The taste of our public is going to deteriorate disastrously and irretrievably. Our stomachs, reared on the wines of Bourgogne and Bordeaux, will have to accustom themselves to coca-cola". A French friend of mine comments, somewhat over-dramatically: "When we apply for the next American loan, we shall be asked to squeeze out Balzac from our school-books and to leave a guaranteed 50 or 60 per cent. of school-time for comic strips. Long live free trade!"

From *The Observer*, 30-6-46

DUMPED AMERICAN LITERATURE.

To the Editor, *The Star* (Johannesburg, South Africa).

Sir,—In The Star of June 3rd there appeared a forceful criticism on American "remainders" or the problem of "dumped periodical literature" by F. L. Davey. I agree wholeheartedly with the writer. This danger of cultural penetration by America and American products is far more insidious than would appear on the surface. Already we wear American stockings and clothes, use their lipsticks and beauty aids and eat their cereals and canned foods. We go to the bioscope and see American films which contain nine-tenths propaganda for American looks, books and business. Our new towns are planned on their lines, we prefer their cars, refrigerators and electric stoves to any other; our children chew their gum and read their comics. We have lost our own colloquialisms and have replaced them with "Okay", "Lady", "O Boy" and "You're telling me." This last one has even been translated into Africaans: "Jy vertel my!"

Had America chosen to invade South Africa in the manner chosen by Italy and Germany we would have resisted to the last man woman and child but we seem quite content to allow her to invade us, nevertheless, in a more subtle and dangerous way by moulding our thoughts and ideas—and what is worse, the young growing minds of our children—into a way American.

F. L. Davey also remarks that by the dumping of this American periodical literature in our country South African writers' interests are affected, as "periodical literature tends to cling to its native soil and a South African writer, writing no matter how sincerely of the humanity and scene he knows best has no computable chance of selling his compositions to American periodicals". Add to that the difficulty of a South African writer struggling to get his work accepted in South Africa and having to compete with the mass of cheap syndicated stuff flooding in from America and some little idea will be obtained of the discouragement facing him however desirous he is of making a living at writing.

However, too much of even a good thing palls, and it may be that the public would relish a return to our own brand of humour, our own music and to a portrayal of our own rather leisurely way of living and thinking, rather than a continuance of the lusty humour and "hot" music of the American films and the feverish "go-getting" atmosphere of their periodical literature. America has produced much worthy of admiration but we should steer clear of imitating her slavishly and strive to retain our South African individuality.

May Dekenah.

GERM-SPRAY MAY BE THE NEW SECRET U.S. WEAPON.

A method of spreading disease may be the new weapon—"far more deadly then the atomic bomb"—which U.S. Congressman Albert Thomas told a Congress sub-committee is in U.S. possession.

"We are in possession of scientific factors which place us in an enviable position", the House of Representatives Naval Appropriations sub-committee was told.

"The Navy has developed, to a point where it can now be used, a weapon that can wipe out all form of life in a large city, if the germ is sprayed from planes that can fly high enough while doing

it to be reasonably safe from ground-fire", a member of the sub-committee said.

"It is quick and certain death to a city, as the germs are highly contagious and the effects would spread rapidly. One operation would be sufficient".

Though Representative Thomas said it had been developed in the Surgery and Medicine Department of the U. S. Navy, British scientists to whom a *News Chronicle* reporter talked yesterday believe that this description of the secret weapon could apply only to the spraying of radio-active matter.

Professor H. S. W. Massey, 37-year-old London University professor and a member of the British team for atomic bomb experiments in America said: "Such a development is by no means beyond the realm of possibility.

"In the power piles used in the making of atomic bombs large quantities of radio-active by-products were produced. These are so highly lethal that extremely powerful protection was needed to guard the workers from injury".

Professor M. L. E. Oliphant, another member of the British atomic team in America, said that such by-products sprayed from the air would kill living things over thousands of square miles.

News Chronicle, 25-5-46

MANNERS IN THE AMERICAN ZONE.

I have just reached Vienna after being "held" for 24 hours inside Czechoslovakia.

My detention was not due to the Czechs, but to the American guard in charge of the control post on the Czechoslovak-German frontier.

He refused to examine any documents, fetched his gun and threatened to fire on me unless I turned my car within five seconds and drove back towards Prague.

... Russian and America control posts at Linz and the American post at Passau passed my documents promptly and courteously.

But when I reached the American post at Eisenstein on the German-Czechoslovak frontier, the N.C.O. in charge, named Sergeant Boots, said my papers, issued by the American military authorities in Vienna, were invalid.

He refused to put me in touch with his officer and ordered me to go to the American H.Q. in Frankfurt for different papers.

As I had no authorisation to go to Frankfurt, I was obliged to return 200 miles to Vienna.

There the American military authorities telephoned Frankfurt, who confirmed that my papers were in order. I was given a chit by Americans to this effect, and bearing instructions in case of doubt to telephone American headquarters in Frankfurt.

Two days later I again reached Eisenstein. After an hour's delay Sergeant Boots was found. On seeing me he burst into a torrent of abuse and flatly refused to call Frankfurt in accordance with the American written orders, and told me to return to Vienna.

When I refused, saying I should report exactly how long I was held up, he eventually telephoned to his officer, who ordered him to allow me to proceed towards Prague.

On the return journey, I arrived in Eisenstein and was confronted by another very youthful American soldier in command of the post who, without examining my papers properly, said "nix good".

He ordered me to return to Prague. He also refused to telephone to Frankfurt, but said: "Get back where you blank-well came from or I will blank-well fire on you".

When I told him I didn't think he would be in a hurry to fire on a correspondent in British officer's uniform, he fetched a magazine rifle and running back, he held it at the ready, saying, "I'll show you. I give you five seconds to turn your car round. Get to hell out of it or I will shoot you".

A woman in British uniform, also waiting to cross the frontier, remarked quietly: "I have never heard of such behaviour".

Immediately the American swung the gun towards her. With a smile she said: "Do you want to shoot me also?"

This infuriated the American, who replied "I will use my bare hands on you", shaking his fist.

When I arrived back that night in Prague I saw the United States military attaché, General Koenig, who treated me with the greatest courtesy and found my papers in order.

G. E. R. Gedye in the *Daily Herald,* 21-5-46

WHY IS THE U.S. ARMY STILL IN ICELAND?

Is U.S.A. bringing pressure upon the Icelandic Government in order to get naval and air bases in that country?

This question is being asked in the discussion now proceeding in the Press of Iceland, the U.S. and Denmark, the three countries having a direct interest, as well as in other parts of the world.

U.S. forces landed in Iceland on July 7, 1941, to take over from British troops the defence of the country.

The principal conditions laid down by the Government of Iceland were:

1) Withdrawal of all U.S. forces after the conclusion of the present war.

2) The U.S. to recognise the absolute independence and sovereignty of Iceland.

These conditions were accepted by President Roosevelt in a special message to the U.S. Congress published on the day that American troops began landing in Iceland.

As a result of this agreement, important air and naval bases were constructed by the United States to prevent "the occupation by Germany of strategic outposts in the Atlantic to be used as air or naval bases for eventual attack against the Western Hemisphere".

While the war was still in progress Mr Bjoernssen and Mr Thor, President and Foreign Minister respectively, of the Icelandic Republic, visited Washington on the invitation of President Roosevelt.

In a Press Conference in Washington on August 26, 1944, Mr Bjoernssen declared that his Government had no intention of granting permanent military bases to the United States.

Despite the unambiguous undertaking entered into by the U.S., and despite the clearly expressed view of the Icelandic Government on the question, it is now known that America is trying to secure bases in that country.

The view of the Icelandic Government is reported to be that if strategic bases are required in Iceland to secure and maintain world peace, then these should be controlled by the United Nations and not by any single Power.

The excuse being offered in the American Press for the non-

evacuation of U.S. forces is that the "war emergency" has not yet ended and adds that continued use of the great airfield at Keflavik "appears to be anticipated so long as we have a substantial number of occupational troops in Europe".

Two points arise from this view of U.S. opinion.

Apparently for purposes of holding on to military strategic bases the war has not officially ended. But for Lease-Lend it was officially considered to have ended many months ago.

Secondly the Government and people of Iceland are dependent upon the U.S. War Department's view of how long the "emergency" should continue—and this may be for as long as American troops remain in occupation of Germany.

Nothing is more certain than that no such ambiguity of interpretation existed in the minds of the Presidents of Iceland and the U.S., when American forces first landed there.

The issue now is when will America honour that agreement in the sense in which it was drawn up and not in the meaning now read into it by the Washington militarists, who are determined by hook or by crook to set up a chain of U.S. bases encircling the world at all latitudes?

Frank Lesser in the *Daily Worker*

ICELANDERS ASTONISHED AT BRITISH INTERVENTION.

Reykjavik, Tuesday.

Public opinion here has been astounded at a remarkarble intervention by the British Government in the current dispute on the evacuation of U.S. forces from Iceland.

The Icelandic Ministry for Foreign Affairs has received a Note from the British Foreign Office which reads: "A bad impression will be created here if the Icelandic Government and Parliament do not accept the proposed arrangement with the U.S. Government and unreasonably withhold the highly necessary communications with the U.S. forces occupying Germany".

This refers to the American proposal to retain a long lease on Keflavik airfield in spite of the promise to evacuate the country immediately after the end of the war.

Commenting on the British Note, the United Socialist Party newspaper here declares:

"This Note is a foreign Power's intervention in Icelandic affairs, but the American diplomats and their Icelandic friends are wrong if they believe they can subdue the Icelandic nation by this method".

The American proposal has not been discussed in the Parliament since September 21, in spite of the Premier's determination to hurry the measure through.

The delay has been caused by the wave of popular indignation which has swept the country at the continued presence of the American troops.

· From the Special Correspondent in Iceland of the *Daily Worker*

GETTING TOUGH.

We rub our eyes in amazement. Is this really August 1946, or has the clock been turned back to the years when Hitler bullied and devoured small nations and when Goering reached for his gun whenever he heard the word culture?

Today, Yugoslavia is being bullied by the United States in the approved Hitler technique, and the American Goerings are reaching, not for their guns, but for their atoms.

Washington has delivered a 48-hour ultimatum to Belgrade and the U.S. Press is snarling threats. The New York Daily News proposes the dropping of an atom bomb on Yugoslavia (dropping atom bombs is fast becoming the universal remedy for all ills) and Senator Bridges talks about being quick on the trigger.

What is behind this incredible hysteria? The answer is supplied by a State Department spokesman who says that the U.S. entire attitude toward developments in the Mediterranean, "will be tougher from now on".

So the Yanks are getting tough in the Mediterranean and they are beginning with our ally Yugoslavia, whose heroic people waged a glorious fight against Hitler and never once wavered even though two million of them, one eighth of the population, were murdered and tortured by the Germans and Italians.

But what do the dollar millionaires of Wall Street care about Yugoslavia's two million dead? The game of power politics knows no morality. American imperialism, with its eyes glued on the oil of the Middle East, is out for the domination of the

Mediterranean in alliance with Britain. Countries which stand in the way must be brought to heel.

First step is to pick a quarrel with Yugoslavia by the simple provocative means of sending a stream of U.S. planes over the country and then delivering an ultimatum when the inevitable incident occurs. But there is no quarrel with Fascist Spain and no threatening and insulting words to Franco.

At the other end of the Mediterranean the American atomaniacs endorse the suppression of Greck democracy by Britain and demand a voice in the control of the Dardanelles, which is Russia's gateway to the sea. A Russian voice in the control of the Panama is not offered in return.

And to back up these moves an American fleet is now off Lisbon and ready to cruise into the Mediterranean.

American imperialism is running away with itself. It is waging war in China and seeking to grab every known strategical position on the face of the globe. If this course is pursued unchecked it will end in disaster from which Britain, now bound to the Wall Street chariot, will not escape.

The British people have no interest in this atom rattling, this bullying of other nations, this oil-grabbing and preparations for a new war. And the time has come for the Labour Government to speak up and say so.

Leader in the *Daily Worker*, 23-8-46

III

FASCISM, THE VATICAN AND GENERAL FRANCO

THE FOREIGN OFFICE.

Colonel Wedgwood's Criticism.

To the Editor, *The Manchester Guardian,* 1-7-38.

. . . No one can know the degree of Roman infiltration into our embassies. I was refused the information because the Secretary of State had not got it. Until recently the matter was not important. It is now. Since the concordat between Mussolini and the Vatican the Roman Church and Government have worked hand in hand. The alliance has destroyed freedom, the Socialist Party, the trade unions, and the co-operative movement in Austria, as had already been done and sanctioned by the Church in Italy. The same alliance has transformed Yugo-Slavia, annexed it to the Rome-Berlin axis, and secured advantageous terms for the Roman Church. The same alliance preaches and carries out a "crusade" in Spain which, but for heroic resistance, would be as horrible as was the crusade against the Albigenses. At the same time the Roman State has carried on incessant propaganda and intrigue against Great Britain and against that liberalism which we fostered in Italy in the teeth of Pius IX at the time of the Risorgimento.

Under such circumstances we need in our representatives abroad wholehearted support for British traditions and for that democracy and justice which is the core of British faith. We need in them, as urgently, wholehearted opposition to the new school of totalitarianism, authority, and tyranny, to the alliance among the enemies of our country's state and faith. How can we suppose that those whose spiritual home is Rome can be whole-heartedly on our side in such issues?

I would remind Commander Fletcher that Queen Elizabeth sent Walsingham as her Ambassador as the result of St. Bartholomew. Walsingham never left his personal views in doubt.

Yours etc.,

Josiah C. Wedgwood

FACTS FOR CATHOLICS.

Why do not the Catholics face the facts, instead of trying to evade them? Anyway, what do the British Catholics think that the German Catholics are doing?

A message from Frankfurt-am-Main, as published in the New York *Times*, answers: "The leaders of the Catholics in Germany ... exhort their believers in and *outside* the Reich to do their utmost in the righteous cause of the German nation under the leadership of Chancellor Adolf Hitler". Last week, Hannen Swaffer said: "No fewer than forty-five of the forty-eight Catholic Bishops in Germany have resolved: 'After the final victory, special ceremonies of gratitude to the German troops and of loyalty to Hitler will be announced'."

What has D. Burton to say about that? The Catholic "Church" claims to be international, but facts show that the hierarchy of the "Church" support whatever side will give them most spoil, regardless of the slaughter and sufferings of any nation's Catholic population.

A letter written by Fritz Thyssen, the steel magnate who financed the Nazi Party until he incurred the enmity of Hitler and had to flee from Germany, was published in a Swiss newspaper, the *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, recently, under the heading: "Pius XII., as Nuncio, Brought Hitler to Power". A passage reads: "... the idea was to have a sort of Christian Corporate State organised according to the classes, which should be supported by the Churches—in the west by the Catholic, and in the east by the Protestant—and by the Army ..."

That the Catholic hierarchy is preparing the way for the acceptance of Fascism by English Catholics is indicated by a dispatch published by the London *Catholic Herald* from Vatican City referring to a congress of Catholic professional men in which it is stated: "This Congress proves what has so often been denied, namely, that Catholicity and the Fascist life are compatible".

From a letter in *Cavalcade*, 28-9-40

FRANCO AND THE CHURCH.

Readers' Opinions.

As one who takes his religion from Rome but not his politics,

I would endorse F. O'Hanlon's statement that the present Pope should be regarded as a pro-Fascist. Here are a few additional facts that should educate our bemused Catholic youth who are being herded into the anti-democratic camp.

Cardinal Goma, the late Primate of Spain, in November 1936, when the Franco rebels were being beaten, issued a proclamation of a "Holy War", thereby rallying the Navarrese peasants to the cause of Reaction.

Significantly, this Pastoral Letter was not circulated to English Catholics, but was widely broadcasted to our Irish colleagues. Goma was not repudiated by the Vatican.

Italian bishops must take an oath of loyalty to the Fascist régime; all children over eight years must receive Fascist training, and so become ruthless upholders of Totalitarianism. These two items alone are part of the solemn agreement between the Pope and Mussolini.

R. C. Sixty Years.

Priests in Office.

Father Tiso, the Quisling-President, and Dr Tuka, the Quisling-Premier of Slovakia, the eastern part of Czechoslovakia, who betrayed their own country and went over to Hitler, are both Catholic priests.

The "Hlinka Guards", the Slovak equivalent to the German Storm Troopers and Black Guards, who derive their name from the late Father Hlinka, a Catholic priest and Papal dignitary, are exclusively recruited from and led by devout Catholics. Their cruelty and brutality against all who do not agree with them is hardly second to that of their German counterparts.

A Seeker for Truth
(Letters published in *Cavalcade*)

MR ARNOLD LUNN IS RECALLED FROM A MISSION.

Sent on a mission to South America, Mr Arnold Lunn has been recalled, it was disclosed in the House of Lords yesterday.

"In view of the unfortunate publicity given to his journey in

the U.S.," said Lord Snell (for the Government), "it became clear that great suspicion attached to his tour, and instructions were given to cancel it. Mr Lunn is now on his way home".

Lord Marley, who raised the question, said that in a paper edited by Mr Ralph Ingersoll, Mr Lunn was reported to have said that he was on a secret mission for the British Government. He then said that Spain, on which he poses as an authority, fears that victory for the united peoples would mean a victory for Communism.

"Damage to Allies"

"The suggestion in the newspaper was that he was going to South America to give that message. The newspaper said that he had a record in written and spoken word which could only cause damage to the Allied cause wherever he went in South America".

From the *News Chronicle,* 7-10-42

'HOLY DAYS' IN FRANCO'S SPAIN.

Mass executions of prisoners on holy days, children and grown-ups fighting over refuse thrown from the markets for food . . . these are glimpses of Franco's Spain, as disclosed to the American magazine *Saturday Evening Post* by Senora Maria Valiente, an American citizen, who managed to escape from the country and whose story is quoted by the B.U.P. from Washington.

Her husband, also an American, was taken away and shot. Hordes of starving children, snapping and snarling, fought over refuse for food. Even grown-up people took part in these fights.

"Feast days and holy days took on a terrible significance", said the Senora. "At such times executions of selected prisoners took place. On Christmas Eve and Easter loads of prisoners were taken to the cemetery and shot. Knowing they were doomed they shouted 'Long Live the Republic!' as they went.

"The prisons were still crowded with men and women, whose only crime was being anti-Franco. Those who did not die in prison came out with swollen stomachs and bloated faces because of the terrible slops on which they had been fed.

"Many did not live long after release."

From *Reynolds News,* 6-2-44

ON FRANCO'S DOORSTEP NOW.

Spanish Frontier, Monday.

The last time I was in France, six months ago, I found my British nationality still assured me everywhere a rather special welcome, undeserved individually, perhaps, but won by the achievements of the British armies of liberation.

This time, in the South of France, it is quite the opposite. Among the huge Spanish population, and among the French masses sympathetic to Republican Spain, the advent of a British citizen is an occasion for silence at the noisy café tables, a cause for frowns to replace the smiles on broad, sunburnt, meridional countenances.

"... We looked towards England", they say. "Where else should we look? And, above all, where else should we look in England but towards the Socialist Party? And now we find that the British Socialist Government not only does not aid us—that is their affair—but that they aid Franco. That makes it *our* affair".

They consider we are aiding Franco in that he could not sustain his régime without economic support from Britain and America. They are unable to comprehend a policy which could combat and crush Fascism in Italy and Germany, and then refuse to break with the unquestionably Fascist régime of the Caudillo.

"You have cut off the branches", one man said to me, "but you leave the roots of European Fascism still in the soil of Spain. Why? We quite understand that your people are tired of war; then why don't you realise that Fascism means war, and that you are storing up trouble for yourselves?"

His friend broke in: "Don't mistake this talk about war; we don't want any intervention in Spain; not that one British soldier should die there. If there's any blood to be shed in Spain, we Spaniards will shed it. We don't want civil war; we will avoid it, by every means, but if it has to be, it is our affair.

Some Memories.

"But you British, in order to avoid civil war, as you say, are making it likely by giving way to Franco. If you broke off diplomatic relations, if you cut off supplies, he would be finished, without shedding any blood ... even Spanish".

An elderly Spaniard joined in the talk. "In the past", he said, "European people felt Britain was always trying to interfere in Continental affairs, to hold the balance of power. That is all over long ago. Lately we have regarded you as the champions of freedom.

"But we do not forget what happened to Czechoslovakia because of Chamberlain. We observe Poland, Greece, Jugoslavia. The problems are complicated. We observe, and we wonder. But if Britain takes the side of Franco—and you take his side if you content yourself with reproachful words—then it will end badly".

"How will it end?" I asked him.

"It will end", he said, "by Britain becoming Enemy No. I, not only of the Spanish people, but of Europe".

A Frenchman who was with me nodded, and said: "That is true. There is a danger there. But do not forget, my friends," he said to the Spaniards, "that the British Government is not the British people. I have been in England, and I know what they think".

The Spaniards in general remained silent at this. If a Socialist Government did not speak for the British people, they were thinking, where are we to look? But a local leader of the Spanish Communists spoke up.

"Make no mistake", he said, "thinking Spaniards do not confuse the two. All the same, it is not going to be very good for the Socialist Government if it does not speak for the people... and not very good for the British people if the world thinks it lets a Government do in its name things which it does not approve".

Hard to Explain.

"Churchill or Bevin, what is the difference?" demanded a young man.

"What about the Liberals, what do they think?" asked a schoolmaster long exiled from his Spanish school.

I endeavoured to explain things as well as I could. But the meetings, you might say, broke up in disorder.

I went away disturbed. It was hard to think of the Britain which endured so much for the liberation of Europe becoming Europe's Enemy No I.

Colin Wills in the *News Chronicle*

FRANCO GETS BRITISH BATTLE EQUIPMENT.

A British firm is making available to Spain armour plate, optical equipment, apparatus for directing the fire of battleships and a great number of large cannon.

Dr Giral, Premier of the Spanish Republican Government in exile, said this in Washington yesterday.

He made the charge at a Press Conference when asked for evidence to support an earlier statement that Britain and the U.S. were supplying Franco with military equipment.

"The American contribution was primarily in the nature of petroleum", Dr Giral added.

From the *Daily Worker*, 21-6-46

PAPAL GREETINGS TO GENERAL FRANCO.

The Pope, replying to Christmas greetings from General Franco, reiterated his "Special affection for Spain, General Franco and his Government."

He asked the Spanish Ambassador to convey to General Franco and the Government his blessing, and added: "I will pray God especially that He may help them to continue in the good path entered".

From the *Evening Standard*, 1-1-44

FRANCO BUYS 13 BRITISH POWER STATIONS.

Britain has profited by Franco's urgent need for electric energy. Metropolitan-Vickers received an order last December for 13 mobile power stations. The first two have arrived and will go into use at Cartagena. Another two are expected to arrive tomorrow at Gijon.

A British technical staff have also reached Spain. They will put the plants into commission and train Spaniards to run them.

Coupled together, each two stations will generate 40,000 kilowatts.

The total order runs into £1,350,000.

From the *Evening Standard*

BROADCAST BY EXILED SPANISH PREMIER BANNED.

The Foreign Office refused Dr Juan Negrin, the exiled Prime Minister of the Spanish Republic, permission to broadcast a message from London to a meeting held in New York last night.

The speech contained remarks that would certainly cause offence to Generalissimo Franco.

Dr Negrin referred to him and his Fascist gang as "those cronies of Hitler and Mussolini who gave them the assignment of being the first quislings".

Such remarks seem to have given offence to the Foreign Office also, although it tries to explain away its action in a very unconvincing fashion . . .

From the *Daily Worker,* 3-1-45

IV

GREECE

CHURCHILL'S WAR AND BEVIN'S CONTINUITY

GREECE. THE BACKGROUND.

British bondholders of the Greek National Debt presented the British Foreign Office earlier this year with a memorandum asking that the exiled Greek Government (then in Cairo) should give an undertaking that it would "continue to safeguard the rights and securities at present enjoyed by Greek external loans and to protect the general interest of the bondholders".

This memorandum was passed on to the Greek Government.

The greater part of the Greek National Debt, amounting to about £100,000,000, was floated in London between 1823 and 1898, when Greece faced bankruptcy after the Turkish war. The bonds then bore interest at the incredibly high rate of 8.19 per cent.

One-third of the Greek Budget had to be set aside each year to service the debt. Even in the worst depression years, 1930-31, a third of the Budget went to pay interest on the debt.

The original loans have been repaid many times over, but the interest rate keeps the Greek debtors tied to the creditors.

Storm of Protest.

In 1932 a Republican Government in Athens tried to reduce the service on the debt, raising a storm of protest from the London financial press.

In 1935 the present King George II was brought back to Greece, and soon afterwards he threw out the democratically elected Government to establish the dictatorship of General Metaxas, which Greek Liberals described at the time as "the custodian of foreign financial interests".

Interest payments on the National Debt were resumed.

General Zervas, the Royalist leader, whose guerillas have been armed by the British, has received from the British Government large sums of money estimated at £30,000 in gold.

From *Reynolds News*

LIBERAL DISMAY.

In the House of Commons today, how will Mr Churchill try to justify his handling of the Greek affair? It is a blunder which has lowered his personal prestige not only in this country but among free men everywhere. It has dismayed us all.

An eminent acquaintance said to me yesterday: "As an Englishman, I feel now as great a sense of humiliation as I experienced after Munich". That remark expresses a common sentiment among people of all classes in this country.

My postbag includes impassioned letters from the parents and wives of officers and men in Greece who are horrified at the thought that their men are to be killed in fighting, not the enemy, but an Allied and friendly people who, not many days ago, were decking them with garlands.

For, make no mistake about it, our soldiers are now fighting the Greek people. It is a barefaced lie to pretend either that they are fighting "a gang of Communist revolutionaries" or that they are "preventing civil war" between two equally-matched factions.

The so-called opposition, now being attacked by Spitfires, is a cross-section of the whole community and represents nearly the whole community. Its leaders include five generals and many other officers of the Greek Army, well-known Liberals, two famous professors, three senators and two bishops—men who are no more Communist than Mr Churchill or Mr Herbert Morrison himself.

The Eam, whose object is to free Greece from an eight-year old tyranny, claims a membership of 1,500,000, with the sympathetic support of the great majority of the Greek population. It mobilised by far the largest Resistance group in Greece. In Athens it could call out 300,000 persons to demonstrate against the Germans. Outside Athens nearly the entire country is ruled by Eam Committees democratically elected.

A. J. Cummings in the *News Chronicle,* 9-11-44

MR CHURCHILL DEFENDS HIS WAR ON GREEK PATRIOTS.

On Friday, I listened to Mr Churchill trying to defend an indefensible policy. He was defending a policy that has set British soldiers against the men whom we have glorified for four years as fighters against the common Fascist enemy and against whom

we are now committed by Mr Churchill to a war of ruthless extermination.

The crime of these men is that they refused to surrender their arms unless their political opponents of the Right, the Royalists and the Fascist-recruited police, were also disarmed.

That is the simple issue in Greece; and, for the Greeks, there is no other. It is an issue on which we in Britain have no excuse for being misled or confused by bogies of Red Revolution.

It is only a week since our own Home Guard was stood down. It might easily have happened that these very Home Guards would have had to carry on resistance against an invading or occupying German Army.

We can judge what would be their feelings if, on being liberated by (say) the U.S.A., the Americans had ordered the Home Guard to hand over their arms, while allowing Mosley's blackshirts, who, during the occupation, had acted as quisling police, to keep theirs.

The Athens police, who started the trouble by firing on an unarmed crowd last Sunday, were the same police that the Germans used to help them to occupy Greece and combat the popular resistance.

For the Greek people, who have had a taste of Fascism, first under the Metaxas dictatorship of King George II, and then under the Germans, this war is still a war against Fascism and they are clearly under the delusion that this means disarming and rooting out every trace of Fascism left by the Nazis. It is still for them a war of "peoples and causes"—in Mr Churchill's famous phrase.

For us in Britain, Greece is the supreme test of whether we have changed our war aims.

David Raymond in *Reynolds News,* December 1944

BRITISH LABOUR (IN OPPOSITION) OBJECTS.

Every two hours, for three days, while British troops were killing Greeks who had been killing Germans for over three years, there were sent out from a wireless station in Athens repeated messages in which pro-British patriots pleaded for a cessation of the bloodshed!

They sought to end one of the most calamitous episodes in British history, the result of one of the most tragic failures in

British "diplomacy". "We criticise emphatically the attitude of General Scobie and Mr. Leeper, the British Ambassador", said the wireless which the "rebels" had captured, speaking to all the world. "They tried to coerce us by ultimatums and threats. We represent the whole Greek people and we are friends of the great English people. We will not accept an ultimatum. Why should this bloodshed continue? We want to stop it. But it must be by negotiation, not by force!"

Nearly, the Government broke up last week. Nearly, the Socialist members were forced to leave the Cabinet. It took more than a day of behind-the-scenes bargaining at the Labour Party Conference before a resolution could be framed which expressed the general disgust over the happenings in Greece without precipitating a political crisis in which Attlee, Bevin and Morrison would have to resign.

No, whatever you may have read, the conference did not back Churchill. That was a misrepresentation, by newspapers that used to praise Hitler and back Mosley.

Arthur Greenwood, the Leader of the Opposition, who proposed the resolution, called the situation "horrifying, appalling and dangerous", but insisted that the Labour Party should not exploit it. James Griffiths, who closed the debate, pledged his colleagues to insist on an armistice in Athens, a free and fair election and the establishment of a strong democratic system.

Aneurin Bevan, who called Ernest Bevin's speech "garbled and inadequate where it was not unveracious", got by far the loudest applause from a conference obviously disgusted with the situation in Greece and all that had led to it.

... Well, the Government has had its warning. No longer dare it support, right across Europe, those monarchists, ex-Fascists and collaborators who, nearly as much as Hitler and his gang, were responsible for the war.

Why, already Franco is toppling to his fall—as did Mihailovich, Peyrouton, Badoglio and the rest. All, until recently, were backed by our Government, in every case, despite angry protests from all the ranks of British democracy.

In every case, the public was right and our "diplomats" were wrong. Why is it that time after time, the Foreign Office sends to liberated countries members of its discredited old gang?

They know nothing of the new Europe now in process of birth. They make contacts with a "Society" that no longer means anything.

Hannen Swaffer in *The People*

A WARNING FROM GREECE.

I have received from a trusted Greek friend, a Liberal with no fondness for the extreme Left, another warning. None of his previous information has been disproved.

"Greece is again on the verge of a bloody revolution", he writes. "We knew, as you are aware, long before December 1944, that this would come if Mr Churchill continued to follow his imperialistic instinct, in consequence of which Greek and English boys killed one another.

"If Mr Bevin persists in continuing Mr Churchill's policy towards Greece, we will have a civil war which will put in the shade the civil war of December 1944 and this time the responsibility will be solely on the shoulders of the Labour Party whose triumph was acclaimed nowhere with more enthusiasm than in Greece.

"Pleace try to do something before it is too late. The solution is not difficult.

"There must be a fair election with no police intimidation, so that every political party feels safe to take part. A representative Government in whom the people can trust is vitally necessary.

"They must postpone until 1948 the plebiscite to decide between a monarchy or a republic, as was originally promised us."

Now, the Monarchist government has not only annulled the trade union elections, but passed a Bill deciding that, even if King George is defeated, it will not be the end of the monarchy. Rumoured alternative candidates are Prince Philip of Greece and Prince Edward, the boy Duke of Kent.

Hannen Swaffer in *The People*, 30-6-46

LABOUR (IN POWER) SURRENDERS TO FASCISM.

Back to Dictatorship in Greece.

At the end of this week, the Greek Parliament adjourns until October 15th. In the meantime, the Government will rule by

decree. Its hand will be strengthened by the passage of two new laws, the first purging all Republicans or persons who took part in the Resistance from the Civil Service, the second providing for the immediate provisional release of all collaborators, including those already sentenced. The first of these laws means that the plebiscite—which will take place while Parliament is adjourned—will be conducted under the supervision of civil servants entirely sympathetic to the monarchist régime. Coupled with these new laws and with the growing terror against moderate as well as extreme opposition groups, is the Greek Government's attempt to break up the trade union movement and to place it under the direct control of the Ministry of Labour. Against the active protest of Léon Jouhaux, vice-President of the World Federation of Trade Unions, who is at present in Greece, the Government has declared that the present elected leadership of the Greek T.U.C. is illegal and has arrested its four leading members, summarily sentencing them to imprisonment. This campaign against the democratic groups is plainly a preparation for the plebiscite and for the fully-fledged dictatorship which would certainly follow on the return of King George. But if the British Government is silent before this return to terror and illegal despotism, can the British T.U.C. or the W.F.T.U. ignore the suppression of a trade union movement whose reorganisation they supervised and approved?

From the *New Statesman and Nation,* 3-8-46

BRITISH SOLDIER MURDERED IN ATHENS.

The murder of a British soldier, Corpl. R. St. J. Wilmot, in an Athens hotel last Tuesday was reported in the Greek Press yesterday.

Rizospastis, Greek Communist paper, reported a speech by the Communist leader, Mr Zachariades, who said that the soldier had been a member of the British Communist Party. Corpl. Wilmot, he said, had been in contact with the Greek people.

He was found shot through the head. The gun had been pressed against the nape of the neck so that the bullet passed right through his head.

Another newspaper, *Eleftheria Ellada,* comments: "The British authorities will keep quiet and the murder will be covered".

The War Office stated yesterday that it had no information regarding his death, but that it was continuing to make inquiries.

Corporal Wilmot, who was a member of the Peckham Communist Party, joined as a regular soldier at the beginning of the war.

From the *Daily Worker*

BRITISH SOLDIER IN ATHENS 'KILLED HIMSELF'.

A British military court of inquiry has returned a verdict of Suicide in the case of Cpl. R. St. J. Wilmot, the British soldier found shot in Athens, says a Reuter report from Greece. Cpl. Wilmot was found dead in his room at the Roosevelt Hotel, Athens, on May 1st.

The first report received in this country said that a gun had been pressed against the nape of Cpl. Wilmot's neck and a bullet had passed through his head.

Cpl. Wilmot's death was disclosed in a speech by Mr Zachariades, secretary of the Greek Communist Party.

Mr Zachariades declared that Cpl. Wilmot, who was a member of the British Communist Party, had been murdered because of his political views.

A Greek newspaper, *Eleftheria Ellada,* commended: "The British authorities will keep quiet and the murder will be covered".

In London, the War Office was last night unable to confirm Reuter's report of the inquiry verdict.

From the *Daily Worker*

THE BEVIN VIEW.

I hold no brief for the Greek King, but the result of the plebiscite is another proof that we need to be on guard against accepting the views of our home-bred experts on the political attitude of foreign peoples.

Not so very many months ago we were being told in emphatic language that the Greeks did not want their King back.

Now, after a vote which, as Greek votes go, was apparently fair and free, the wish of the people for his return is indicated by an overwhelming majority.

Ernest Thurtle, M.P. (Labour) in the *Sunday Express,* Sept. 8th 1946

V

RUSSIA, POLAND, JUGOSLAVIA

WHAT IS RUSSIA UP TO?

"What is Russia up to?" "What is she after?" the old "enigma" game is being played. The propagandists are at it again, working overtime to create confusion and make a puzzle out of what is really plain.

There is no mystery about Soviet foreign policy and never has been. Russia wants peace.

Russia wants peace because there is absolutely nobody in the entire U.S.S.R. who can benefit from war. There is in Russia full employment—no one needs a war to find a job. There is no man in Russia who makes a profit out of war industry. No man who can make a profit out of capturing territory, or elbowing rivals out of foreign markets, or exploiting cheap colonial labour. No one. Can any other country say as much?

Russia is out for 1) peaceful internal reconstruction; 2) helping to build on its frontiers strong and friendly neighbours; 3) strengthening the international peace organisations; 4) wiping out Fascism, as a potential focus of new wars.

This is a policy which, achieved, would obviously make peace more stable. It is, moreover, the policy to which all the major Powers were pledged in the days of Churchill-Roosevelt-Stalin collaboration. Only it happens to be the policy which Byrnes and Bevin between them are endeavouring to thwart at every turn. They are doing this in several ways

With every sort of pretext Byrnes and Bevin are trying to cut down or delay the reparations due from the aggressors to make good the ghastly destruction from which Russia suffered.

The more friendly a neighbour government is to Russia, the more Bevin and Byrnes oppose it, cutting down Unrra supplies, refusing it credit, dispatching threatening Notes. And they denounce it as "undemocratic" unless it gives liberty and power precisely to those politicians and intriguers who are most violently anti-Soviet.

They continually try to whittle away those provisions in the constitution of U.N. (like the veto power), or the methods of decision at the peace conferences, which require agreement between the Powers.

Finally, they back up, instal, protect from purge, punishment or intervention Fascist groupings all over the place.

... The fact is Soviet policy follows the interest of peace, the working class and the progressive movement of the entire world.

There are two attitudes one can take up with regard to it. One is that adopted by Roosevelt as the war proceeded. To co-operate with it, discussing with the Soviet Union a detailed map of world settlement in which all countries could play their part, respect each other's sovereignty, and avoid treading on each other's toes.

Or one can oppose it remorselessly.

But, make no mistake about that, there is no way of opposing Soviet foreign policy without forming an alliance with all the Fascist and reactionary forces throughout the world, helping them to power, trying to hold them there, and backing them to the point of civil war and international war.

And that is precisely what Bevin and Byrnes are doing at the moment.

The question is not: "What is Russia after?" But: Where are we allowing Byrnes and Bevin to take us in their opposition to Russia?

Ivor Montagu in the *Daily Worker*, Sept. 23rd 1946

IS OIL THE ROOT OF RUSSIA'S PERSIAN STRATEGY?

... Naturally Russia has been trying to secure her oil needs by diplomacy, even if it has been somewhat clumsy diplomacy by Western standards. She asked long ago for oil concessions in Northern Iran and clashed with the United States over it because American oil companies were already interested.

It is not too late, of course, for the United States and Britain to offer their old comrade-in-arms a participation in the concessions which their nationals enjoy in the whole of the Middle Eastern oilfields.

But surely we have advanced on the crude technique of the 1920's when the victors divided up the oil spoils of war between themselves. Surely it is time to stop talking power politics and

to start talking plain economic sense in the interests of humanity.

This international oil sore must not be allowed to fester. It calls for a drastic cure. In my opinion it will yield to only one treatment—the setting up of an International Petroleum Commission which will take over and operate oilfields in countries which have not the technical and financial equipment to develop them on their own.

To avoid international friction in these explosive areas of the world the International Commission must be the sole oil concessionaire.

Nicholas Davenport in *the Evening Standard*

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TRIAL REVEALS NEW BID FOR ANTI-RUSSIAN BLOC.

When 12 Poles were sentenced in a Moscow Court for their activities against the Soviet Union, the world knew that the biggest of the "men behind the scenes" were not in the dock.

The accused Poles themselves admitted that they had acted "as soldiers" under the orders of the Polish émigré Government in London.

The Polish émigré Government in London is paid by the British Government. It is supported and always has been supported in its anti-Soviet attitude by leading members of the Tory Party.

The British Government has for years kept some of its leading intelligence agents working as "liaison officers" with the London Poles.

A whole section of the Political Intelligence Department was set aside to collaborate with these saboteurs and spies.

A British plane from a British base—at Brindisi—was put at the disposal of Saboteur No 1, Leopold Okulicki, to take him to Poland.

At San Francisco Anthony Eden, Churchill's Foreign Secretary, threw the whole of his influence into an attempt to protect the saboteurs from the hand of Soviet justice.

They were, he said, just the type of men the British Tory Government wanted to see engaged in negotiating the formation of a Government in Warsaw.

Is it conceivable, it was asked yesterday, that the British Tories —so intimately, so officially and so personally bound up with these ruffians, were unaware of their lines of activity, their propaganda, their intentions?

There was no sane man in London prepared to sustain the proposition that Eden and Churchill just did not know what their puppets were doing.

Radio Facilities.

Anthony Eden's Foreign Office, Brendan Bracken's Ministry of Information, and Sir James Grigg's War Office were together responsible for putting at the disposal of the London Poles radio facilities for communication with their agents in Poland.

Over those radio waves—and therefore under the auspices of Eden, Bracken and Grigg—there went to Poland anti-Soviet propaganda, incitements, provocations, and code messages actually directing the activity of anti-Soviet formations and organisations.

This method of instruction was revealed from the dock in Moscow by the very gentlemen who were on the receiving end of the radio material from London.

From the *Daily Worker,* June 22nd 1945

HE SUSPECTS B.B.C. MOTIVES.

Mr Howard K. Smith's script, which the B.B.C. banned and *Picture Post* published, contains, no doubt, many personal views and might not be representative (alas!) of American opinion. I doubt, however, the B.B.C.'s statement that this was their reason for refusing it. Does the B.B.C. really think that it is a 'personal view' of Mr Smith that Russia lost so many times more of her sons than we did, that she suffered a thousand times greater material destruction? Does the B.B.C. honestly believe it is a 'personal view' that nations have felt the necessity for spheres of hegemony for their security? What they do believe is, I am sure, that broadcasting these particular facts at this particular time, in this particular context, would have unwarranted results. The public might understand more easily—or perhaps for the first time—that people on the other side of the 'irons curtain' base their views on facts. In withholding these facts systematically from the public the B.B.C. is meddling in politics, and feeding the public with B.B.C. views. We should remember that the Nazi technique of propaganda was not so much based on telling lies, as on withholding the truth and allowing no 'personal views'.

A letter by A. Armstrong in *Picture Post,* 17-1-46.

THE NEW POLAND.

By George Thomas
(Labour M.P. for Central Cardiff).

I have just returned from Poland, a land where the war is still a horrible reality. The physical destruction in Warsaw, Breslau and other places is worse than anything we can imagine. But the spirit with which the Poles are setting about the reconstruction of their cities is as heartening as the wreckage is depressing.

In common with Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Czechoslovakia they are grimly determined that out of the suffering of their people is to come a better order for the common man. This gives them a fierce sense of unity which it would be foolish for any nation, however strong, to try to upset.

There is a new spirit abroad in Poland, and Britain must accomodate itself to the reality that in the partisan movements throughout Europe there was forged an understanding which diplomacy will not be able to destroy.

On July 22 I attended in Warsaw a great national demonstration on the celebration of Poland's first anniversary of liberation. For four hours industrial workers and young people walked past the President, the Prime Minister and the Government.

Although the Press of Europe was well represented, there was not a single British journalist covering this event of such importance to Poland. When I made inquiries of the Press Attaché of the British Embassy I was told that they could not be represented at every little affair.

The Press Service of the British Embassy in Warsaw is entirely out of tune with the spirit and the desire of the Polish nation. Britain is represented abroad by people who neither understand the new Britain nor the new Poland.

All over Poland are to be seen great red banners with slogans denouncing the Fulton speech of Winston Churchill. No one can exaggerate the damage which has been done to Britain's prestige amongst this people by the Churchill speech.

I frequently drew attention to the fact that these banners seemed to give to the people the impression that Churchill spoke for Britain. The reply which I invariably received was that there was

to the Poles little difference between the policy of the Labour Government and that of Churchill.

When I was in Warsaw there was a court martial in progress of six anti-Government terrorists who had been caught. It was repeatedly stated that the radio sets in the possession of these terrorists were British in origin and that their military equipment and stores came from the same source.

This serious charge calls for a full investigation by our own Government. If it is untrue, then our name should be cleared before the world. If it is true, then we need a few courts martial of our own.

From *Reynolds News*, 11-8-46

ANDERS' POLES.

The fact that not a single displaced person in Europe is being admitted to this country is being widely commented upon in the House of Commons.

Comparisons between their treatment and that of Anders' Poles are being made following the written reply by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Mr J. B. Hynd, who made this fact known.

The 200,000 Anders' Poles, at least one third of whom fought with the Nazis against us, are receiving exceptionally favourable treatment.

It is pointed out that among the displaced persons are 100,000 Jewish survivors of the Nazi pogroms in Europe, many of whom should receive asylum in this country.

From the *Daily Worker*, 27-6-46

THE POLISH INVASION.

What is the War Office hiding?

by Charles Wintour.

How many of the 160,000 Polish troops whom the British Government have agreed to enrol in a Resettlement Corps located in this country fought in the German Wehrmacht during the war?

Mr Bevin should have obtained an answer to this question before he accepted this enormous influx of aliens into the already overcrowded British Isles.

Careful investigation would have shown him that some 30,000 of these Polish immigrants enlisted in the German Wehrmacht during the war and fought, not with Great Britain, but against her. This remarkable and disturbing conclusion will be reached after comparing the strength of the Polish forces towards the end of the European war with their peak total at the beginning of this year.

Early in 1945 a Polish propaganda pamphlet, apparently written in 1944, put the size of the Polish forces in the United Kingdom at 30,000 and stated that the Polish Army in the Middle East numbered some 100,000 men. The total number of Polish troops was thus about 130,000.

But by the beginning of this year the Polish Army had swollen to 190,000. This figure is obtained by adding the 30,000 men already repatriated to the 160,000 who, according to the Foreign Secretary, are to be resettled in Britain. How did the extra 60,000 materialise?

Here is a strange story which has been kept from the British public. During the campaigns in Italy and Western Europe Polish recruiting teams followed close behind the front-line troops, combing out the maximum number of potential Polish soldiers from the German prisoners captured by the Allied forces, and from the displaced persons liberated during the course of our advance.

These teams found large numbers of Poles who, rather than suffer hunger and forced labour as Polish civilians, were bribed by offers of good food and pay to join the German Army. After cursory screening large numbers of these Poles were induced to join the Polish forces—for the same advantages—in order to swell the size and prestige of General Anders' army.

Just how many of these men were thus enlisted as Polish soldiers has not been disclosed. The British War Office merely reply to inquiries that "they have no means of telling" but believe the figure to be "a very small proportion" of the 160,000 due to settle in Britain. But the War Office is, of course, anxious to gloss over the whole incident, and they offer no explanation of the 60,000 recruits which the Polish Army appear to have gained in 1945.

If it is assumed that half this figure was obtained from displaced persons and any other sources of recruitment, such as the

Polish mining community in Northern France, then some 30,000 men were milked from the prisoner of war cages. These ex-German soldiers are, of course, the last people to apply for repatriation to their native land, whatever promises of amnesty may be held out to them.

So British citizens are now being asked to welcome into their homes some 30,000 of their ex-enemies. This intolerable imposition has been foisted upon them by a Government which, it seems, has not bothered to investigate a question which closely affects every citizen in the country.

What, in fact, are the obligations of this country to the Polish Army? They were set out in February 1945 by Mr Churchill who, speaking in the House of Commons on his return from Yalta, declared: "His Majesty's Government will never forget the debt they owe to the Polish troops who have served them so valiantly and to all those who have fought under our command I earnestly hope it may be possible to offer the citizenship and freedom of the British Empire if they so desire."

Mr Churchill referred to "those who have fought under our command". He was not talking about "those who have fought for Hitler". In fact, we have no obligations whatsoever to the ex-German soldiers now in the Anders Army. It is, of course, utterly repugnant to the British public that any such time-serving mercenaries should be settled in the United Kingdom, with the possibility that British citizenship might be granted to them at some future date.

From the *Evening Standard,* 3-6-46

TRIAL OF MIHAILOVICH

Britain Accused by Prosecution.

From our own Correspondent, Belgrade, Monday.

The treason trial of Mihailovich and 23 other Serbs—the biggest treason trial in Balkan history—opened today.

The accused include other Chetnik leaders, some members of the quisling Government, Gen. Nedic (who committed suicide last February) and ten politicians and diplomats of the Yugoslav war-time emigré Government who are being tried in absence.

Famous Order.

In the presentation of the indictment against Mihailovich two references were made to what was described as the "anti-partisan policy of the British High Command" during the first half of the war.

The first was stated to have concerned Mihailovitch's famous order of November 1941, in which he ordered all his commanders to withdraw their forces from fronts facing the Germans and switch them to a general attack on the partisans.

It was recalled that this happened after the arrival at Mihailovich's H.Q. of Majors Ostojic and Lalatovic, both said to have been emissaries of the London Government, and a Capt. Hudson, representative of the British Command in the Middle East. The last, it is alleged, carried instructions to Mihailovich "to fight for Yugo-Slavia, and not to transform the fight into a rebellion of Communists on behalf of Soviet Russia."

'Liquidate Communists'.

The second is a reference to a Col. Bailey, who commanded the British liaison mission to Mihailovich in 1943. The indictment quotes a communication said to have been made to Mihailovich by Col. Bailey in the spring of 1943 in which the Colonel said the Allies were preparing an invasion of the Dalmatian coast that spring, and "it was necessary to liquidate the Communists" in order to clear the hinterland.

It was shortly after this that Mihailovich's forces took part in the fourth major Axis offensive against the partisans as an integral part of the enemy forces.

Col. Bailey is stated to be one of five British officers who have submitted memoranda in defence of Mihailovich under Foreign Office auspices to the Yugo-Slav Government.

Arrangements for journalists are apparently modelled on those at the Nuremberg trial.

It may be noted that the accused are all Serbs being tried by Serb judges and defended by Serb counsel.

From the *News Chronicle*, 21-6-46

WOMAN WITH THE CHETNIKS—AND THE KING.

Belgrade, Thursday.

The former Police Chief of Belgrade, Dragomir Jovanovich, in the dock here today was asked to identify a woman in a photograph produced by the Prosecutor.

"Is is a Miss Mitchell, a U.S. citizen", he said. "I saw this woman with the Chetniks in Belgrade". He also said that he had seen her at Gestapo headquarters. Prosecutor: "Who is the man with her?" Jovanovich: "King Peter". Earlier, Jovanovich had told how he offered his men 25,000 dinars for each partisan caught.. .

From the *Daily Worker,* 21-6-46

BOUGHT MUNITIONS FROM NAZIS— WITH BRITISH MONEY.

from John Gibbons.

Daily Worker Special Correspondent. Belgrade, Friday.

At today's session of his trial here, Mihailovich admitted that he had "bought" munitions from the Germans and used them against his country-men.

Presumably, the munitions were purchased with money supplied by the British who apparently, at that time, swallowed the legend that he was fighting the Germans.

Asked if his commanders returned to the Germans the German prisoners recaptured from the partisans, Mihailovich replied that they did.

Prosecutor: Is this treason?

Mihailovich: Yes, it is treason.

The defendant admitted that all his departmental officers collaborated including Ostotjic and Laltovich, chief of operations in the Intelligence and chief of communications respectively.

Asked how and when did the British Mission leave his H.Q., Mihailovich replied: "In the spring of 1944".

He said that Lukachevich, one of his emissaries, had earlier gone to London to speak to "all important persons".

Another emissary, Bachevich, went to Cairo to see General Masterson, who told him: "The Communists ought to be eliminated", in which case the British policy would change. Mihailovich admitted, too, that officers of General Anders' Polish Army had been parachuted into his camp.

From the *Daily Worker,* 22-6-46