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INSTEAD OF ARMS

was published in Sweden two days before the death of Count Folke Bernadotte in Palestine. It will be read for its autobiographical interest; for its portraits of the great war-leaders, politicians and diplomats with whom Bernadotte's work for the Swedish Red Cross brought him in contact; for its memorable scenes from the other side of the war picture—the prisoners-of-war of many countries, the displaced persons whose name is legion, the defeated and dispossessed of Europe. Bernadotte's missions took him to the Berlin, London and Paris of the Second World War; to Russian prisoners north of the Arctic Circle; to the remarkable work of rehabilitation in Finland; to the devastated towns of the Rhur; to post-war Poland and Rumania, Hungary and Austria, Turkey, Greece and, lastly, Palestine. Few had the same insight into the present state of these countries and peoples, and the need and opportunity for service.

But, above all, it will be read as a simple and moving expression of the philosophy of a great humanitarian, a declaration of that faith in peace by which he lived and



FOLKE BERNADOTTE

INSTEAD OF ARMS

by

Folke Bernadotte



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FOREWORD

THE purpose of this book is to try to give a picture of my experiences in the world which has been the scene of so much suffering during and after the Second World War.

It may seem strange, but I count it a great privilege to have had an insight into conditions in the war devastated countries. It has been a great privilege because it has made me understand how grateful one should be that one's own country and one's own family have been spared the destruction of war.

I have also tried to point out the significance of international humanitarian relief work in war and similar circumstances, especially in the present tense and complicated situation. It is my firm conviction that all activities founded on love and charity have great possibilities for bridging the gap caused by the hatred and misunderstanding now prevalent between nations in the shadow of the Second World War. Let mercy speak instead of arms.

FOLKE BERNADOTTE

Rhodes, July 23, 1948

I

"JUDGE NOT . . ."

*"Judge not that ye
be not judged. . ."*

I KNOW of no more beautiful words in the Bible. If they had been the guiding principle of society, the world today would have been a different place. If people took them into consideration more than they have done, there would be far greater understanding for those who have ended up in the shadows. We are very ready to be shocked by crime, sitting comfortably at home reading the newspaper headlines and reports. It is too easy for us to judge and condemn. We do not realize that, instead, we should try to take into consideration the criminal's environment, investigate how far his deeds came of poverty or were caused by crowded living conditions which destroy all pleasure in the home; whether they were connected with inherited tendencies or neglected upbringing, or with destitution in a war-torn country where cold, hunger and a gnawing fear of the future are constant companions. If we did this, perhaps we should cease to beat our breasts in righteous indignation and, instead, feel deeply grateful that we spent our childhood and youth in a home full of goodness and harmony. This ought to make it possible for us to share the happiness of the love we have enjoyed and the beauty we have had around us. Perhaps it would even mean that we would share the joy everyone feels who tries to help those who are not equally fortunate. There are some who argue that all humanitarian work is simply a disguise for a selfish person's desire for activity. Even though

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I do not share this opinion, I am certain that "it is easier to give than receive" expresses a reality that needs no discussion.

I am one of those who spent their youth in a peaceful and affectionate environment. In later life I have enjoyed so much good fortune that I should deserve to be included among criminals and misfits if I did not try in some fashion to share part of my own good fortune and happiness. It is natural, therefore, for me to begin this account with a description of my parents and my childhood home, since they played so important, in fact so decisive, a part in my development.

Perhaps it is unnecessary to sketch the background of my parents' marriage. The romantic circumstances surrounding this event are so well known that they need not be related. When my father, in 1888, made his decision to give up the right of inheritance to the Swedish crown and all royal prerogatives for himself and his descendants, it was a unique event and aroused enormous interest.*

As children, we often sat listening while our parents turned the pages in their rich and beautiful book of memories, and let us enjoy the story of the romance of the young sailor prince and the beautiful lady-in-waiting. I shall never forget the October evening in 1946 when we were assembled with my father after mother's funeral. Hour after hour he sat and related to us the events that had brought about such radical changes in his public life. At this time, when his beloved wife had left him after fifty-eight and a half years, he recalled the events in connection with their unusually happy marriage with

* My parents reached this decision after several years of careful consideration. They had to overcome many obstacles and difficulties, and their love had to endure many tests before my father's parents, King Oscar II and Queen Sophia, and the Swedish Government agreed to the marriage.

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rare clarity, and we listened, moved and charmed, to his fascinating story. I have never admired my father so much as at this time. It would be natural to expect that at the age of eighty-seven he would have been completely prostrated with grief at losing the dearest he had on this earth. But never had he been able to give his family and his friends as much as during those days.

The exalted calm and strong faith he then showed had characterized my parents' entire marriage. It cannot be explained solely on the basis of the support and help which they received from the beginning from their parents and closest relatives. Neither can it be attributed only to the deep sympathy they received from a great part of the Swedish people. Nor could this harmony have been caused alone by the unselfish and generous love which they felt for each other throughout their earthly journey. Something more must have influenced them, something even greater and more steadfast, something that was like an anchor in their life and that made it impossible to shake their faith or to allow any discord to enter their home. There is no doubt that it was their strong and personal belief in God which carried them through all difficulties, united them in ever closer bonds, and always made their home a place of perfect harmony. I never heard my parents exchange an angry or violent word. Their relationship was characterized by an unselfish appreciation of each other's wishes. They provided a unique example of living up to the high ideals in which they believed, and they expressed their deep and wholehearted piety in everyday life. Now that my father is alone, he goes on living in the same humble and modest fashion, and looks forward to the day when he will once more be united with mother in a heaven which, to him, has always been a living reality.

It was in such an environment that I grew up, and it must naturally have made its impression on my youth and upon my entire life. There was ample room for joy and laughter, but our home was characterized above all by a feeling of seriousness and warm piety. Our upbringing was strict. I remember my father often said that children should learn to obey before they were two years old. My parents laid great stress on honesty, obedience and punctuality, even though they were tolerant of childish pranks and mischief, providing nothing was done that either irritated or harmed anyone. Even when we were small, we were taught to think of being useful and helpful to others. My father and his brothers had been educated in this spirit, and my parents wished to continue the traditions that my grandmother, Queen Sophia, had founded. Every Christmas in our home on Östermalmsgatan my family arranged what would now be called "a little Christmas Eve", when we invited a number of poor families in Stockholm. Even today I occasionally meet people who had taken part in these festivities as children, and who look back upon the traditional celebrations in my parents' home with joy and gratitude.

In a sense, our interest was also aroused in international matters, since my sisters and their friends gathered every other Saturday to work for missions. My brother and I were supposed to be present at these meetings. I must admit that I did not look forward to these sewing bees with any great degree of enthusiasm. I would have preferred to spend the evenings with my classmates from school, who amused themselves in a fashion far more attractive to a high-spirited youth. Even though we complained inwardly because we had to take part in these "unmanly sports", undoubtedly a seed was sown which did not fall on altogether stony ground, even if it took years to germinate.

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After graduation, my training as a cavalry officer began. It was quite natural that I should become an officer, something, indeed, that I have never regretted. It was also natural that my interest in humanitarian activity and in the more serious aspects of life should have been pushed into the background. The Service, horses and pleasures captured my entire interest. The cavalry lieutenant had not the slightest idea that some day he was to become a “Red Cross General”. I do not believe that I felt the least thing lacking in my life. Youth had its way, and my motto was to live my life with a smile.

Sooner than I thought, however, an element of seriousness entered my life. It was during a ball that a few bachelor friends and I had arranged at the Officers’ Mess of the Guard that I was suddenly stricken with a hæmorrhage and had to be taken to hospital. The physician diagnosed a serious case of stomach ulcers that would require a long period of treatment. It was the first time that I had ever been confined in a hospital. It was an experience I have had many times since because of similar attacks.

Although it is very depressing to suffer relapses, I have been extremely grateful for these spells in hospital, and I would not have had these experiences obliterated from my life. When one does not know what the future holds, when one feels that the step from life to death is short, then difficulties which seem so great under normal conditions disappear. They are reduced to their correct proportions, they appear in many cases mere bagatelles. During recent years, I have seen so much suffering and sorrow in war-devastated countries that my illness is nothing in comparison. Nevertheless, I believe that it has been of great use to me. One’s thoughts turn to more serious matters; it becomes easier to understand the suffering of other people.

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One thing is certain, my illness became an indirect preparation for my present activities. If it had not come into my life, I should presumably have continued my military career. I would like to add also, that without my illness I would not have had the good fortune to meet the wonderful American girl who is now my wife.

II

“THE WORLD OF TOMORROW”

MY marriage and my many journeys to America and to France, where I lived for a long time, gradually brought about an interest in international problems. When the Second World War began, I was in the United States as Swedish representative at the New York World's Fair. It was quite interesting for me to follow the development of events from America, which seemed to me to be so distant from the centre of things.

The World's Fair, that gigantic enterprise which was supposed to symbolize “the world of tomorrow”, was situated in the same place as the present headquarters of the United Nations, near Lake Success. There one could study and observe everything new in the fields of science and technology, of industry and agriculture. How beautiful and pleasant that world would be to live in. I remember how American businessmen returning from European conventions explained, as late as the beginning of July, 1939, that war rumours were exaggerated. Day after day large groups of people assembled in the “Court of Peace” in order to proclaim their will to increase understanding between peoples, and in order to rejoice over the wonderful possibilities all the inhabitants of the earth could enjoy in the fortunate world of tomorrow.

The dramatic events that occurred in the summer of 1939 developed, as everyone recalls, because of Nazi Germany's

purposeful and increasingly obvious efforts to acquire control over Europe. In March, 1938, Hitler annexed Austria. In September of the same year he secured control of Sudetenland Czechoslovakia as a result of the famous Munich conference. In March, 1939, he occupied Bohemia-Moravia and thereby dismembered the Czechoslovakian state. A short time afterwards, he inaugurated a violent campaign against Poland, which brought on a new peace crisis in the summer of 1939. Hitler declared that Poland exercised a terrorist pressure against the German population in Danzig, something he could not tolerate. Prime Minister Chamberlain, who tried as long as possible to continue the policy of co-operation, declared that England was forced in the eleventh hour to change its policy, and would support Poland if it were attacked. German troops marched up to the Polish border. On August twenty-third the sensational news arrived that Nazi Germany had made an alliance with that country which had so far been considered its own and the western world's deadly enemy, Soviet Russia.

The World War approached rapidly. All the marvellous talk in New York about "the world of tomorrow" sounded ironic, in fact almost grotesque. When I think of the impressions I received from my journeys in Europe, which I still recall most clearly, the tragically sharp contrast between the motto of the World's Fair and developments in Europe is especially strong. We must indeed hope that the work of the United Nations which, at least in the really important questions, has so far been characterized by distrust, consideration for prestige and lack of unity, will not symbolize the world which we all hope will arise some day from the chaos and destruction we live in.

War broke out on the first of September, when German troops marched into Poland. For myself and for all the other

Swedes who were working at the exhibition, it was a natural wish to return home. After all, I was an officer in the Swedish army, and even if the trend of events seemed uncertain, it was my duty as a soldier to be at home if Sweden should be drawn into the war. But my duty was also to remain, in order to supervise the closing of the Swedish Pavilion on the first of November. It was a great relief to me when this task was finally completed. It had been decided that my wife and I should take the American clipper to Lisbon on December the sixth, and from there proceed to Sweden. This was our plan, but events dictated otherwise.

A few days earlier, Finland had been attacked by Russia, who during this period co-operated with the Nazi régime in Berlin. Danger was now a closer threat to Sweden, and we pressed forward preparations for our return, though it was difficult to leave our two boys, who were to stay in safety in the United States for the time being. Then a telegram arrived. I remember as if it were yesterday that moment when I opened the yellow Western Union envelope and read its contents. It was an appeal from a number of leading Swedish citizens, asking me to remain in America. They wanted me to organize a voluntary army corps, particularly of Americans of Scandinavian descent, to aid Finland in its dire straits. The Swedish promoters of the plan apparently entertained great hopes. In addition to recruiting this corps, they wanted me to collect twenty million dollars from leading Americans in business and industrial circles to finance the corps in Finland, and for other expenses connected with this project. This was rather a difficult task, I admit, but in spite of the fact that my wife shook her head in warning—and she naturally knew more about American conditions than I did—I accepted the suggestion and put myself at their disposal.

Through the newspapers I had learned about the extraordinary enthusiasm for Finland's cause that held sway at home in Sweden, and I felt great sympathy for the thought expressed in the slogan, "Finland's cause is ours."

I telephoned to Stockholm in order to secure supplementary information. For example, what was the attitude of the Swedish Government to the project? There were other practical questions that had to be answered before I could commit myself definitely. After a few days I received a definite answer. No obstacles existed as far as the Swedish Government was concerned.

The next three months were hectic. My first step was to go to Washington, in order to find out what attitude would be taken toward our project by the United States Department of State. I had long conversations with President Roosevelt's advisor on European affairs, and he declared at once that from certain points of view the project was impossible. Under American law it was expressly forbidden to set up an armed corps in the United States for service on foreign soil. However, the Department of State had no objection to the buying of certain kinds of supplies in America, and even admitted that individual Americans could secure passports for journeys to Europe. If they later volunteered for the Winter War in Finland, that was no concern of the American authorities. I cannot help laughing when I think of the reaction of my friends in Sweden when I informed them of the attitude of the American authorities. One Swedish participant suggested that I should persuade Congress to change the American laws. It shows both how great an enthusiasm inspired them and how little knowledge of American procedure they possessed.

After consultation with the principals in Sweden, I agreed to

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try to collect money with which to buy airplanes urgently needed by the Finnish army. I was also requested to engage experienced pilots who were willing to volunteer for service in the Finnish Air Force.

At least we now had some foundation on which to build, and I continued my negotiations in Washington. I received a great deal of help from Lord Lothian, then British Ambassador. He was sympathetic toward our cause and declared that if the pilots came to Canada he would grant them visas to England, and in that way they could reach Finland via Sweden.

During earlier visits to America, I had come to know many people, several of whom were members of banking and industrial circles. I now began to call upon the most influential and wealthy American business men. In spite of the fact that they had great sympathy for Finland, there was serious opposition both from firms and individuals when the question of giving economic help arose. This was, of course, very discouraging to me, but it was interesting to note the American arguments. After the First World War many banks, industrial companies and individuals had been accused of involving the United States in war by making contributions or by granting credits to belligerent nations. Long after the end of the war, the authorities had continued investigation into the matter, and as a result, business men did not dare to take similar risks again. The fact that Finland had promptly paid its war debt to America had made Finland, in American opinion, a kind of symbol of honesty and reliability. However, typical of the answers I got was this: “It is quite true that I have great admiration for Finland and I would like very much to do something to help you. But, the truth is, I dare not write a cheque for as much as a cent. It would jeopardize the future of my concern.”

Wherever I went I received similar responses. I soon realized that I had accepted a job more difficult than I had anticipated. In the meantime, however, I had succeeded in acquiring a number of excellent pursuit planes of the Brewster type, which had been tested by experts and which could immediately be transported to Finland. I had even arranged shipment, and all I needed were the necessary funds. I contacted a well-known man, also prominent in Sweden, and agreed with him that together we should borrow a very large sum from a bank, enough to pay for the available planes. This money would become the nucleus of the next stage of the project. The first definite progress having been made, I now had some assurance that our plan would succeed. It is easy to understand, therefore, how disappointed I was when the gentleman involved told me a week later that, unfortunately, he could not keep his promise. This doomed the plan to failure.

Since I did not, however, wish to give up all hope of concrete results, I called upon Duff Cooper, former First Lord of the Admiralty, who was then on a lecture tour of the United States. I asked him if he could put me in touch with Winston Churchill, then First Lord of the Admiralty. He was immediately sympathetic, and a telegram was sent to Churchill in which we asked if a certain number of English planes could be placed at our disposal in Finland. I would secure the necessary pilots and ground crews in the United States. The answer came almost immediately and was affirmative. At last it looked as if the project could be carried out. I thereupon set out on a lecture tour to different parts of the country in order to collect money for Finland.

It was the first time that I had the opportunity of working with Elsa Brändström, who was also interested in

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Finland's cause. It was a great help to know that I had as an ally so charming a person.

I happened to hear that a rather well-known man in America, Colonel Sweeney, who belonged to the American air group operating in Europe during World War I under the name of “Lafayette Esquadrille”, was interested in engaging pilots for voluntary service in the French Air Force. I asked him if he would not, instead, concentrate his interest on Finland, and he promised to do so. We got able assistance from him and his colleagues, who made enthusiastic efforts to develop our project.

One Saturday morning a number of people arrived at my New York office and asked to see me. They were young Americans whom Colonel Sweeney had urged to contact me. They wished to be engaged for voluntary service in Finland. They had with them extremely good references praising their earlier activities as pilots in different South American revolutions. For a couple of hours we discussed financial details and the possibilities of going to Finland. I remember commenting to my secretary, as I left the office that day, that it was a great relief to know something was finally happening. Little did I know, however, what that something was.

Next day one of New York's leading newspapers telephoned, requesting an interview. The editor wanted to discuss the sensational article which appeared in *The Daily Worker*, the leading Communist paper in New York. When I failed to understand him, he read the most essential parts of the two-column spread, complete with the headline: “Nephew of King of Sweden Agent of Mannerheim”. It proved that the men who had come in to see me the previous day had somehow heard of my activities, and by presenting false papers and references, had

succeeded in learning the preliminary details. I had been completely fooled, and once more had to suffer bitter disappointment. Unfortunately, American newspapers now began to show excessive interest in my work.

I did not intend to give up so easily, however, and I sent Colonel Sweeney to the West Coast, where most of the American pilots received their training. I despatched another representative to Toronto with instructions to rent a flying field where the aviators could be tested, so that only the best would be sent to Finland. Colonel Sweeney reported that the work on the coast was progressing satisfactorily. I learned also that a Toronto field had been rented without complications. New reverses soon beset us, however. One afternoon when I was on the train from New York to Pleasantville, where I lived with my family, I saw startling headlines in the evening papers. Sweeney had carelessly tried to engage an American who was not of age, and the young man's parents had reported the case to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, which now began to show a lively interest in Sweeney's activities. I began to doubt the outcome of our project.

Sweeney immediately reported his activities. When I phoned my representative in Toronto, who sat waiting for pilots, he reported that measures were being taken to close the border to American pilots wishing to enter Canada. He himself had been ordered to stay in Canada to be available to the authorities, and could not return immediately to New York as I had requested.

This was certainly not a pleasant situation to be in. I went once more to the Department of State for advice and to acquaint myself again with their attitude. The highest authorities, however, did not view the matter in quite so serious a light, and promised future assistance. They even advised me to

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engage the American pilots in some Swedish enterprise. The American authorities would later on turn a blind eye if these pilots joined the Finnish Air Force. I endeavoured to make new contacts in various parts of the country, and a friend in Stockholm promised me that he would engage the Americans in his firm.

It was with renewed hope that I made preparations to leave America and return to Sweden. During my efforts to secure planes and pilots for Finland, I became interested in leading a campaign to raise funds for the purchase of an American ambulance. This was a much easier task, and the personnel and material for the ambulance were soon ready for shipment from America to Finland via Sweden. I took the Italian ship *Conte di Savoia*. When I reached Paris after a week's journey I found a telegram from a colleague in New York informing me that our problems were at last being solved. We needed only ten more pilots and he asked me to try to engage them in Paris.

I turned to the Air Attaché at the British Embassy, and asked for his assistance in engaging the required number of aviators. He was very interested and explained immediately that it would not be difficult. In Paris there were a good many Polish pilots who were inactive for the time being, and who undoubtedly would be interested in employment. Much encouraged, I returned to my hotel.

I was stunned, however, when I read the headline in the *Paris Soir*. The Moscow Peace had been concluded and the Finnish Winter War was over. Our project was now worthless, and I cabled New York with instructions to discontinue further preparations.

III

DRIVEN BEFORE THE WIND

IT was with a feeling of real disappointment that I returned to Stockholm at the end of March. Except for the personal contacts I had made, all my work had been in vain, and as far as I knew no new task awaited me. However, I had not been home for more than a fortnight when Germany occupied Denmark and Norway. All officers were called up, and I presented myself at my regiment. Soon I had a conversation with General Rappe, then the Chief of Staff, who assigned me to a new task. He informed me that the General Staff was just then organizing a command to be responsible for the military forces of belligerent countries which would probably end up in Sweden, and which, according to existing regulations, would have to be interned. Already, in September, 1939, they had to take charge of the crews of two Polish U-boats who had fled to Sweden, and a few German pilots who had made a forced landing off the Swedish coast. General Rappe asked me if I would accept the responsibility of heading the organization for the internment of foreign military personnel.

Events now developed rapidly. A Norwegian division of between four and five thousand men crossed the Norwegian-Swedish frontier and we had to take immediate steps to look after the personnel and material. I travelled to Dalecarlia to arrange for their billeting. It was very interesting to meet these Norwegians. They were a collection of bitter men who con-

sidered themselves to have been fooled when they were ordered by their officers to cross the Swedish border. They openly talked about sabotage—the weapons they had received when the Norwegian army was mobilized were useless—and they believed that by crossing the Swedish border they could proceed through Sweden to the north of Norway, in order to fight there against the German occupation troops.

Very soon, a number of Englishmen who had come across the border also became internees. They were members of an invasion force that the English had landed at Åndalsnes, and hastily we arranged a camp for them near Falun.

Neither the Norwegians nor the English stayed long in Sweden. We were very soon able to send them back to their home country, at the same time repatriating a number of German pilots who had made forced landings in Sweden. The Germans soon invaded the Baltic countries, however, and we of the General Staff received a report that a number of Russian ships from those countries had arrived off the Swedish coast. We billeted the Russians for the time being in Stockholm, and I remember very well my impressions on first meeting them. Of course, they were very suspicious. Sweden was an unknown country to them, and they were uncertain of their future there. To begin with, they were on the defensive, but matters were arranged in a spirit of co-operation, and a camp was organized for the Russians near Mariefred.

On account of the intensification of Allied bombing attacks, our group of internees increased very rapidly, and soon our task was to care for about one thousand American and English pilots who could not return to their bases after their missions, but had been forced to land on Swedish soil. It was during this work that I first encountered the various conventions dealing

with such questions. Regulations about internment are very vague in these conventions, and they leave quite a lot of freedom of interpretation. Certainly it was intended that military personnel should be interned in well-guarded camps, but certain clauses gave the authorities discretion to allow the interned greater freedom of movement. Soon the Swedish public became critical. Why were internees from certain countries allowed greater freedom than those of other nationalities? Also, the foreign legations inquired as to why the internees from the different countries were not treated in the same way. Russian, German and Polish internees were kept in closed camps under guard, while the Americans and English were billeted in boarding-houses and hotels, and enjoyed a great deal of freedom of movement within a certain defined area. The Russian authorities, however, said that they would rather see us follow a strict policy. They did not want the Russian internees to mix with the Swedish population. In view of the very negative attitude taken by the Swedish people toward the Germans confined here, we also thought it advisable to restrict them to limited camp areas. As Polish naval personnel had been in camps from the start, no change regarding them was considered necessary. The Swedish population especially criticized the behaviour of Americans in Sweden. The American pilots were better paid than the Swedish troops, and this was sometimes an awkward point of contention. In this connection, I particularly want to stress that I believe the criticism unjustified. If Swedish troops were in similar circumstances I am convinced that a comparison between the two would not have been to the disadvantage of the Americans.

An amusing incident occurred concerning the Russian internees. One day Mme. Kollontay, the Russian Minister in

Stockholm, called on me at the offices of the General Staff and complained that both officers and enlisted men were billeted in the same camp. I replied that I had done this intentionally, as I believed this to be the situation prevailing in her own country. According to my belief, everyone, both high and low, was treated in the same manner, and I therefore thought that the arrangements we had made were fully in accordance with the policy of the Soviet Union. She replied laughingly that possibly that policy had formerly been enforced in her country. Now, however, it had been abandoned, as distinction in rank was understood to be essential for the maintenance of discipline in the various divisions. In this connection, I should like to state that it was especially interesting to come into close contact with the Russian internees. As I said before, they were rather suspicious at the beginning, but gradually, when one got to know them, one found that the difference, for example, between a Russian and a Swedish soldier, was very small. They were decent and honest people who tried in every way to do their duty as Russian soldiers, and they were grateful to us for trying to make their stay in our country as tolerable as possible. I found the same feeling of loyalty and gratitude among the German, Polish, American and British internees. It is probable that the way in which the Swedish authorities treated the internees created appreciable good will for us in their respective countries.

In the beginning of 1945, we started repatriation on a large scale. The number of Germans who made forced landings in Sweden increased, and we were therefore able to exchange, in the first place, English and Americans for Germans. We also offered to repatriate Russians. In connection with their return, the Russian Legation asked that some of their officials should

be allowed to talk with their internees without Swedish representatives being present, because a number of them had stated that they did not want to return to their country for political reasons. With great misgivings, I agreed. There were six or seven Russians who wanted to stay in Sweden, and I had explained to them in general terms that they should consider carefully before they took this step, as this would make it impossible in the future for them to be reunited with their families. It is of some interest to note that the result of Russian persuasion was that the number of internees refusing to return home in no way decreased, but instead, increased by a few men.

My service with the General Staff as chief of the Internment Section gradually diminished during the first half of 1945, as my Red Cross work proved more and more demanding.

IV

THE RED CROSS

IN the spring of 1943 I was elected vice-president of the Swedish Red Cross. I accepted this office with much gratitude, pleasure and enthusiasm. I was to begin on September the first of that year. I had always felt a deep respect for the humanitarian ideals of the Red Cross and for its great tradition. Moreover, as I have pointed out before, my mind had become more and more pre-occupied by international questions. Even if the aim of the Swedish Red Cross was primarily to be of service to its own country, the organization was a link in a very significant international body, and I therefore realized that my new activity would be concerned with problems of ever widening scope.

My first step was to draw up a plan for the post-war activities of the Swedish Red Cross. Even if the final phase of the war could not at this time be envisaged, it was in any case clear enough which way events would turn; the German struggle was doomed to failure, and Allied victory had to come sooner or later. In the memorandum I drafted for the supervisory body, I pointed out that the Swedish Red Cross had to be prepared for immediate action when the European armistice was signed. It was my opinion that we should try to get in touch with similar organizations in other countries as soon as possible.

The Swedish Red Cross works on two fronts, the domestic

and the foreign. In my memorandum, I took the attitude that the domestic post-war activities should not be expanded, in any case not right away. Our economic position would certainly be stronger than that of the countries which suffered through the war, and relatively speaking, the need for aid within Sweden should therefore be small. We should inform the Swedish Government that the Red Cross was prepared to be at its disposal to improve the state of social hygiene in Sweden.

But first of all we should direct our efforts toward the assistance of foreign countries, first our neighbours, and then others in distress, in order to enable them to start their reconstruction programmes. The Swedish people belong to a large international family. It seemed to me that we ourselves could not feel happy in our own homes if we did not know that the other countries had made a little progress toward repairing the enormous damage caused by the war. Only then could we feel that we were entitled to think about problems at home.

However, Swedish resources certainly would not be so extensive that we could help all war-torn European countries. In order to get really effective results it would be necessary to concentrate our efforts. Scattering our work over too large a field would, in my opinion, only weaken our contribution. The international work should be divided into two areas, I advised, one comprising humanitarian help to the civilian population, and the other concerning the exchange of prisoners of war. The humanitarian activity would primarily be concentrated on our Scandinavian neighbours and the Baltic countries, and possibly on Germany. That assistance would, in the first place, concern our closest neighbours needs no explanation. On the contrary, it is not equally evident that Germany

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should receive Swedish aid. The terrible sufferings which, for example, Belgium, France, Austria and Hungary had undergone made Swedish assistance there quite logical and natural, in view of our old cultural and material relations with these countries. As it was pointed out, however, one could suppose that through their connections with England and the United States, they would get help from other sources. It seems fairly evident that after the war, nations other than Sweden would give them help. To a certain degree, this applied also to Poland. Because of the events that had occurred there during the first weeks of the war, the Allies ought to have been especially anxious to aid the Poles after the armistice. Poland was a country which had suffered terribly from the war, and the need there would certainly be enormous. As regards Germany, the situation was of course quite different. Help from a neutral country like Sweden would be of great significance.

These were my general views on Swedish post-war aid in the summer of 1943. It may be of interest in this connection to get a picture of how these activities were afterwards organized and executed.

In my opinion, the greatest shortcoming in the planning and instituting of international aid at the end of the war was that no leading organization was available to co-ordinate the programme for work in the different countries. It is well known that UNRRA, formed at an early stage by the Allies, had worked out extensive plans for aid. It is also known that this organization, which finished its work in 1947, suffered from a number of obvious flaws. It made some significant contributions, but much more could very likely have been achieved if UNRRA had been better organized. The leaders did a marvellous job, but they did not have at their disposal a sufficient

number of assistants with real experience in humanitarian work to lend stability to the organization. Because of this, a great deal of money and material was lost.

Sweden could not, of course, become a member of UNRRA, as its statutes stipulated that only Allied nations could be admitted to membership; therefore, we had to organize our own relief programme, and in many ways this was an advantage. The programme was extensive. The Swedish Red Cross was by no means the only Swedish organization which carried on relief work after the war. In the beginning of 1944, the Swedish Committee for International Aid was organized, partly for the purpose of co-ordinating Swedish relief work, and partly for investigation of how government funds should be used for these purposes. Associations such as the Save the Children Society, Intra-European Mission and others still continue relief activities in various countries, and last but not least, one should stress the extraordinary contribution made both during and after the war by the Aid to Norway Society and the various agencies for aid to Finland. The forming of the so-called Swedish European Relief, in which all the most important organizations active in the humanitarian field are represented, and which even the great popular movements and other powerful groups have joined as supporting members, has also been of great importance. The Swedish European Relief has made the collection of clothes and money more efficient, and has in different ways helped to co-ordinate relief activities, so that different Swedish organizations would not be performing the same tasks in each country. As a matter of fact, the Swedish European relief has become the leading factor in the post-war programme which I had originally envisaged. Undoubtedly, this organization was better qualified than the

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Red Cross alone could have been to achieve the excellent successes which have resulted.

In our Red Cross work after the Armistice, we have always followed the policy that our Scandinavian sister nations would be the first to receive aid. Activities in Germany have had good results, and they have also been approved by the Allies. In the case of Poland, our policy was to carry on as much relief work as possible without reducing any of our aid to other Scandinavian countries. For obvious reasons, the Allies have not been able to do very much for Poland with the exception of UNRRA's large contributions. England, especially, has had great difficulties to contend with, not the least of which has been the food problem. She has therefore been unable to aid Poland to the extent she would have wished.

Conditions in Holland and Belgium have improved more rapidly than was anticipated, and the reconstruction work that the Dutch and Belgian people have carried out in such a marvellous way does them honour. To these countries, therefore, Sweden did not give any post-war aid, except that Belgian and Dutch children have been cared for in Sweden through the Save the Children Society.

France has also been the object of Swedish efforts. For example, the Swedish Government has granted considerable help to some of the devastated towns in Normandy. After the war, the Save the Children Society and other organizations established and operated homes to care for French children.

In Hungary and Austria the situation has been, and still is, very difficult. Important relief work was begun there, and is still being continued. Also Italy, Czechoslovakia and the Balkan states have received Swedish aid. Homes for children have been established both in Yugoslavia and Rumania, and meals

for children provided. Efforts have also been made on the part of Sweden to aid the suffering population of Greece by caring for tubercular children. Since the situation in Greece has, for well-known reasons, been so unsettled, our activities there have just begun. Sweden has even been able to make contributions for relief to the Soviet Union. Of course, we have been unable to send Swedish personnel to Russia, but aid has been given in the form of clothing, medicine, artificial limbs, surgical instruments, etc.

Opportunities for the Swedish Red Cross to assist prisoners of war in the various countries unfortunately have proved fewer than I had hoped for in September of 1943. In my opinion, the entire question of war prisoners has been dealt with after the Armistice in a very unsatisfactory, if not to say erroneous, fashion. The existing conventions for prisoners of war are not explicit as to the time fixed for prisoners to be repatriated. Some people are even of the opinion that the Geneva Conventions cannot be applied today. Although the world cannot be considered at war, the belligerent parties have not yet concluded the peace.

In my opinion, it is a crime against humanity, from the moral point of view, that hundreds of thousands of prisoners of war who are still kept by some of the Allied countries have not been permitted to return home. One may contend that it is only reasonable that, for example, German prisoners of war should be used for reconstruction work in the countries which have suffered under the Nazi régime. In the long run, however, such a concept is morally untenable. Certainly, repatriation of German and Austrian prisoners of war has gone on from the very beginning. The United States, for example, has not kept any. But there are still hundreds of thousands of Germans who

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would be glad to return to their homeland and to their families, but who are used in forced labour, not only in Eastern Europe and Asia, but also in some Western European countries.

The Allies have promised that repatriation will be finished before the end of 1948, but technical considerations for the return of all prisoners of war before that date seem to make that uncertain. It is to be hoped that the new conventions which now are being prepared, and which will be finally discussed before the end of the year, will prevent a repetition of what is happening now, should the world again become involved in war.

V

"IT'S A LONG WAY TO TIPPERARY . . ."

SCARCELY had I taken office as vice-president of the Swedish Red Cross when the government requested the supervisory body to deal with the technical details concerning the exchange of prisoners of war and medical personnel, planned to take place in the middle of October, 1943. Despite Geneva Convention stipulations directing belligerent countries to arrange for the quickest possible return, or care in a neutral country, of invalids or severely wounded prisoners of war, such World War II exchanges had rarely occurred before 1943. It is indeed true that some hundreds of invalids had been exchanged in 1940 between Germany and France, before the latter's capitulation; also occasional exchanges of seriously wounded British and Italian prisoners and medical personnel had taken place on British and Italian hospital ships, via Smyrna and Lisbon.

Finally, on another occasion before 1943, serious efforts had been made to organize an exchange on a larger scale between England and Germany. A considerable number of English prisoners of war had been sent to one of the French channel ports. On the other side of the channel, seriously ill or wounded Germans were waiting to embark on English ships for repatriation. One can imagine the happiness with which these people looked forward to the day when they would return to their homeland. They would finally be able to rejoin

their families. The long and monotonous period in the prison camps would soon be over.

However, just before the order to embark was given, word came that the entire enterprise had to be called off. The German authorities had at the last minute made trouble over the fact that the number of prisoners of war to be returned to Germany did not correspond to the number of English who were going back to their country. This contention was absolutely without foundation, as the Conventions clearly state that the number of prisoners exchanged need not correspond. Both the English and the German prisoners thus had to return to the sad camps they had hoped never to see again. The future was just as grey and hopeless for them as before, and they could no longer count the weeks and the days until the time of release.

No more had been accomplished. Against this background, it is understandable that I was very happy to collaborate in the exchange of prisoners planned to take place on Swedish soil, specifically, in Gothenburg. The preliminary negotiations had not been completed by the Swedish authorities, but by the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva and by the Swiss government, which was the neutral agent for England and Germany. We had only to arrange the technical details. This involved a series of conferences with both German and English authorities; it was necessary to arbitrate the demands of both parties.

The exchange embraced about five thousand prisoners of war. The greatest part were British, a smaller number Americans, and the rest Germans who were to be sent home from England. We had at our disposal a number of ships, both English and German, and at this point, I gained some insight into the enormous difficulties connected with the operation of

transports between belligerent countries. I do not know how many times my assistants and I drafted detailed plans for a transport and exchange programme—plans that could not be carried out the following day for various reasons. It happened that at the last minute a few of the assigned ships were torpedoed or bombed. So we had to start all over again. We did this with enthusiasm. For my own part, I can say that until then, I had never had a mission which interested me more. The consciousness of being a cog in a machine which would enable thousands of soldiers of various nationalities to be sent back to their homeland after many years of imprisonment filled us with real happiness, and encouraged us to do our utmost to make everything run smoothly.

It was a marvellous experience to take part in this exchange, and in similar ones which took place about a year later, also via Gothenburg. Episodes occurred which reminded one that beneath the hatred wrought by war there is deep within us a core of humanity. At the bottom of our hearts we all feel a spirit of comradeship. We who had the privilege of being present in Gothenburg at the two exchanges experienced days which I, for my part, shall never forget. The war came very close to us then. And yet, things happened which made the thunder of cannon, the chattering of machine-guns and the roar of bombers suddenly appear to us as something unreal and very distant. We experienced events which could not but strengthen our belief that hatred between belligerents was not so deeply rooted as we had often supposed. I was invited on board one of the German ships together with the German and English officers, and I noticed that the British prisoners of war and the German crew had formed an orchestra which played violin, guitar and mouth-organ until the deck plates rattled.

“IT’S A LONG WAY TO TIPPERARY . . .”

I went among the English prisoners on one of the German hospital ships to tell them that they would soon board an English ship for transport home. They informed me that the German doctors had just performed an appendectomy on one of the English invalids. Later, German doctors asked me if they could buy some wrist watches to present to their English colleagues as an expression of their gratitude for fine co-operation.

In my talks with these men, American, English and German, I was aware of the deep depression which characterized them and the agonized feeling of insecurity with which they viewed the future. I remember an old German trading vessel captain who sat in silence in his compartment, waiting for the train to leave for Trelleborg. When I asked him if he were not glad to go home, he answered: “Well, yes, it is nice to be returning home again. But I am from Hamburg, so you will understand that I have not much hope of seeing my family again. It is several years since I left them.”

Otherwise, feelings of joy predominated. Many said to me that everything was like a dream. Among them were soldiers who had experienced the terrible disappointment on the English Channel. I can still hear the British soldiers singing the well-known marching song “It’s a long way to Tipperary,” when the ships left the docks in Gothenburg, and turned their prows toward home. Apparently they had sung this song many times in their prison camps; their voices then had been filled with melancholy, for the way to Tipperary had seemed to them very long, dark and uncertain. But now their voices were jubilant and full of hope.

I looked at the German soldiers. They took up the melody and it seemed as if their hearts were in the well-known tune.

They also knew that they would soon return to their homeland—to that which they treasured most. Every country has her Tipperary. Each soldier has his own particular home and his private plot of land; it may be somewhere in the enormous British Empire, in *das grosse Vaterland*, in Russian Holy soil; in old Denmark or Norway, in Finland, the land of the thousand lakes, or anywhere else where people have their roots—the country which they call their own. Those who have fought for their country long to go back to it. They want to be present when their country's future calls.

With such memories behind me, I feel a deep gratitude for the opportunity of participating in the work of the Red Cross. It has only one aim: to try to lend a helping hand to suffering or distressed people, regardless of their nationality, race, creed or political affiliation.

VI

IN THE EUROPE OF TOTAL WAR

IN accordance with the proposal I handed to the supervisory body of the Swedish Red Cross, in which I had set forth my opinion that the personal contact between the Swedish Red Cross and its sister organizations ought to be further developed, I was directed to travel to Germany and Switzerland in the November of 1943. The purpose of this trip was to try to interest the German Red Cross and the German authorities in the continued repatriation of medical personnel, prisoners of war, and perhaps even civilians, as well as to discuss these questions with the International Committee of the Red Cross and inform the Committee of the plans of the Swedish Red Cross for international aid. The negotiations I conducted with the Germans in Berlin were in the nature of preliminary discussions, as I wanted to have the opinion of the Swiss before I made a definite proposal. My intention was to take up the matter again in Berlin, on my return from Geneva, and to negotiate further with the Germans at that time. Later developments prevented these negotiations, however, for reasons to which I shall refer presently.

I took with me to Geneva some documents from the President of the Swedish Red Cross, H.R.H. Prince Carl, in which he expressed the wish of the organization to assist in an intensified repatriation programme. I also took a memorandum of the aid activities of the organization, as well as his plans for

the near future. Prince Carl referred in his memorandum to the official offer of the Swedish Red Cross to its Russian counterpart to assist in every way the Russian prisoners of war in Germany, if the same could be done for German prisoners in Russia. This had been done during the First World War, but this time the Russians had refused. The first step should have been to exchange lists of prisoners, to forward correspondence to their home towns, and to supervise their treatment. I hoped that through the International Committee of the Red Cross I would be able to get a clear picture of the entire problem. I was especially interested in ascertaining their attitude regarding the possibility of Russian co-operation in these activities. Because the government of the Soviet Union has not ratified the existing Geneva Conventions about the treatment of prisoners of war, the International Committee has not been able to establish effective contact with the Russian authorities.

My experience has taught me that this question has been and is of great importance to the Swedish public, and so I want to relate here the negotiations which took place between the International Committee and the Russian authorities. The information I received was as follows:

The International Committee has always tried to maintain unbroken relations with the Swedish Red Cross. Before the war, the Russian Red Cross was the national organization which had made the largest economic contributions to the International Committee. The Committee sent a permanent delegate to Moscow in 1938, but he was later recalled as there was no longer any work to be done.

After the beginning of the war in 1939 the Committee repeatedly tried to reopen direct relations both with the Soviet government and the Russian Red Cross. When the Russians

were drawn into the war, the Committee applied to the Soviet government at the same time as it applied to the nations which were at war with Russia, in order to stress that the Committee wished to continue its humanitarian work. In the spirit of the Red Cross, the Committee thus put itself at the disposal of the Soviet government for all eventualities in which it might be of use. It emphasized the collection and forwarding of information concerning wounded soldiers and prisoners.

The International Committee proposed that lists be compiled of war prisoners and fallen soldiers from both sides, in order to enable it to answer relatives who applied to the Committee for information.

Molotov, Commissar for Foreign Affairs, answered in June 1941 that the Soviet Government was inclined to accept the proposal of the Committee with regard to the exchange of information concerning prisoners of war, provided that such action would be reciprocal. To this end, the Committee contacted the nations which were then at war with Russia to inform them of Moscow's attitude. Gradually, the Committee received news from Finland, Rumania, Germany, Hungary and Italy that these nations agreed in principle to the exchange of such information. The Committee thus considered the matter decided, and therefore applied to the German Government for permission to visit their camps for Russian prisoners. After receiving the permission of the German Government, several visits were made to these camps. The permission to visit these camps, however, was withdrawn by the Germans because the Russians did not reciprocate.

The Russian Red Cross informed the Committee that it had been assigned by its government the task of organizing an official information bureau for prisoners of war. This bureau

would receive and provide all the necessary information, take care of mail and parcels and collect the possessions left by fallen soldiers.

At that point the Committee was very hopeful that an exchange of information would start.

In accordance with the agreements made, the Committee received from the German Government the first list of Russian prisoners in Germany, and forwarded this to the information bureau in Moscow. Receipt was acknowledged and the Russians informed the Committee that they, for their part, would make out lists of prisoners in Russia. These prisoners would also be permitted to correspond with their families.

During the course of the years 1941 and 1942 the Committee also received lists of Russian prisoners held by Rumania and Finland. These lists, containing millions of names, were forwarded to the Soviet Government. However, little by little, the lists of the Russian prisoners stopped arriving, as the governments concerned did not receive in exchange lists of their own countrymen who were prisoners in Russia.

Despite repeated and urgent requests from the Committee in the name of interested nations, the Soviet Government had not sent a single list of prisoners of war in Russia. The International Committee had also repeatedly requested permission from the Soviet Government to send delegates to Russia. In accordance with its agreements with the Swedish Red Cross, the Committee had proposed that the Russian Government should choose a delegate from a list containing six names, four of which were those of outstanding Swedes. No answer was ever received on this point.

The International Committee also sought permission to send material aid to prisoners of war in Russian camps, but the

Soviet Government did not reply to the proposals. In any case, the Committee was extremely anxious for improvement in the situation, so that the same activities could be performed among war victims in Eastern Europe as in other parts of the world. We of the Swedish Red Cross were given to understand that any co-operation we could give towards solving this important problem would be highly appreciated by the International Committee.

As far as I can gather, the negative attitude of the Russians toward these questions which were so important to prisoners of war hinged on the knowledge that the Russian prisoners, particularly in Germany, were treated in an extraordinarily bad way, and not in the spirit of the Geneva Conventions. Reports have come from all sides that treatment of the Russian prisoners by the Germans was absolutely inhuman. This probably explains, but cannot justify, the attitude of the Soviet Government. As far as can be judged, the treatment of the Russian prisoners was improved after representatives from the International Committee and other aid organizations had visited the Russian camps in Germany.

Perhaps the opinion is widely held that the Germans on the whole did not treat their prisoners in accordance with the stipulations of the Conventions. Examples can be cited proving that individual German camp commandants were guilty of serious violations of the Conventions. Although I personally have had no opportunity to visit any prison camps in Germany, I have been informed by reliable observers, however, that the German treatment of the prisoners of the Western Allied countries was as a rule correct. Of course, this does not apply to the final phase of the war, when general chaos in Germany rendered camp conditions for the prisoners extraordinarily bad.

During my visit to Geneva, I conferred with the General Secretary of the International Committee of the Red Cross and informed him of the post-war plans of the Swedish Red Cross. As a result of these conferences I proposed, after my return, that the following steps should be taken:

The Swedish Red Cross should propose to the German, British and American Governments a resumption of prisoner exchanges, and offer technical assistance in the event that exchange should take place via Sweden.

Moreover, the Swedish Red Cross should endeavour to open discussions with Soviet Russia. If possible, representatives should be sent there to try to interest the Russian authorities in a repatriation of prisoners of war. The representatives should also request permission to visit prison camps.

During my stay in Geneva, I had the opportunity to visit an institution organized by the International Red Cross, the "Agence Centrale des Prisonniers de Guerre". Its task was to register prisoners of war, to deal with inquiries regarding them, and to search for missing personnel; namely, those cases in which it was not known whether the person in question had been killed or taken prisoner. The Agency, which had a staff of over three thousand people and which, since the beginning of the war, had answered millions of letters, worked with the utmost care and precision. As an example, I recall the following case. An English soldier was reported missing. His comrades stated that he had been shot near a big tree in the neighbourhood of a church in France, but they could not give the name of the village, only that part of France in which the battle had been fought. From Geneva, a questionnaire was sent to all the priests in that particular part of France, based on the information received from the comrades of the fallen soldier. After

many months of correspondence, it was finally ascertained which church it was. The priest affirmed that the man in question had been killed, and his relatives could now be informed where he was buried.

★ ★ ★

After the conference in Geneva, I returned by air from Zürich to Berlin. This journey was not lacking in thrills. I arrived in Stuttgart without mishap, and from there I was supposed to continue via the Madrid-Berlin plane. The airfield, which was well outside the city, and which was then undamaged, had been requisitioned by the military authorities, and while waiting for the Berlin plane, I could follow the manoeuvres of the Luftwaffe.

It was a long wait. Hour after hour passed. One of the officials asked me to lunch with him in his office. It proved that a relative of his had been repatriated via Gothenburg some weeks before, and perhaps this was the reason why he was so extraordinarily kind to me. It also appeared that he was a representative of the Gestapo in that particular area, but I did not discover this until later.

We finished our lunch. Still no plane was in sight. I was preparing to go to Stuttgart and try to get a room in an hotel, when the commandant suddenly came to inform me that the plane was approaching. They were going to try to reach Berlin the same day, although weather forecasts were not very favourable.

It was not exactly a pleasant trip. At that time, blind flying technique had not advanced to the extent it has today. The closer we came to Berlin, the lower the ceiling became, thus lessening our chances of landing at Templehof.

We flew in over Berlin's suburbs while a German bombing

squadron passed by, heading west to perform its nightly mission. Some minutes afterwards, we circled over Templehof. To fly through the layer of clouds was like diving into thick porridge. Next to me was a young German pilot, and when I asked him his opinion about landing prospects, he shook his head doubtfully. We circled time after time, until suddenly, a church spire rushed past in the milky white fog, only a few yards from the wing tip. Otherwise we saw nothing. The pilot made one effort after another to land, and had to give up each time. Finally he succeeded, and we landed. The Swedish Minister, Richert, was there to welcome me and, having followed our efforts to land from the Templehof control tower, he said that he hardly expected things to end happily. Afterwards we drove to a manor house in the country called Alt Döbern, which the Swedish Legation had rented for the evacuation of their entire personnel. The fog was so thick that we could only proceed inch by inch.

Sunday was spent quietly at Alt Döbern, and on Monday morning, the twenty-second of November, I drove with the Minister and his personnel into Berlin to confer with the German authorities. The first person I met was the chief of the foreign division of the German Red Cross, Herr Hartmann, a man of the old school with whom the Swedish Red Cross had collaborated for many years, and who, despite the Hitler régime, still held his post. He promised to do all he could to interest the authorities and the leaders of the German Red Cross in the continuation of prisoner exchanges. He hinted that it might be possible to include civilian internees in the next repatriation. This was achieved when the subsequent exchange took place in Gothenburg.

As I have said, Hartmann was a man of the old school. The

rest of the German Red Cross, however, had been highly nazified. A typical example was the acting chief Obergruppenführer Grawitz, a pronounced party man who was highly in favour during the Hitler régime. In the course of a long conversation I had with him later, he developed his general views and attitude in a characteristically Nazi spirit. Humanity was, for him, an outdated and old-fashioned concept. He said that youth should be educated for war. The word humanity should be banned. It should be replaced by chivalry. The German Red Cross was certainly very well run from the technical point of view. But ideologically, it had been totally incorporated into the Nazi community. I should add that Obergruppenführer Grawitz committed suicide some months after my conference with him. Perhaps, inwardly, he was not as sure of his ideals as he would have made it appear.

By this time I should have met Grawitz and representatives from the German Foreign Office. However, this meeting did not materialize. Instead, I came to know wartime Berlin.

I stayed at the Swedish Legation at Tiergartenstrasse 36, where Minister Richert was my very pleasant and hospitable host. On the evening of November the twenty-second, he had invited to dinner some of the ladies and gentlemen of the Legation. When I entered the drawing-room, the inevitable question was posed: was there going to be a bombing attack that night or not? I felt that we could be relatively at ease on that evening. There was still a heavy blanket of fog over Berlin. Richert, however, did not share my opinion. Experience had taught him that it was on just such evenings that Allied raids were most likely to occur. His prophecy proved correct. Just as we were going in to dinner a message was telephoned that warnings had come from the air defence

authorities. An attack was imminent. We had just sat down when the air raid sirens sounded. We discussed for a moment whether we should continue our dinner or whether we should go to the excellent shelter under the Legation which had just been completed by Swedish workmen. Hearing the roar of approaching planes we chose the latter course. Some of the Swedish personnel had already gathered in the large and substantial shelter, and we were soon joined by several members of the Finnish Legation, whose shelter had not yet been completed.

All hell broke loose. This was obviously a large scale raid. Fire wardens soon reported that incendiary bombs had set fire to the attic and we rushed up to extinguish the blaze. However, it was too dangerous to fight the fire immediately because of the raid, and we returned to the shelter. More and more Swedes, who had first fled to cellars in the houses where they lived, soon arrived. These cellars were not strong enough to resist the concussion of explosions and falling masonry. We learned that the other three Legation buildings were also on fire and that they were heavily damaged.

The all-clear signal was sounded after an hour and a half, and we went out. The houses nearby were ablaze, and the fire burned fiercely in the attic of the Legation. While efforts were being made to extinguish it, we tried to save a number of valuables in the upper two storeys. After that, we started carrying the Legation archives down to the shelter, where we were soon confined again by another alarm. This raid only lasted a short time, however. When the second all-clear came we found that all telephone connections had been cut off and access to water was very limited. The councillor of the Legation, Von Post, and I went out to try to contact the nearest

police station and the German Foreign Office in an effort to have fire engines sent to the Legation, which could still be saved. We started down Tiergartenstrasse by car but were soon stopped. Fallen trees and masses of rubble made it impossible for our vehicle to proceed. We continued on foot. I shall never forget the sights we witnessed.

It was blowing hard. Soot and ashes from burning houses were whirling about, and we were nearly blinded. Sirens screamed as fire engines rushed by. The streets were full of people, apathetic, worn, and tired. Here and there were little groups of people, families gathered about the furniture they had succeeded in saving from destruction. This night in Berlin, from the twenty-second to the twenty-third of November, 1943, was one of the most terrible I have ever experienced.

Von Post and I had succeeded in contacting the authorities, but they could do nothing for us. All communications were severed. When we returned to the Legation, we found that the top floor had already been destroyed by fire. There was not much hope of saving the building. At that point an incident occurred which was rather typical of the German mentality, at least as it was during the Hitler régime. A German is used to obeying. His ambition is to execute an order received exactly as he has been instructed. Outside the burning Legation building was a division of the Berlin fire brigade. The street had been torn up and the fire engines could not proceed farther. I turned to the commander and asked him if he would help us save the Legation from complete destruction. He refused categorically. He had been ordered to extinguish a fire some blocks farther on. This and nothing else was his task. I tried in vain to explain that he could not possibly reach his destination, that he was thus unable to carry out his assignment, and that

in the circumstances, he could certainly be more useful helping us than standing idly by twiddling his thumbs. He still refused. Orders were orders. The Legation could go on burning.

At dawn, when the raid finally ended, Richert and I went out in the Tiergarten to survey the damage. Terrible sights met our eyes. The Legation was almost totally destroyed. Only the walls were left. The same fate had befallen the other three Legation buildings. One of them had been hit by a high-explosive bomb and had completely collapsed. Round about, the same destruction prevailed. The only houses which had not suffered direct hits were, through an extraordinary caprice of fate, the Italian and Japanese Embassies. I remember saying to Richert, as we walked through the streets on this sad autumn morning, that if one were to arrive home and meet a Swedish gentleman who was upset over having been improperly placed at the dinner table, one would consider him very much out of touch with reality.

A deadly silence covered the whole town. Thick columns of smoke still rose from the burning houses. Great masses of people thronged the streets on their way to places where they could get help. They had lost their homes and possessions and the future seemed to them empty and meaningless. Total war had this night shown itself at its worst. It nurtured bitter thoughts. So this was where civilization was leading us. Here was the drama which beset the life of modern man. The curtain had not only risen in Berlin, but also in London and Warsaw, Rotterdam and elsewhere. The whole thing was like a nightmare. Certain conclusions I came to during that horrible night I should like to record.

In the first place, it is clear that no plans, however well for-

mulated, will function under such circumstances. It is impossible to maintain communications. Everyone must realize that individual initiative is a very important factor, and that each must deal with eventualities as he thinks best. I do not mean that a strong air defence discipline is unnecessary; far from that. But subordinate authorities cannot depend on communications for instruction from above, they must rely on themselves. In the second place, personal courage plays a very important part. In this connection I think the task of the fire wardens especially important. While concentrating on one structure, they cannot afford to be frightened by what is happening in the adjacent buildings. However dangerous it may be, they must do their utmost to extinguish the fire bombs which have hit the building and rescue the occupants. Another detail I should like to stress is the advantage of having goggles available. With the aid of these, one can pass among burning buildings without being blinded.

Even though that night on the twenty-second of November, in Berlin, was one of the most terrible I have experienced, I would not have missed it. In the face of the frightful drama which unfolded before my eyes, I felt how insignificant the individual becomes in the general picture. None has the right to boast about what he or she may have accomplished. That fiery night in Berlin thoroughly impressed upon me the appalling realities of total war.

On my return to Stockholm on the twenty-third, I reported to the President of the Red Cross and to the supervisory body the results of my conferences in Geneva, receiving their approval of my proposals. I contacted the Russian Legation in Stockholm to ask permission to visit Leningrad and Moscow. I wanted to discuss with the authorities and with the leaders of

the Russian R.C. plans for an exchange of prisoners of war and medical personnel.

The Russian Minister, Mme. Kollontay, received me in the afternoon, and we discussed in a most informal way the possibilities for my journey, and a number of other questions concerning Red Cross activities. Like many others, I can truthfully say that Mme. Kollontay was a very fascinating person with great initiative, in spite of years of ill-health.

Like many others, I can also testify that she had a warm interest in the Northern countries, including Finland where she grew up. Without a doubt her work in Stockholm was of great importance to Sweden. Mme. Kollontay belonged to that generation of outstanding Russian personalities who participated in the Revolution from its very inception in 1917. Everything points to the conclusion that her words, in consequence of this, and in view of her long, wise and clever diplomatic activities, carried weight in Moscow.

From the very beginning, Mme. Kollontay showed great interest in my application for a Russian visa. She promised to take up the matter personally with the Russian Foreign Office. She was, however, doubtful about the chances of getting into the Russian camps. I had a feeling that in spite of her personal interest, she was pessimistic about the possibilities for my journey.

I tried to point out that, even from a Russian point of view, it might be valuable for a neutral observer to study conditions in the camps. I stressed that the opinion was widely held that the Russians treated their prisoners of war unsatisfactorily. An objective clarification of this question ought therefore to have been of interest to the Russians.

In parenthesis, many people have since asked my opinion about this. I have never been able to give a satisfactory

reply. The sources of information have been inadequate. However, sometimes the Swedish Red Cross receives information from prisoners of war in Russia. Some of our representatives have also had the opportunity to talk personally with a number of repatriated prisoners. On the strength of this information, one concludes that conditions in Russian camps are not particularly bad. It is by no means easy to live in such a camp for a long period, with limited rations, hard labour and a severe climate. Uncertainty about how long confinement will last, and about the fate of the family at home must also be very depressing. To be entirely fair, however, I must point out that the very alarming rumours which have circulated time and again about conditions in Russian camps are greatly exaggerated, as far as I can tell. It would be desirable for the Russian leaders to give observers from the International Committee of the Red Cross, or from some other neutral international organizations, the opportunity to see for themselves what conditions are really like. For my part, I am convinced that the opinion I have expressed is true—but at the same time I want to emphasize that this is only in regard to prison camps, and not to concentration camps in which civilians are held in so-called slave labour.

My conversations with Mme. Kollontay continued. Every few months I visited her and inquired if any answer from Moscow had arrived. At the same time I contacted the Swedish Minister in Moscow and asked him to investigate the matter. In the meantime, another plan was evolved: namely, that we should try to get in touch with the provisional Polish government in Lublin, in order to find out in which regions in Poland Swedish aid could be given after the war. The only way to get to Lublin during the prevailing conditions of war, however,

was to travel via Moscow and therefore I was even more anxious about the Russian project.

During one of the many discussions, it was brought to my attention that there might be a way to improve the chances of my receiving the Russian visa, which I wanted so badly. A fairly large number of Baltic people had succeeded in getting into Sweden during the war. This obviously irritated the Russian government very much. She wanted these people to be sent back to their countries. I was told that if I could be instrumental in settling this question as Moscow desired, my application might then receive more favourable attention. Of course my reply was negative. I pointed out that the question of the Baltic people was a matter with which the Red Cross could not deal, and that it would have to be handled by the Swedish government.

Despite all this, it looked by the end of 1944 as if the situation would improve. The Swedish Minister in Moscow sent me very encouraging information. One of the Vice-commissars of the Russian Foreign Office had informed him that he approved of my proposal. I therefore believed that sometime in the beginning of 1945 I would be able to start my Russian journey.

However, the entire plan came to nothing. Mme. Kollontay had resigned as minister and returned to Moscow, and I very soon understood that I had nothing to hope for. In my last discussion I was told that the problem of getting quarters presented difficulties. The matter was finished.

I am the first to regret that a personal contact could not have been effected. My experience has taught me that just such contacts are the best way of clearing up possible misunderstandings.

VII

PEOPLE IN AIR RAID SHELTERS

A NIGHT in an air raid shelter, no matter where, is the same sad, dreary, and oppressive experience. The drama is repeated everywhere. The air raid warnings sound, the people rush to their shelters, mostly women, children and old men, since the young are in military service. They sit listening, silent and tense. First they hear the increasing roar of approaching planes. Then they hear the explosions of the bombs and the crash of falling buildings. While anti-aircraft guns chatter, they speculate about where the bombs have fallen, how near or how far off. Then they come up into the blacked-out streets. Here and there fires are burning. Searchlight beams still sweep the night sky. First-aid patrols are in action. Fire brigades and ambulances rush by. Then the inevitable question is asked: "Is my home still standing? Or have I become one of the hundreds of thousands of people who have in this way lost all they possessed? Will I become one of those who must wander about in search of a new place to live?"

Thus it was in all countries involved in the war of 1939 to 1945. It struck the civilian population as severely as it did the military. Everywhere were the same problems and the same suffering. Everywhere people asked themselves the same question: "Will the bomb that falls to-night have my name on it?" Everywhere life was filled with the knowledge that if one had escaped one night, the same drama would be repeated the

next night, and the next, and the next. These people in the shelters feared, perhaps more than death, the dark and frightful future awaiting them if they lost their homes. They had all witnessed the fate of many of their neighbours and fellows. They had all seen the sorrowful sight of homeless people wandering through the streets looking for places which they hoped could offer some refuge. These bombed out crowds looked like lemming runs and consisted, for the most part, of old men, women and children. They walked into a seemingly hopeless future which had nothing to offer them.

It was the same everywhere. I thought of that when, in the spring of 1944, I had the opportunity to visit London. I had not been there since the coronation of George VI, which I attended with my family and my parents-in-law, and I was now able to compare the English population's reaction to air warfare with that of the Germans.

During my conferences in Geneva, a desire had been expressed that I should go to England to contact the British Red Cross and other Red Cross organizations represented in London. I had also intended to get in touch with the leaders of UNRRA in Europe. The flight to London was not without its novel aspects. At that time there did not exist any regular air communications between Sweden and England. However, the British Legation promised me that I could go via one of the small, very fast Mosquito planes used for carrying mail between Stockholm and London, and which could take passengers, if need be. It was on the twelfth of February that I boarded the plane. First the pilot gave me a very thorough lesson in the art of using a parachute, and then crammed me into a narrow space which was ordinarily the bomb bay, but which I was now to occupy. "You had better sit tight,"

explained the pilot with a smile, "in case the bomb bay doors open. I should hate to lose you." Then I was given an oxygen mask, as the plane was forced to fly very high, and we took off.

If I remember rightly, we left Bromma airport about eleven thirty in the evening. Four hours later our journey was over. Because of bad weather we were unable to land at our destination, St. Leuchars aerodrome in Scotland. Instead, we had to land on one of the RAF fields near Lean Loss.

I spent the night there, very well cared for by Squadron Leader Slade, and in the morning I shared breakfast with the young RAF pilots. As always in the case of English messes, especially those of the RAF, a very informal atmosphere, typical of the English, prevailed. In these messes, there is no stiffness between officers and men. They are all comrades. They can be human beings without violating service discipline. In such a group of young aviators the mood is carefree, superficially at least. They have become accustomed to living close to death. When a comrade dies there is little said.

When I arrived in London the following morning, I soon noted that there was much less destruction there than in Berlin and that the situation was not as terrible and depressing. The cheerful atmosphere I had encountered in the RAF messes in Scotland was, to a certain extent, characteristic of the population as a whole. It is true that London and many other English towns had endured frightful bombing attacks and suffered great losses. But by and large, London was the same as before. German propaganda in that respect had been greatly exaggerated, and London was still in good spirits. Englishmen had retained their composure admirably through all these hardships. Above all, they had retained their own special brand of humour, which helps to lighten the atmosphere even in very

serious situations, and which undoubtedly helped sustain the morale of the London population during the worst days of the blitz.

As an example of this humour, I would like to relate a little episode which happened during a luncheon at the Swedish Legation. The Swedish Minister, Björn Prytz, had invited the Foreign Minister, Anthony Eden, the Minister of Economic Warfare, Selbourne, and the President of the Executive Committee of the British Red Cross, Field-Marshal Sir Philip Chetwode. Eden, whom I had met casually some time before during his visit in Stockholm, described in a lively and humorous way, how, during an attack the night before, a bomb had fallen on Whitehall and caused much damage in the rooms of the Foreign Office. Eden had scarcely finished before the British Red Cross chief exploded with laughter: "That was a jolly good shot, right in the Bull's eye." This amused everyone. The German humour—and there was German humour even during the war—was quite different.

After lunch I had the opportunity to discuss with Eden the questions which I had come to investigate. I had a letter from Prince Carl to Eden, suggesting that the British government should co-operate in getting exchange of prisoners started again. Prince Carl pointed out that this exchange should be on a larger scale than the previous ones, and that it should also include civilian internees. Eden promised to have his experts investigate these questions as soon as possible and report to Prince Carl through the Swedish Minister. On the whole, he showed a lively interest in these matters. His gratitude for the prisoner of war exchanges which had taken place in Gothenburg the autumn before was obvious. He said he looked upon it as the most important event which had occurred in the

humanitarian field during the war. At the end of our conversation, I also touched upon the Russian problem and stressed the desirability of the Russian government's collaborating in a coming exchange. Eden stated that he completely shared the attitude of the Swedish Red Cross toward this question, but he intimated that, in his opinion, this would be difficult to accomplish.

The greater part of my ten days in London was spent in conferences with the British Red Cross and with representatives of other Red Cross organizations from the Allied countries. The discussions I had with them were, from a factual point of view, very interesting. As a Swede, I was also very happy to note the appreciation expressed by various people for the contributions the Swedish Red Cross had been able to make under the leadership of Prince Carl.

I will not weary the reader with a lot of technical details which were touched upon during these discussions. I will, however, say a few words about two meetings I had during my visit in London. One was with King Haakon of Norway. Many years had passed since I had seen him, but he had not changed a great deal. While we sat there chatting in his drawing room, I was overcome with admiration for the way in which he kept his mental and physical vitality despite all he had gone through. It was easy to understand the important rôle his personality played in the Norwegian underground's struggle for freedom. One could not fail to appreciate his burning love for his country and his people, nor his absolute conviction that right would triumph. When I gave him a packet of Norwegian ersatz cigarettes which I had with me, there came at once a melancholy and at the same time humorous look into his eye—I had tried one of those cigarettes myself,

and I can assure you that the only thing they had in common with ordinary ones was that they burned when you lit them. For him they were a greeting from Norway which eloquently testified to the situation there. His humour asserted itself when he said: "It will be interesting for me to try a Norwegian war-time cigarette, but I believe I will make my ADC try a few first. If he, contrary to expectation, is still alive when he has smoked them, I will gladly try one myself."

The other meeting was with the widowed Queen Maria of Yugoslavia. She lived with her son in exile in London, and was very active in helping her suffering people. She asked me if the Swedish Red Cross could help the Yugoslavs whom the Germans had taken to Norway. She had received information that their living conditions were intolerable. As I heard later on there were about two thousand of them. Her plan was to get food parcels from America and she now wanted to know if the Swedish Red Cross could forward them to Norway. Of course I promised to do all I could, but I had strong doubts that this matter could be arranged. It proved that my doubts were justified. When we in Sweden took up the question with the German officials, they were definitely opposed to the plan.

Before I left London, I was asked to make a statement to the representatives of the Swedish press. I was very dubious. Of course, nothing ought yet to be published about the planned exchange of prisoners of war, as no one knew what the results would be. However, I tried an experiment. Quite candidly, I told the reporters present about my negotiations in Geneva and London. I also told them that prospects were good for a new exchange via Sweden in the course of the year. At the same time, however, I asked them not to publish anything about matters as they stood then. The main reason for keeping

these plans quiet was that publication might raise false hopes in the various prison camps. I wanted to avoid, at any price, a repetition of the disappointment experienced by so many soldiers on the English Channel earlier in the war. It is with real admiration and with gratitude that I now think back on the loyalty the Swedish press showed me that time. As a matter of fact, I had a similar experience in Germany at the end of the war when the Swedish Red Cross was engaged in liberating the Scandinavian concentration camp prisoners. These experiences have strengthened my conviction that frankness with the press is the only right policy. To try to lay a smoke screen or to make false statements is a procedure bound to bring the wrong repercussions.

My last memory of London at that time was the air attack which started just when I arrived at the blacked-out railway station to take the train to Scotland. The attendant told me that we would be delayed, as it was not advisable to start during the attack. Only a few days before, this train had been hit by a bomb just outside London. From the window of my compartment I could follow the drama: German flares dropping over the city, English fighter planes climbing up to intercept, and anti-aircraft guns in full action. Then it became quiet again and the train slipped out into the night.

VIII

THE END APPROACHES

LATER in the year, toward the end of October, I had another opportunity to visit London. The Swedish Government Committee for International Aid had started its activities, under the chairmanship of Birger Ekeberg, then President of the Court of Appeals. This committee wanted to send out representatives to get in touch with British and other Allied aid organizations, and also to try to contact Allied headquarters, which were located, after the invasion, near Paris. The secretary of the Government Committee, Associate Member of the Court of Appeals Leijonhufvud, the chairman of the Doctor's Society for International Aid, Dr. Ulf Nordwall, and I were assigned to make the journey.

On a dark October evening, we boarded an American plane at Bromma airport. This plane was being used to repatriate American pilots who had been interned in Sweden, and we had permission to use it for this trip. The procedure of my former journey was repeated. We were given detailed instructions on the use of our parachutes and, on that occasion, I noticed that a small whistle was attached to each one. When I asked what it was for, the American pilot answered that it would be useful to have if one had to parachute into the North Sea, as it enabled one to call for help. He also pointed out a small electric lamp on the lifebelt. I have to admit that I felt little enthusiasm. I had visions of myself floating in the icy waters of the North

Sea energetically blowing the whistle, which most certainly could not be heard beyond a few hundred yards, and perhaps being saved by some passing ship.

The flight went well, however, and we arrived safely at the St. Leuchars airport. We continued from Scotland to London where, after a few days of conference with various aid organizations and the UNRRA delegates in England, we received an invitation to Allied Headquarters in France.

We took off on a clear November morning from an airfield near London in an American plane. Our pilot was a brigadier general on the staff of General Spaatz, chief of the Allied Strategic Air Forces in Europe. A strange feeling took possession of us when we crossed the English Channel and flew in over some of the most devastated parts of France. This was the region where the invasion had started and where the tide of war had turned. We had asked ourselves how that part of the country would look. All we could see from the plane was destruction and devastation.

Soon we approached the fighting itself. When we landed on a temporary airstrip near Versailles, our impressions of the devastating march of war grew stronger. Everywhere we saw burned houses and wrecked aircraft. General Spaatz' headquarters, which we reached later, gave the impression of being more mobile than permanent. One had the feeling they were prepared to move at any moment if developments called for it. The General himself lived in a trailer, fully prepared to move at short notice.

In Paris, I had the opportunity of conferring with the French Minister of Health. The entire city bore scars of the war. In the streets, the scene was dominated by Allied military cars, while the congenial Paris taxi drivers were conspicuous by

their absence. I remember the small vaudeville theatre in Montmartre where we spent an evening. The arrangements were as primitive as possible and there was no scenery. Nevertheless, the place was filled, and the atmosphere was wildly enthusiastic. The whole programme dealt with conditions during the occupation, with a mixture of incredible humour and the deepest seriousness. The people openly expressed their joy at once again being free.

During my stay in Paris, we lived in the magnificent Ritz Hotel which had been requisitioned by the American military authorities. It was quite curious to hear the French attendant who took care of my room describe the period of the German occupation. Of course, the Ritz had been one of the hotels taken over by the Germans and the attendant had served a German general during his stay in Paris. It was interesting to hear the rather favourable comments this French "valet" made about his German "guest." He did not hesitate to point out, even though he was in strong opposition to Germany and the occupation, that even in the German army there were many people who could be respected.

We wanted, in the first place, to ascertain the attitude of the Allied authorities regarding the aid which Sweden would be able to give after the war. Among those we contacted during this journey, about which I have given a few glimpses in my book, *The Curtain Falls*, were some of the most prominent figures of the Second World War. It was the Allied Supreme Commander, General Eisenhower, who, in his headquarters outside Versailles, explained to us his views on post-war problems in his powerful and concise manner. Also there was the American Ambassador in London, John Winant, one of the most genuine people I have ever met, obviously a man of the

THE END APPROACHES

highest ability and, in addition, a person with a strongly idealistic and deeply humane spirit. His personnel loved him, a member of his embassy staff told me, despite the fact that occasionally his methods were somewhat original. When working, he would wake his secretary in the middle of the night and ask him to fetch a cigar from the room next door. When, in the autumn of 1947, he took his life under circumstances so far unexplained, a man was lost who had given more than most. My own impression during the long conferences I had with him was that his entire efforts were directed towards the service of others.

Various people pointed out to us that it would be particularly important to establish Swedish aid activities in Poland after the war. This was confirmed when we got in touch with the Polish government in London after our trip to Paris. The Polish representative pointed out that Sweden could perform an important task in Poland by organizing centres for Displaced Persons. It was stressed that it would be of great help to displaced Poles and accelerate their repatriation. We were informed that about 3,900,000 Poles were living outside the borders of their country at that time, of whom about 2,500,000 were in Germany, 700,000 in Russia, and 800,000 in other countries. As far as I could learn later, these figures were understated. However, this gives us some idea of the gigantic reconstruction work facing Poland.

The return journey was not without certain adventures. We were to fly to Scotland, but on account of fog, we were forced to land on an American military airfield in Wales. It was there that our Permanent Under-Secretary of State to the Treasury, Dag Hammarskjöld, who had joined our company, had to answer all the questions which American pilots asked about

Sweden. He managed this very well. Their comrades, whom we had interned, had obviously told them about their experiences in Sweden and this had stimulated their interest. I well remember the icy cold night we spent in the sheet metal barracks. It was equally cold in the English military plane in which we finally left Scotland. It was a long flight. A report received concerning German activity over the North Sea made it impossible for the pilot to take the direct route to Stockholm, and instead, he made a big swing to the north. We were glad when we landed at Bromma in the middle of the night.

The curtain then rose for the last act of the Second World War.

IX

THE CURTAIN FALLS

IN my book, *The Curtain Falls*, I have told about my experiences in the spring of 1945 and I shall not describe them in detail again. I went to Germany in February to investigate the possibilities for the Red Cross to save the Scandinavians in German concentration camps—to rescue them from the horrible treatment to which they were exposed and from certain death during the general chaos bound to result from the fall of the Third Reich. Our success is well known. We were able to free not only Scandinavians, but also a large number of women of other nationalities. In order to achieve this end I had to get in touch with Heinrich Himmler, the chief of the Gestapo and of the concentration camps. During my conversations with him, events developed in such a way that suddenly I found myself in the centre of power politics.

Since I wrote *The Curtain Falls*, many different books have been published dealing with the last days of Hitler and events in connection with Germany's capitulation. To a great extent, these books are based on official and secret reports made by the Allied military authorities, on facts brought to light during the Nuremberg Trials and on interrogations of Germans taken into custody. Intensive research has been conducted concerning events in the Berlin bunker during the last days of April 1945. Nevertheless, despite these, and in spite of all the careful deductions, experts have not been able to agree in detail as to what really happened.

The thesis presented in *The Curtain Falls*, which naturally, at that time, I could only base on personal observation and on statements made by people I encountered, was that Hitler should be considered dead; that he was killed by certain of his collaborators, and that Himmler took part in the plot. The authors who, since then, have stated their opinion and who, on account of their service with the armies of occupation, have had an opportunity of reading the vast amount of material accumulated since—I am referring mainly to the English Professor, H. R. Trevor-Roper, and the Americans, Herbert Moore and James W. Barrett—seem in any case to agree with me on this point: Hitler is no longer alive. He ended his days in the Berlin bunker immediately before the capitulation. This seems to me the only essential point in the entire question. Probably the details of the events in the Berlin Bunker will remain hidden for all time. They are shrouded in mystery. There is no clear and conclusive evidence of Hitler's death. It is practically impossible to prove that a person is dead unless the body is produced, and Hitler's body has not been found. However, the available testimony and all probabilities indicate that the leader of the Third Reich is no longer alive. Occasionally, rumours have sprung up to the effect that Hitler is alive and succeeded in escaping from Berlin just before the city fell. In my opinion, these rumours are completely unfounded. They only served to foster, in certain German circles, the wishful thinking of those who cling to the faith that their "Führer" some day will return in the same way as Napoleon returned for a final attempt during the "Hundred Days." Hitler may have been murdered or he may have committed suicide. The most important fact is, and will be, to establish that he died an ignominious death, that he realized that the system he built had crum-

THE CURTAIN FALLS

bled and that it constituted a frightful disaster for all his people. I can add that, on the surface at least, it appears that there is little support for Hitler in Germany now. "No one cares about Hitler and his collaborators" is often the answer when one talks with a German. Hitler destroyed Germany. They are through with him.

The Germany I knew in the spring of 1945 lived in fear and trembling under an unscrupulous and ruthless dictatorship. Nowadays we know all about this reign of terror. We also know that even in Germany certain efforts were made to replace the cruel régime with sensible people. But these efforts were often bungled and desperate and they were confined to minor groups. The German people as a whole never made a serious attempt to cast off the yoke. They never seriously protested against the anti-semitic policy, against conditions in the occupied countries, or against cruelties in the concentration camps. "We knew nothing of all this" is generally the answer when one puts these questions in the Germany of today. Of course, one cannot accept this explanation. One is thus faced with the problem of the cause of German passivity. One can say that it is easy to criticize when one is not in a position where opposition means a concentration camp, or sudden death for oneself, or, above all, privation and suffering for one's family, who may be taken as hostages. On the other hand, one can point out that in Denmark and Norway, and in most other occupied countries, there were marvellous examples of the will to sacrifice in order to fight Naziism, the foe of liberty. Everything was risked, their own lives and those of their relatives, to fight for the cause which they considered right and worth while, worth dying for. Even the Germans have given countless examples of courage and self-sacrifice when fighting for their country. But there was no general uprising against Naziism.

Does the reason for this lie in the German mentality? I have often puzzled over these problems without finding an answer.

It is generally accepted that the German is disposed to obey. He feels most at home when there is someone who has the power of command over him. "But, Herr Major, it is you who must command," a German official exploded desperately when he was informed by a British occupation officer that the British had again decided to put the civil administration of the British Zone in German hands. If a German does not feel somebody above him, he becomes uncertain and confused. Due to some sort of mental indolence, he does not want to form his own opinion or to act in accordance with it. He wants to swim with the stream, act with the masses. If there is no one to direct, he is swept into a vortex. Everything goes to pieces. In Germany, the people prefer to be of the same opinion. Only in this way do they melt together into harmonious unity. This may seem to be a harsh judgment on a fundamentally capable people. In order to judge the very complicated question of the future development of Germany, it is important that the German problem should be understood as a psychological phenomenon.

It may seem strange for a Swede to state these opinions. We in Sweden have not lived under a reign of terror in paralysing uncertainty, and we have, therefore, extremely few qualifications for understanding life under such oppression and lack of freedom. I will not try to exonerate the guilt of the German people. One thing is certain, however, if one is justified in criticizing the Germans for their lack of perspective and initiative, the same reproaches can be directed against other people who today live under the same oppressive and terrifying conditions, and whose leadership is fully comparable to that of the Nazis.

X

AMONG PRISONERS OF WAR NORTH OF THE ARCTIC CIRCLE

NORWAY and Denmark were free. Now at last the Swedish Aid organization could start implementing the first point of their post-war programme: to bring relief to our Scandinavian sister nations. The first task I was given after I finished my mission in Germany was to go to Oslo.

The Swedish Aid to Norway organization had carried on extensive activities in that country during the war. For the most part its work consisted of distributing so called "Swedish soup" to thousands of children. These activities which, as far as could be judged, had really been of great importance, would of course be continued. Nevertheless, when I arrived in Oslo on May the sixteenth, I was eager to see if some other form of Swedish aid might not be needed. It was most important to contact the Norwegian officials as soon as possible, as they, together with the Allied authorities, were on the point of drafting a programme for their activities in the medical and welfare fields for the next few years.

I arrived in Oslo on an Aktiebolaget Aerotransport plane, one of the first Swedish aircraft to land on a Norwegian air-field after the liberation. Fornebys Airport was commanded by men of the Norwegian resistance movement, handsome boys who gave the impression of being very powerful, even though their uniforms were somewhat motley and their weapons

varied. I received a very strong impression of how cleverly the Norwegian resistance movement was managed when I dined that evening at the home of my old friend, the National Curator, Harry Fett. Some of the leading men of the resistance were present; the President of the Norwegian Supreme Court, Paal Berg, Bishop Berggrav, and a number of other well-known Norwegians who had been imprisoned in Grini.* They all talked about their experiences and they told me, among other things, that only a very few knew the names of the real leaders of the movement. For example, Paal Berg had lived a long time in the house of Harry Fett, just outside Oslo, and his host had not known what an important and responsible position Berg held in the resistance. Harry Fett found out only after the German capitulation.

Norway's national holiday, the seventeenth of May, with its wild enthusiasm, was a moving experience. Every single person in Oslo had gone out to pay tribute to the royal family, represented by Crown Prince Olav, and to the members of the resistance movement. A religious service was held at the fortress of Akershus in front of the wall where so many Norwegian patriots had been shot. Bishop Berggrav preached and the Crown Prince received the Norwegian soldiers trained in Sweden. Then we witnessed the most important part of the drama, the huge mass demonstration in front of the palace. Tremendous crowds of people had gathered to express their gratitude for their newly regained freedom and the feeling of unity which inspired the whole of Norway at that time.

The conferences I had with Crown Prince Olav, whom I had not had the opportunity of meeting since the New York

* A well-known Oslo prison where many Norwegians were imprisoned by the Germans.—*Translator.*

AMONG PRISONERS OF WAR

World's Fair, with the Norwegian Minister of Social Affairs, Stöstad, and with the chief of the British military Commission, General Thorne, resulted in an agreement that Swedish activities should aim at aiding Russian prisoners used in slave labour in various German camps during the occupation, particularly in the north of Norway. It was necessary to organize hospitals for these prisoners where they could get necessary care before repatriation. According to the information we received, there were sixty thousand Russian and ten thousand Western Allied prisoners and forced labourers in Norway. Furthermore, over one hundred thousand Norwegian citizens had been forced from their home regions in the north of Norway to some other part of the country. The Norwegian authorities lacked the facilities and supplies with which to assist these displaced foreigners. To begin with, they wanted material aid, primarily food, but also medicine and bedding were lacking, and they would be grateful if they could get doctors and nurses to help with medical assistance in prison camps. They considered that such material and personal aid to the north of Norway would not only relieve the Norwegian food situation, but also constitute important help to Russia. The Red Cross, through the Swedish Committee for International Aid, received a government grant to enable the organization of such relief activities. The Swedish Aid to Norway organization promised in addition that food should be furnished for a considerable number of Russian prisoners of war.

After a few days in Oslo, I returned to Sweden and the supervisory body of the Swedish Red Cross approved of my proposal to organize aid activities in the North of Norway under the auspices of the Red Cross.

By the middle of June a Swedish Red Cross detachment was

ready to leave. After a conference with the Norwegian authorities in Fauske, a hospital had been set up to take care of Russian prisoners of war badly in need of treatment. Ten days later, on the twenty-seventh of June, I left for the north of Norway to view conditions there and at the same time to inspect the hospital of the Swedish Red Cross in Fauske.

A dazzling and beautiful view confronted us when we landed on Bodö airfield in the north of Norway after crossing the immense Swedish-Norwegian mountain ranges. From the air we could also, however, see indications of war's devastation. When the Germans occupied Norway they bombed a great number of Norwegian ports in order to make it impossible for King Haakon to flee to England. This little Norwegian harbour town was badly damaged. About sixty per cent. of the houses were bombed.

Accompanied by my Red Cross colleagues and about ten journalists, Swedish and foreign, who had come along to study conditions in the north of Norway, especially in the Russian prison camps, I travelled from Bodö to Fauske, a distance of about forty miles. Immediately we realized the nature of life in this part of the country. For example, near the airport was a German camp with a number of aircraft and trucks nearby, and on the other side of the road was a little town of barracks from which the Belgian, Dutch, Polish and Czechoslovakian flags were flying. There were only a few steps between friend and foe, but conditions had changed now. Of course, all the camps were surrounded by barbed wire, but their inhabitants could come and go as they wished. Regulations in the German camps, however, were much more restrictive. Signs had been put up stating within which areas Germans were allowed to move. If they had to leave the camp on duty, they had to carry

a white arm band and have passes. All German vehicles had to mount white flags. Guard duty was performed by a great extent by young boys of the resistance, sixteen or seventeen years old, with the prescribed machine guns under their arms.

After a beautiful automobile ride, we came to the Swedish hospital. In addition to their services here, the Swedish doctors and nurses helped take care of Russian prisoners in a hospital under Russian administration nearby. The Swedish Hospital contained about two hundred patients, most of whom suffered from tuberculosis or malnutrition. When I went round the hospital rooms and talked with the patients through an interpreter, many stories of disrupted lives were unfolded to me, and I was told much about the brutal treatment they had been exposed to by the Germans. From what was told me, the Russians had been full of forebodings in the beginning. They had believed that it was the Germans who had taken over the hospital again. But after it became clear to them that it was Swedes who were caring for them they were very pleased. The Russian gratitude for Swedish aid was obvious. In memory of the visit to the Fauske hospital, I still possess a few small things which were presented to me and which gave me real pleasure; proofs of the Russians' fantastic ability to make attractive souvenirs of the most simple material.

A Norwegian Major explained to us how the prisoners of war were used during the German occupation on a project which seems almost fantastic. There has never been any railway communication between the south and the north of Norway. Mo in Rana, north of Trondheim, was the last station on the line from Oslo. It is true that the Norwegians had had plans to continue the railway up to Bodö, but these plans had never been fulfilled. The Germans decided to carry them out,

however. They went still further, and decided to continue the railway right up to Narvik and if possible all the way up to Kirkenäs. This meant the line running for miles on end through tunnels, in valleys, and high over mountains. It is obvious how terribly strenuous the work of laying the track must have been. For this task the Germans had mostly chosen prisoners of war and imprisoned civilians from various occupied countries. There were at the end of the war, in Nordland county alone, between twenty-six and twenty-seven thousand slave labourers, which means about a third of all the war prisoners in Norway.

The day after our arrival, I had the opportunity of being present at the departure on a German ship of a number of Russians from Megård, a little harbour town on the Sörfolda Fjord. The episode was not without interest. Various Russians spoke, but the audience did not appear very interested. Their thoughts seemed to be far away. Perhaps they were thinking about their dear ones at home. The command of the ships was in German hands, though the transfer was under Russian management. When the gangplank was raised and the hawsers cast off a few German words of command were heard, and the Hamburg registered ship slowly backed out into the fjord. The last things we saw were a couple of enormous portraits of Stalin and Lenin raised high on the bridge.

Perhaps the most interesting part of our visit to the north of Norway was an automobile trip to a number of camps for Russian prisoners of war. The first camp we visited contained about four hundred Russians, and we were allowed to tour it guided by the Russian commander, who talked with us in a spirited way through our interpreter. The Russians greatly cherished the memory of their dead comrades, and many ex-prisoners were caring for and beautifying their cemetery.

We saw a mass grave in which, we were told, three hundred and sixty Yugoslavs were buried. These Yugoslavs had come as slaves from the opposite corner of Europe and when they arrived in northern Norway there had been five hundred of them. Scarcely one hundred were fit to work, however, since in the last phase of the transfer they were forced to march more than one hundred miles through snow and storm. Those who were unable to work were compelled to dig their own graves, and when it was ready, they were lined up in the grave and shot without further ado. The Germans had left no traces of these executions and had completely levelled the ground. However, thanks to the fact that some men of the resistance were observing from a nearby mountain with binoculars, the graves had been discovered.

The other camp we visited was situated above the timber line, high up in the barren mountains near Krokelta. Here about eight hundred men were imprisoned all year round. The camp was bad, and rations had been scanty and very poor. It was not difficult to imagine how these prisoners had suffered. The numerous gravestones showed that many of them had succumbed. We left this camp, the final point on our tour of inspection, in very low spirits. We were told, however, that all the camps were not as bad as that one and that some of them were in rather good shape. Before my departure, I had the pleasure of informing the Norwegian representatives that the Swedish government had made available ten thousand uniforms to be distributed among the Russian prisoners of war for their journey home.

When we took off from Bodö airport, we saw the valley and the towering mountain ranges nearby disappear into the distance. Seldom have I seen such overwhelming and wonderful

scenery. At that moment, it was very hard to imagine that so much suffering and misery could have occurred in these regions during the last few years. However, we could not forget the many prison camps strung along the projected route for the railway.

I want to relate a little episode which occurred on our return journey. One of the foreign reporters was supposed to make a radio report on our trip immediately upon our arrival in Stockholm. Shortly before we landed at Bromma he asked me to read through the script. It ended with a very dramatic picture of our visit to the Yugoslav mass grave. The climax of his story was that the bodies had not been buried deep enough, and that feet protruded from the earth. This was, I said, a detail which had apparently escaped me. When I inquired if this was really the case, he exclaimed: "No, but it makes such a striking finale for my story."

XI

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ON a hill in that part of Hamburg called "die tote Stadt", in consequence of the complete destruction there, lies an old cemetery. Looking down from this hill, all one can see is ruin. This is the view which a visitor to Germany encounters in any city which, for one reason or another, has been of military importance. House after house, block after block, street after street have been devastated. Here and there, sagging gables and blasted walls rise above the mounds of rubble. Here and there a light from one of the cellars where homeless people have taken refuge glimmers in the dusk. One recalls the official report of the authorities: of the 563,000 homes in Hamburg before the war, 277,000 have been totally destroyed and only 114,000 are wholly undamaged.

Over the little cemetery on the hill hangs a grim stillness which envelopes the whole of the dead town. The atmosphere is one of destruction and doom. The gravestones were torn up and shattered during an air raid, and walking among the gaping, black craters, one sees decayed coffins and exposed skeletons. At the spot where the cemetery gate must have been, a support upon which an alms box once rested was standing, ready to topple. The eye is caught by a faded and worn inscription, and with some difficulty one can read the words, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Against a background of the ruins of the dead town, this

inscription reads like an epitaph on the latest epoch in German history.

There are many such places in the Germany of today, which the Germans themselves like to refer to sarcastically as the Fourth Reich—while they look forward to the Fifth. If one goes to Cologne, one can see a large wooden crucifix in the ruins of what at one time was one of the most interesting churches in the old town from the point of view of the history of art. It is hanging in what used to be the chancel of the church, on a big iron support which is now covered with rust. It is only a torso. The head of Christ has been knocked off, and rain and sunshine, to which the ruined arches are exposed, have dealt harshly with the rest. When we asked the old caretaker, who had stayed in his church even after its collapse, why they had not taken down the crucifix to save at least what was left of a valuable treasure, he answered with a melancholy gesture: "It cannot be done. It is too dangerous. We have not the tools and implements necessary to take down the crucifix without risking the lives of the workmen." The whole archway was ready to collapse.

Such is the Cologne of today—devastated and powerless.

We returned to Hamburg to the mass grave in the large cemetery out in Ohlsdorff where 45,000 people sleep their last sleep—people who died during the terrifying summer nights of the twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth of July, 1943, when large portions of the city were destroyed in a bomb attack. The grave has the form of a giant cross, on which enormous beams of wood have been placed at fixed intervals listing the different sections of the town to which the dead in their lifetime belonged. At the outer edges of the cemetery are small private graves which preserve the names of at least a few of the dead.

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They tell their own story. One man commemorates his wife and his seven children, aged three to fifteen years—his entire family. Another survivor states that his wife died “as a result of a terror attack”. On a little wooden cross erected by another man in memory of his wife is a commentary on her death, laconic but very eloquent. It consists of only one word: “Warum?”

Why? This silent query written on the wooden cross in Ohlsdorff is directed to a whole nation. If one knew how the majority of the German people today would answer this question—in what spirit they would approach it—one would also know much about the road the German people intend to follow in the future.



My first visit to Germany after the Armistice was in June, 1945. I travelled with the American Military Attaché, Col. Rayens, with the Secretary of the Legation in Berlin, Torsten Brandel, and the former Brigadeführer Walter Schellenberg. The name Schellenberg was often mentioned in connection with the events I described in *The Curtain Falls*. The man who bore it had made a very considerable contribution toward helping me and other leaders of the Swedish Red Cross detachment in our efforts to save as many as possible of the prisoners in the concentration camps. Schellenberg had come to Sweden for certain conferences in connection with the capitulation. He stayed on after the Armistice and I had the opportunity to talk with him several times. I also brought him into contact with representatives of the American and British Legations in Stockholm. The discussions he had with these gentlemen resulted in an order for Schellenberg to report, as soon as possible, to the Allied Headquarters in Frankfurt am Main.

When I travelled there with Schellenberg on the eighteenth of June, I had an invitation to visit Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur Tedder (now Marshal of the Royal Air Force Lord Tedder), who was second in command to Eisenhower in the Allied Headquarters. We landed first near Kiel and then in Hamburg. An extraordinary feeling came over me when I found myself back on German soil. The last time I was there I had the task of handing over to Himmler the Allied reply to his offer of capitulation.

Scarcely two months had passed since that day. However, the impression I now received of Germany was in many ways different from my previous one. At that time the roads had been crowded with retreating German columns, the traffic slowed and hindered by continuous Allied bombings. It was the last act of a terrible drama. Now, standing on the airfield near Kiel, everything looked peaceful and quiet again. It is true that we could see a great many wrecked German planes around the temporary airstrip. But close by we also saw a peasant tending his farm work as if nothing had happened. This was my first realization of the fact that while frightful destruction had hit the German cities, on the whole, the countryside had been untouched. Already, quiet had settled over the land.

When I think back on my impressions of the Germany I knew during the years following the collapse, I clearly recall how enormously difficult it was to get an idea of the situation, to form a true picture of the underlying forces and currents. At first, I had the feeling that I was meeting with something lifeless, something apathetic and formless. Gradually this impression disappeared. After the catastrophe in May, 1945, Germany undoubtedly existed as though it were under an anæsthetic, but its influence gradually dissipated. While the crowds of refugees

made their tragic journey from the east to the west, while the population struggled with the increasingly difficult and dominating problem of finding its daily food, and fuel for an occasional fire, the average German, it seemed, became more and more conscious of the fact that a future did exist which could not altogether be ignored. The Germans began to have discussions among themselves. These discussions were often groping and halting, doubtful and cautious. You often heard groups of Germans talking about the fear which the people had felt during the twelve years of Naziism, a fear which was still among them, and about the conditions of insecurity in which the people lived, and the lack of freedom which was still their lot.

During these years, one got the impression that the Germans tacked back and forth between the foreign occupation authorities on the one side and, on the other, their own people. They knew they were totally dependent, for example, for employment on the military government, and they wanted to be on good terms with it. On the other hand, they were afraid of what the Germans themselves would say about them later on. They were afraid to take sides. They were afraid that one day, when conditions had changed in Germany, they might be called collaborators. It was an extraordinary thing, but, because of the emotional nationalistic elements in Germany, you could see growing up a problem of just the sort which was so familiar in the countries occupied by the Germans during the Second World War. Especially for the working classes, the first years of the Nazi régime appeared—and probably still appear—to have been happy. They felt that there was quiet, order and discipline in the country and, above all, they had something to eat. The idyll, the order, the quiet and the prosperity, disappeared with the war. Then many longed for “the good old days” when

there was sufficient bread and work, clothes and housing, and they were not obliged to live an underground life, which now is the case in all German towns.

Of course, this attitude is very unfortunate. But it is important to emphasize that this was the attitude prevalent in the years following the capitulation, and probably it still exists. In a way, it can be explained. The question which concerns the man-in-the-street in Germany more than any other is how he can get food and fuel, clothes and a home to live in. The existence of this problem explains the disappointment they felt and are feeling about the occupation procedure of the western Allied powers. This problem also partially explains the fact that when public opinion began to concern itself with the larger political issues, it oriented itself in a nationalistic direction.

The problem of youth was, and is, as I soon understood, a burning question in Germany as well as in the other countries which had been involved in the war and where the morale has sunk below par. During my travels in Germany, I talked with many youth leaders. Their opinions can be summed up in a word: the youth of today is totally disillusioned. For twelve years these boys were the object of Goebbels' propaganda machine. After that they were suddenly told that everything they had learned to believe in was fundamentally false. They showed a decided distrust for democratic ideals as they have been presented by the Allied Military governments. The young, like the old, compare conditions existing today with those of the Nazi régime. In many cases, they feel that conditions before 1945 were much better than they are now, and often they reach a state of complete despair.

In an official report about post-war conditions in Hamburg, there is a very interesting description of the youth problem. It

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is told there that after the capitulation, crowds of boys and girls formed groups and bands which moved along country roads living by theft and black-market dealings. One of these youths, a boy who died at the age of seventeen, left a diary from which I now give some excerpts:

"Aug. 15, 1945. We are sitting here without a penny. I am at a loss what to do. Winter is coming. For the first time I am struck by the absence of meaning in life. It is frightful to have such thoughts when one is so young. Only the memory of my parents has kept me from being guilty of worse things. I shall wait a few days.

"Seven o'clock at night. The situation has changed a little. A gleam of light is visible on the horizon. G. (one of the boy's comrades) has been in P. Unfortunately I could not go with him on account of my illness. He got coupons for seven days, but of course, we ate everything right away. Moreover he got fifteen cigarettes. Of course, we immediately sold them on the Reeperbahn. Thereafter we went to 'Allotria', and drank a bottle of wine in spite of our ragged clothes. We felt as though we were back in the good old days. We are tense with expectation waiting for what tomorrow will bring.

"Aug. 17, 1945. We could not sell our cigarettes. The price has suddenly dropped catastrophically. Yesterday the price was still two and a half marks, but now it has dropped to one. Now we would rather smoke them ourselves.

"Aug. 20, 1945. We are going to Bremen to get food and things. Unfortunately we have none.

"Aug. 21, 1945. Was at the Ration Office and received ration coupons for a seven day trip. . . ."

The entries in the diary end with these words. They speak for themselves. The question of the attitude and development of

INSTEAD OF ARMS

German youth is, of course, of the greatest importance. It is difficult to say what steps can be taken by foreign organizations to improve conditions. Such measures as have already been taken—and in which I, for my part, am very interested—have been an attempt to provide German youth, through the Scout movement, with ideals to replace those instilled by the Hitler Jugend. Of course, one has to tread very carefully. If the Scout movement takes root in Germany, one has to make sure that it does not degenerate into a repetition of the manœuvres of the Jugend. However, I know from my own experience the possibilities of Scouting when it is properly handled; how it can inspire youth with a healthy view of life, a sense of comradeship, and an understanding of the necessity of making a positive contribution to the welfare of one's fellows.

★ ★ ★

On my arrival at the Frankfurt airport, I was received by representatives of Sir Arthur Tedder and of the Allied intelligence service, the organization which was going to take charge of Schellenberg. I well remember wondering as I said goodbye what fate awaited him. Of course, I was quite conscious of the fact that his past and his position with the SS was especially incriminating. On the other hand, I felt I owed him a debt of gratitude. He had made a really important contribution in connection with the work of the Swedish Red Cross detachment in Germany in the spring of 1945. Also he had been very active in helping release the so-called Warsaw-Swedes.*

It was really an experience to sit in Tedder's quarters in a villa near the village of Falkenstein, some kilometers from Frankfurt. With him were a number of the leading members

* Certain prominent Swedish citizens living in Warsaw had been imprisoned by the German Gestapo.—*Translator.*

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of his staff, both military and civil, and we exchanged views concerning recent events in connection with the German capitulation. No actual negotiations took place during my short visit in Frankfurt. The kind invitation of Sir Arthur was largely due to a former visit of his to Stockholm where we had met. He also wanted to show his appreciation for the work I had been doing during the war in connection with the internment of British pilots.

After only two days in Frankfurt, I left in Tedder's private plane for Hamburg. I requested that the plane should circle the concentration camp of Neuengamme. Recalling my previous activities among the Scandinavian prisoners there, I very much wanted to see the place again. When we circled the camp at a very low altitude, we could see a great number of people moving about. They were Germans whom the German authorities had taken into custody, and who had to stay in the camp until their individual cases had been investigated. Some of them were later released, while others were tried and given sentences of varying lengths.

I also requested that we should fly over Prince Bismarck's country manor, Friedrichsruh, where the Swedish Red Cross detachment had had its headquarters. I had not had the opportunity to see the results of the Allied bombing of Friedrichsruh, which had taken place some days before my last conversation with Himmler in April. The castle had been almost totally destroyed. The Bismarck family had been obliged to take refuge in one of the nearby buildings which had been used before as a Bismarck museum.

We flew in over Hamburg. As I have said, the silhouette of Hamburg, with its beautiful towers, has been preserved as by a miracle. Looking over the central portion of the town, one

could imagine at first sight that Hamburg was relatively undamaged. The Alster looked about the same as before the war. The walks along the banks, the Jungfernstieg, with the town hall in the background, and the Lombard bridge were still intact. But very soon it became clear that this first impression was just an illusion, and that the view of the Alster was a façade which hid the sad reality. Hamburg, even when seen from the air, made a terrifying impression.

It was the English commander, Brigadier Donald Pender, who received us, and he did this in the nicest and kindest fashion. During the evening we had an interesting experience. We had the opportunity of attending a performance of *Peer Gynt* in one of Hamburg's theatres. It was a wonderful performance presented by the Old Vic Company of London for the British garrison in the city, with the excellent Sybil Thorn-dyke and Laurence Olivier as Åse and Peer Gynt. It was the first time since the war that I had witnessed collaboration between Englishmen and Germans in a cultural field. The orchestra was German while all the actors were British. There was not the least tension or animosity between them and the whole performance was received with tremendous applause.

Lübeck, where I spent a day on my journey home, brought back many memories of the days before the Armistice. I again saw the house where, as I described in *The Curtain Falls*, I had been sitting during a night air raid, listening to Heinrich Himmler as he requested me to take his offer of capitulation to the Allies. That was the night when it became clear to me that the collapse of the Third Reich was only a matter of days. Now Himmler has departed from history and from life. He has succeeded in outwitting justice.

A summary of my impressions after my return indicated that

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the food situation in Germany at that time could not be considered desperate. On the other hand, an aggravation of conditions could be expected in the autumn. Then the food situation would be handled by the Germans themselves under a certain amount of Allied control.

One of the things that struck me during this first short journey in post-war Germany, six weeks after the capitulation, was the attitude of the civilian population toward the occupying military forces. The Germans were strikingly amenable and all the British and American representatives I talked with agreed that they were often embarrassingly submissive. Control of the German population had posed very few problems. In the streets the German police and sometimes even civilians politely greeted the Allies. It is certain that large groups of the German people looked upon the western Allies as liberators who would ameliorate conditions in Germany, and wipe out all traces of the hard times they had gone through under the severe Nazi régime, before and during the war. During later visits to Germany, I felt that relations between the occupation powers and the German population had grown worse instead of improving. I will touch upon this later. Especially in the American zone, the problem of fraternization was serious. Already, the Americans realized that probably this question could not be solved, and developments later forced the order prohibiting fraternization to be cancelled.

During this journey, I also learned something of the attitude of certain leading Britishers on the subject of war criminals. I gathered that at that time it was considered, at least by several people, that every German who had held a high position was *ipso facto* a war criminal and that he should be treated as such until the contrary could be proved. I mentioned the names of

some people I had encountered, people who had been employed by the German foreign office and who, as far as I knew, had not been guilty of any direct war crimes. The English maintained that they could expect quite heavy punishment.

This attitude has, of course, changed since. For my part, I have always held the opinion which I expressed in the closing words of *The Curtain Falls*: "I return to Sweden an even firmer opponent of the Nazi creed than before, but at the same time I cannot help having a deep sympathy for Germany's unhappy people. They have been found wanting. They have allowed themselves to be led by ruthless scoundrels. They must drain the cup of suffering. But as the representative of an organization with the humanitarian spirit of the Red Cross, I must urge that afterwards they be helped and led in other paths, not with hatred and brutality, by those who understand that love for humanity is the strongest of all forces for good. Then, and only then, can we hope to see the downfall of the Third Reich followed by a happier scheme of things for a cruelly tried humanity."

XII

WE BEGIN OUR WORK IN GERMANY

THE reports received from Germany expressed fear that the winter of 1945-46 would present great difficulties for the German people with regard to their food supply. I considered it the duty of the Swedish Red Cross to try to start relief work in those parts of Germany which had suffered most. The proposal I made to the Chairman and the supervisory body of the Red Cross was accepted. The Swedish Committee for International Aid also agreed, and the government did not object to my going to Germany to negotiate, even though they did not want to commit themselves one way or another until they were better informed about existing conditions. In this connection, I want to mention how helpful it was for Sweden to have a liaison with Germany. Officially, Sweden had at that time no representative on German soil. During my last journey, however, we had succeeded in arranging for the Secretary of the Legation, Torsten Brandel, to remain in Hamburg as representative of the Swedish Red Cross. This proved to be the wish not only of the Swedish, but also of the British. It is true that he could not carry out any consular work, but there were a thousand questions which had to be dealt with and the many Swedes and Germans of Swedish origin living in Germany at the time of the capitulation definitely needed a compatriot who could help them.

Before I started this trip, I realized that aid activities to

Germany, even if they were limited to children would probably elicit much criticism, both in Sweden and in other countries. This was the case. After it had been made public that Swedish activities would be started in Germany, I daily received letters expressing disapproval of my taking the initiative in this matter. In this case, as in others, it proved that many people were apparently unable to distinguish between the followers of Naziism and those who were guided by purely humanitarian motives and were simply extending a helping hand to suffering people. Even the American press had made rather sharp attacks upon me in consequence of the course of action I had taken. But one has to resign oneself to accept this. In my opinion, it is absolutely necessary that humanitarian activities should be conducted in an open and straightforward way, and that sympathies and antipathies should in no way influence their planning. The only task of an organization like the Red Cross is to try to help people in need, with no concern for race, nationality, creed, or political affiliation. The duty of the Red Cross is to help wherever it can. As far as I can gather, an increasing number of people have come to understand that the attitude of the Red Cross and other Swedish aid organizations at that time was absolutely correct.

Before, when the Swedish Red Cross worked in Germany during the last months of the war, it was to help the people who were suffering in concentration camps. It was to help those who were the active enemies of Germany. It could be said, though the comparison is imperfect, as comparisons are apt to be, that this time the situation was reversed: now it was the Germans, especially the German children, who were facing death if they did not receive help. On the basis of Red Cross principles it was only logical and natural, therefore, that Sweden should help

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even Germany, mindful, of course, of the needs of other countries and of the resources which could be made available to them.

It was against this background that I left Bromma for Frankfurt in the beginning of October, 1945, in an American plane. I hoped to renew my contact with General Eisenhower in order to discuss with him the possibilities of Swedish aid in Germany. We had had earlier negotiations on another matter with Allied Headquarters. This concerned Swedish Red Cross assistance in the repatriation from Germany of Swedish-born women and their children who lived under difficult conditions in their new country, and who wished to obtain permission to return to Sweden. In principle, permission for this aid had been granted, and a detachment had travelled to Germany a few days before my departure.

On the day I left, however, I received a telegram informing me that the matter was not completely in order from the point of view of the Allied authorities. It was therefore necessary for me to settle the question so that the detachment, which had already passed the Danish-German frontier, would be able to start work.

It was a great pleasure to meet General Eisenhower again. His personality had made a strong impression on me at our former meeting in Versailles. He received me in his office, in the enormous building of the I. G. Farben works, which, curiously enough, had escaped destruction under Allied bombings. Otherwise, Frankfurt am Main had suffered much during the war and great parts of the city were completely destroyed by bombs.

I opened my conversation with Eisenhower with the request that the Swedish Red Cross detachment be admitted immediately to the American and British Zones in order to begin work

there. It was very interesting to see the expression on General Eisenhower's face when I handed him a copy of the telegram I had received in Stockholm informing me that there were still many objections to the activities of the detachment. He immediately called for his chief of staff, General Bedell Smith, who later became American Ambassador in Moscow. General Smith did not seem to be in a very good humour on that day. Later I heard that he had toothache. He explained why, in principle, it was unthinkable to permit foreign activities in Germany. They had, for example, rejected a similar request from the Spanish government. When I remarked that the comparison between the Spanish government and the Swedish Red Cross could hardly be considered apt, I immediately felt that I had won over Eisenhower to my side. In such an enormous organization as the Allied Headquarters, it is natural that the highest in command cannot be informed or cannot be troubled with such details as the Swedish aid, insignificant in comparison with the major problems they have to solve. However, then and there, Eisenhower promised me that the Swedish detachment could immediately start work. The first round was won.

During the years these activities were carried on, the Swedish Red Cross met with the greatest understanding on the part of all the Allied authorities. A considerable number of German women of Swedish origin and their children have been repatriated in Sweden under the auspices of the Red Cross. Regarding the transfer of the husbands of these women to Sweden, Eisenhower informed me that the matter should be submitted to the United States Department of State.

When I later considered with General Eisenhower the question of Swedish aid planned for German children under twelve years old, he replied that he alone could not decide; it had to be

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referred to the Allied Control Council in Berlin. It therefore became necessary for me to go to Berlin as soon as possible, and Eisenhower promised to put a plane at our disposal for this journey.

Before this trip, however, I paid a visit to Wiesbaden, and to Mainz in the French zone. In Wiesbaden, I intended to discuss with the chief of the American Air Forces in Europe the possibility of Swedish airlines operating in Germany. With regard to this question, I met with the greatest understanding on the part of the Americans. We discussed all possible considerations with the kind and helpful Americans, and I got a definite impression that the American officers appreciated Swedish policy during the war. They particularly emphasized the great services Sweden had performed by giving so much help to her neighbours. Evidently they still felt great sympathy for Finland, and again it was pointed out that Finland was the only nation which had paid her debts after the first World War.

Mainz was very depressing. My intention was to try to meet the Bishop of Mainz to ask his opinion about conditions in Germany, but unfortunately he was away. We did, however, meet one of the priests, who gave us a great deal of interesting information about the town. Among other things, he told us that of the 114,000 inhabitants before the war, only 54,000 were known to be left at the time of our visit. Of his parishioners, who in peace-time numbered 2,000, he was only in touch with fifteen.

Mainz was heavily damaged, and as far as we could see there was scarcely a spot untouched. There were few people in the streets and little traffic. In contrast to the towns in the British and American Zones, there was still a good deal of rubble in the barely passable streets.

On the way back, we crossed the river. The suburbs of

Mainz also showed clear marks of the war, but when we came out into the country, everything looked peaceful, though of course far from prosperous. We got the impression that the effects of modern warfare very soon disappear in the country. When travelling in an automobile one hardly notices them at all. From the air, however, one sees an occasional bomb crater, trenches, and tank tracks in the farm yards.

The German troops had systematically destroyed the bridges over the river. It seems that the Germans themselves were annoyed by this. A workman with whom I talked said to us: "It was insane. The enemy advanced just as fast anyhow."

After we received permission for the Swedish Red Cross detachment to work in the American and British Zones, it occurred to me that we should also try to arrange with French Headquarters for permission for the detachment to operate in the French Zone. With impressive American efficiency, a plane was put at our disposal for the journey to Baden-Baden, and we also had permission to continue from there to München in order to find out if there were Swedes there who wanted to avail themselves of the opportunity to return to Sweden. Unfortunately, the airfield where we were supposed to land in the neighbourhood of Baden-Baden proved to be unusable. We continued directly to München.

This city was very heavily damaged by bombs, especially the centre, where the cathedral is completely gutted. The Brown House* was damaged, but not destroyed, and the Pinakotek had received a direct hit. We got in touch with the former Swedish Consul General, Mr. Schniewind, and after arranging with him a number of technical details, we returned to Frankfurt.

The kind Americans provided us with a plane for the trip to

* Hitler's Headquarters before he came to power in 1933.—*Translator.*

Berlin, and early the next day we left Frankfurt. When we approached Berlin, it seemed to us that the traffic on the roads was almost nil. Seen from the air, the city made the same impression as during the last months of the war. For the first time, however, I saw that the centre of Potsdam was heavily damaged. The castle of Sans-Souci escaped, however. The view from the air strengthened the opinion I have expressed before about destruction in Germany. Flying over it and seeing village after village undamaged and apparently prospering, one must say that at least there still is room for life. The destruction is concentrated on the towns.

After a fast flight, we landed at Tempelhof, which was then under American control. I was really curious to see Berlin again. The last time I left the city was on the twentieth of April, Hitler's last birthday. It was just before the Allied forces had surrounded the city, and since then violent street fighting had occurred, especially in the centre of town. Artillery fire had completed the devastation begun by the bombings. I must admit that I got a shock when we drove from Tempelhof to the so-called Harnack-Haus in the residential district of Dahlem, where the chief of the American public health department for Berlin was located. On the way, we made a tour of the different sections of town. As is known, Berlin is divided into four different sectors under American, British, French and Russian administration. There were no difficulties in passing from one sector to another. Only signs in certain streets indicated that one was leaving one sector to enter another.

I soon realized that there was not much left of the centre of Berlin as we knew it before the war. It is true that the Brandenburg Gate, a point of departure from the centre, is still standing, though badly damaged. However, looking east and west, one

sees nothing but destruction. The houses on Unter den Linden are almost all gone.*

The Adlon Hotel is just a shell. Behind this ruin, on both sides of the street, stretches an almost unbroken row of burned and fallen houses. The University and Royal Library are badly damaged. The former Royal and Imperial Castle, as well as a number of other monumental buildings are almost totally destroyed. Leipzigerstrasse is also a dead street. Only Goering's Air Ministry is still standing, to all appearances almost intact. But the most desolate of all is that part of Berlin directly west of the Brandenburg Gate, the Tiergarten. Here almost every tree has disappeared; they have been burned or cut down. There are only sooty stumps left on level terrain which, after the war, was waste land for a long time. Recently they have begun to cultivate this for a community garden. The whole of the terrible desolation characterizing the district which was once the Tiergarten merges with something almost as depressing. The enormous stretch of the East-West Axis is marked by houses as empty and as dead as in most of the other streets in central Berlin.

If I were to make a comparison between the impression the Berlin population made on me this time and the one I received during my previous visit, I would say that the tension and fear on the faces of the people during the last days of the war had now given way to a certain apathy. However, I do not mean that I saw happy and smiling faces. Life had not yet become normal. The water supply was not functioning and I saw long lines of people in the streets at water pumps. They had with them containers in which they took their day's supply of water to their damaged houses.

* In the spring of 1948, one new house was under construction on the Unter den Linden, which lies in the Russian Sector, namely, the building which will house the Russian Embassy.—*Author.*

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Their faces were full of sorrow and despair. On the other hand, I did not find the people as hollow-cheeked as I had expected. When I remarked on this to our hosts, I was told that there were countless people in Berlin who were unable to go out into the streets because of starvation and illness. They stressed that one could not get a true picture just by motoring through the town. It was also feared, here as in Frankfurt, that the coming winter would aggravate conditions.

In accordance with General Eisenhower's advice, my task in Berlin was to contact representatives of the four occupying powers to ascertain their attitude toward Swedish aid. I was also to request permission from the French and Russian representatives for the Swedish Red Cross detachment to work in their zones.

My first visit was to the French General Beauchsne, a genial and extremely kind elderly gentleman who had many Swedish friends whom he had met while attending the Cavalry school in Saumur. When the question of the Swedish Red Cross detachment was brought up, he contacted General Koenig, who immediately consented to our extending aid to the French Zone. He was personally in agreement with giving Swedish aid to German children, but he pointed out that this question had to be taken up in the Allied Control Council.

The Secretary General of the Council, the British General Dewing, held the same opinion. I had the opportunity, at a dinner given by the British in our honour, to discuss various problems current in Germany with Dewing and his colleagues. As on many occasions, the discussion turned to that problem so difficult to solve but so extremely important: the de-Nazification of Germany. They held it was doubtful that the solution could be found in a summary clean up—it might be better to

let people who had admitted that they had been Nazis keep their jobs, if these were not purely political in character. In that way the Germans might be influenced for the better. They hoped that the association of the Germans with the representatives of the occupation authorities, with their democratic attitude, would have better results than the procedure of completely eliminating the Germans from their present jobs.

The Military Governor of the American Zone, and as such directly under the command of General Eisenhower, was General Clay. I had a very spirited discussion with him during which we exchanged divergent opinions. At first Clay held a negative attitude toward the proposal for relief of German children. He was of the opinion that no help should be given as long as the children in the countries occupied by Germany were still in worse condition than the German children. Of course, I pointed out to him that it was not our intention that the German children would in any way be privileged. At the same time I emphasized that I expected conditions in Germany, perhaps during the coming winter, would be so difficult that the situation, at least as regards the children, would become fully comparable with that in other countries. We separated on the best of terms after Clay had promised to take up the matter in the Allied Control Council.

In the years since then, I have had the opportunity of meeting General Clay again several times, and I have been able to revise the impression I received at our first meeting, when he took a negative attitude toward the question of aid to the German people. As a matter of fact, he has been extremely helpful and co-operative in facilitating our work, even if, in principle, he has always held the opinion that foreign organizations, for practical reasons, should not perform relief activities in the

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American Zone. America itself has such great resources that the help or relief that a little country like Sweden could give might seem insignificant in American eyes. In this connection, it should be kept in mind that the general American attitude toward the question of aid to Germany, during the three years following the Armistice, has become more and more positive.

It was quite natural that I should look forward with great interest to the meeting with the Russian General Smirnov, who, at that time, was acting chief of the garrison in Berlin. I had never before been in contact with any of the Russian generals, nor was I accustomed to negotiate through an interpreter. In this case it was necessary, as Smirnov spoke no other language but Russian. Our discussion was characterized by a marked friendliness and frankness on the part of the Russian officers. I was especially impressed by the fact that General Smirnov, who was totally unprepared on the subject we discussed, immediately went to a safe and fetched lists of names of the Swedes who were living in the Russian Sector of Berlin.

Regarding efforts to provide food for children, Smirnov did not consider himself the proper person to make a decision, but promised to arrange a meeting with the right man in the Russian Military Government. The discussion, which lasted about an hour, was marked by considerable ceremonial politeness alternating with humorous remarks, and I left General Smirnov's office feeling strongly how useful personal contacts are. Possibly quite a few prejudices which both of us had had before our meeting had been dispelled by our discussion.

"The right man" in the Russian Military Government proved to be an old acquaintance from Stockholm, the former Counselor of the Legation, Semenov, who now served with the rank of Minister in the Russian Headquarters near Karlshorst. He

made detailed notes about the wishes I put before him and he promised to take up the question. He held out the prospect that, through the Allied Control Council, we would in time receive an answer to our request.

I was especially interested to see again the Swedish bomb-shelter in Tiergartenstrasse, and on my return from the Russian Headquarters we paid it a hasty visit. Representatives from the Swedish Legation had remained in Berlin during the entire siege: they had lived in the shelter and from there witnessed the street fighting. Rumours had circulated that the shelter had been totally plundered and damaged, but happily we found that these rumours were considerably exaggerated.

The next day we flew from Berlin to Hamburg. A day later I had the opportunity of being present at a service in the Swedish Sailor's church in Lübeck. This church had been a centre for Swedish Red Cross activities during the last days of the war, and I therefore wanted to express to the Swedish minister the gratitude of the Red Cross for the extraordinary help he had given us in our efforts to assist in the repatriation of a number of Swedes before the end of the war. I shall never forget that moment in the Swedish Sailor's church in Lübeck. I had been delayed on my way, and when I entered the small, dark place of worship, much damaged by the war, an evening service was in progress. They were celebrating thanksgiving day, and when I entered the church the entire congregation was singing the old and beautiful psalm "Now Thank the Lord All Ye Peoples". I went to the first pew, deeply moved that these Swedes and Swedish-born people, who, for the most part, had lost all their worldly possessions, could take part in this singing with such devotion and piety. I turned around and looked at the tired faces, pale and wan in the twilight.

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When I saw the expressions on the faces of these people I understood that the words of the psalm were not only empty phrases, but that they felt a real gratitude to God who had preserved them during all their difficulties. Seldom have I felt so small and so unimportant as when, at that moment, I reflected that I, whose family and home were wholly intact, and who had so much to be thankful for, had not perhaps felt the same gratitude toward the Almighty as these Swedes, who had only escaped with their lives and to whom the future must have seemed very dark and uncertain. This was a lesson which I will never forget and which certainly has been useful when I have thought sometimes that things at home were difficult. In the larger issues, when real need and trouble come to people, trivialities, which to us Swedes may seem important, become insignificant. I wish that many of my countrymen could have been present during this impressive service in the Sailor's church in Lübeck.

Next day I returned home by automobile via Denmark and had the opportunity to discuss with General Barker, commanding general in Schleswig-Holstein, a number of technical problems in connection with future aid to children and the repatriation of Swedes. He took a sympathetic attitude toward these problems and promised us all possible assistance.

Not until the end of November did we receive definite information from Berlin about the attitude of the Allied Control Council toward our proposal. We were informed that the Council had decided to allow the Commander of each zone to determine whether or not Swedish relief was desirable. At the same time, we learned that the only Commander who had expressed himself in full support of our proposals was the chief of the British Zone. We therefore had to contact the British authorities again to obtain their assurance that there would be

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no obstacles in the path of Swedish relief work in the British Zone. We also had to discuss a number of technical details.

On my last visit to Frankfurt I had, in my capacity as Chairman of the Swedish-American Society in Stockholm, asked General Eisenhower if one of his generals might not be interested in coming to Stockholm and being present as a guest of the Society at the first thanksgiving celebration after the war. Eisenhower immediately contacted General Patton, who promised to come to Stockholm at the end of November if the authorities would permit. I thus had the pleasure of meeting Patton in Stockholm. When he heard that a Swedish delegation was leaving for Germany for further negotiations, he offered us his plane, which he had left in Copenhagen.

General Patton was one of the most prominent figures of the Second World War. The better I came to know him, the more he impressed me. On the occasion of his visit to Stockholm, the Chief of Staff of the Swedish Army had invited him to review some Swedish troops, and he thus had the opportunity of seeing a Swedish regiment on parade and imparting to them some of his unusual war experiences. Perhaps some people will recall that General Patton, for a time during the war, was not very popular in America. He was considered a very tough and exacting general with no interest in the welfare of his troops. Some people said he hardly possessed human feelings at all. However, my impression of him was quite different. He certainly was a tough and exacting warrior. But at the same time he was a perfect gentleman vis-à-vis his opponents, whose achievements he often praised. I had much evidence that he possessed a warm heart, and the way he associated with our children proved that he was not of cold and inhuman nature but a man who could show many warm and even tender feelings.

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I asked him about the report we had read in the newspapers, according to which he had slapped an American soldier in the face when visiting an American military hospital in Italy. He told me the following: the American forces had suffered large losses, and Patton decided to visit some American field hospitals. He found most of the wounded soldiers very interested in the course of the battles, and they had only one wish, that the advance should continue as rapidly as possible. When he left the hospital, he noticed an American soldier sitting in the waiting room, and asked him what was the matter with him. "Nothing", he answered, "except that I cannot stand it any longer—I left my company and now I am here." With the other soldiers' interest and enthusiasm in the military operations freshly in mind, and confronted with this American's sullen behaviour, General Patton lost his temper and slapped him in the face with his gloves. He told him to report back to his company immediately. He probably thought no more of the matter, but later, there were serious repercussions in the American press, which Patton, however, took very calmly.*

The interesting part of this episode is that Patton later came across this soldier again. He came up to the General and thanked him for the undoubtedly brusque but very useful treatment. He had recovered from the temporary depression he had suffered, and afterwards had successfully taken part in his company's battle engagements.

Patton is remembered as a great hero. A short time after we separated, on the airfield outside Hamburg, he was killed in an accident when his car collided with an American military

* General Patton himself described this episode in his diary published posthumously under the title of *War as I Knew It* (1947). Patton stresses here that he considered the soldier in question hysterical and that he wanted to cure him by slapping him in the face.—*Author*.

truck. This was a sad end to a brilliant career—especially as he intended to retire soon from active military service and was looking forward to a quiet and peaceful time with his family in the United States. He had been separated from them for a long time, but was obviously thinking of them always, with great love and devotion.

On my trip to Germany, I was accompanied by representatives of the Government Relief Committee and the Save the Children Society, and by the radio reporter, Sven Jerring, who was preparing programme material to be used later for benefit performances. I will not describe in detail the negotiations with the British Red Cross in Vlotho, near the British Headquarters. The result was an agreement that we should start Swedish relief activities after the first of the year. We were to concentrate on Hamburg and the Ruhr district, and to a lesser extent, the British Sector of Berlin.

I must say that the negotiations with the British authorities were in certain respects very slow. I could not help joking with the British representatives and comparing the tempo at which they made their decisions with the speed at which Heinrich Himmler had moved during my negotiations with him, about six months before—a joke which the humorous Englishmen did not mind at all. I went so far as to say to one of the leading representatives that I did not understand how, with all their red tape, they could possibly have won the Second World War. He laughed heartily and replied: "Honestly, I must say that I do not understand it myself."

However, gradually all the questions were settled, and at the beginning of January, 1946, we would be able to begin the work which, with certain interruptions, continued until July the first, 1948. When the American, Russian and French authorities

learned that we were going to start relief work among the German children in the British Sector in Berlin, they thought it unfair of us not to start such work in the other Sectors as well. The only thing I could say, of course, was that that was exactly what we wanted to do, but that they had not shown any interest in the matter. I said, however, that we were very pleased by their attitude. We were thus able, at an early stage, to extend Swedish activities to all sectors of Berlin.

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During this journey, I had the opportunity to have dinner one night with the two American judges who were on their way to Nuremberg to take part in the trials which the whole world was anticipating with anxiety. I told them of my experiences during the death struggle of Nazi Germany, and in exchange, they gave me some interesting information about the coming trials.

Much has been written and said about these trials. Certain people have pointed out, especially before the trials were concluded, that they were a unique manifestation of western concepts of justice. They have stressed that the accused were given every possible opportunity to defend themselves with the assistance of the lawyers put at their disposal. It has been called a triumph for the democratic system of justice that the former enemies of the accused, from the beginning, adopted an objective attitude toward the entire question. Others, also experts in this field, were of the opinion that, of course, the German war criminals should be tried, but not in this fashion and not under such sensational circumstances. At the Congress on Criminal Law held in Switzerland in the summer of 1947, the opinion was widely held that the Nuremberg trials represented a regrettable deviation from the customary principles of western

justice. I am completely ignorant of judicial matters and am not therefore qualified to express an opinion on this score. But the question has also a moral and ethical side about which, despite my amateur status, I have the right to form an opinion, and even to express it.

In the first place I want to ask: is it really just to condemn collectively all the members of a given organization? Is it absolutely certain that all those who have joined, for example, the SS, are guilty of a crime? But how can one be condemned without being a criminal? I am fairly certain that in some cases individuals who joined organizations in good faith before the organizations' true characters had been revealed afterwards did not dare resign because they feared terrible reprisals against themselves, which is cowardly, or against their families, which is human. When the Nuremberg trials started, it was fairly clear that a large majority of the accused were war criminals who were certain to be sentenced to death. Was there not something farcical about these desperately solemn proceedings, especially when a country which, at the outbreak of the war, was allied with Germany was represented among the judges who condemned a number of the accused for preparing and starting the Second World War? Certainly, I can very well understand that all the documents will have extraordinary significance for future historians. They give a clear and enlightening picture of the mentality of the Nazi leaders and their ghastly crimes. But could not the same have been achieved without letting people, even if most of them were criminals, endure this terrible mental strain? If a new world war should sometime in the future be inflicted on mankind, which I sincerely hope will not be the case, but for which we unfortunately must be prepared, may not the Nuremberg and other trials, for example those of leading

politicians in Germany and other countries, become a precedent for the future? An English general once said to me, when we discussed these questions after the war, that if England should lose the next war all the English generals would have to be prepared to face prison. Is it also quite certain that those who were sentenced to death by the Nuremberg tribunal, and quite rightly so, were considered the worst criminals, and really received the severest punishment? I doubt it. One of those who was not sentenced to die asked if his sentence could be changed to the death penalty, as he understood that the rest of his life could only be one of suffering.

Finally, one more point. Is it so absolutely certain that all the four nations represented on the tribunal are blameless? If one honestly and truly had reflected on the Bible text which prefaces this book: "Judge not . . . that ye be not judged", one might possibly have felt some doubt about the architecture of Nuremberg justice. Would it not have been more satisfactory if those of the accused whom all right thinking people considered war criminals, quite simply and without such enormous publicity, had been tried before a court martial and condemned to death, the military by a firing squad and the others by hanging?

I assume that my amateurish reasoning can easily be refuted by many learned and expert jurists. But that does not prevent me from considering myself right from the moral point of view. In my opinion the moral and ethical aspects of problems are often more valuable and essential than formal judicial ones.

XIII

PRINCE CARL

ON the same day as I left for Germany, in November 1945, I was appointed Chairman of the Swedish Red Cross. I accepted the appointment with the greatest gratitude, but I felt a great deal of doubt regarding my ability to carry out the task. To *succeed* "The Red Cross Prince" was one matter, to *replace* him quite another. What he meant to Swedish humanitarian work, national as well as international, will perhaps never be fully appreciated. I will describe his contributions in a few words, although I realize that the story of the great work he has accomplished would require an entire book in itself.

Just being the leader of the Swedish Red Cross for more than forty years is an accomplishment worthy of admiration. Prince Carl also achieved great results. When he joined the Red Cross, the membership numbered 4,500. When he left his post as leader, the membership had increased to about 550,000. When he took over the Chairmanship at forty-five, he instituted countless reforms and new programmes which he continued until his retirement. With his great administrative skill and foresight, he succeeded in bringing about steady and successful development, and at the same time bringing order to the organization.

Some years after Prince Carl became Chairman, he left active military life, and after that he could devote himself almost exclusively to his task of leading and developing the Swedish

Red Cross in national as well as international fields. The organization was well prepared when the First World War broke out. The Red Cross was ready to be of service to Swedish defence forces according to the obligations which the supervisory body had undertaken to fulfil in the event of Sweden entering the war.

When, however, developments indicated that there were good prospects of Sweden remaining neutral, Prince Carl directed his interest more and more toward international relief. The extensive exchanges of war prisoners arranged through Sweden, between Russians on the one side, and Germany and Austro-Hungary on the other, are well known. It is less well known, perhaps, that Prince Carl, in the very midst of the war, succeeded in assembling representatives from the belligerent camps to negotiate for the humanitarian betterment of conditions during the war. Three such conferences took place during the years 1915 and 1916. By applying directly to the Czar of Russia and the Emperor of Germany, Prince Carl succeeded in preventing certain reprisals against prisoners of war, reported by Swedish delegates who, in the service of the Swedish Red Cross, worked in different prison camps. The most well known of these delegates was, of course, Elsa Brändström, who with her collaborators performed, under enormous hardships, such wonderful work among the prisoners in Siberia.

Even after the end of the First World War, Prince Carl took the initiative in international humanitarian relief work among the destitute peoples. In this connection, we can mention the relief to Germany, Austria and Hungary, where there was a great lack of food. Relief expeditions were also sent to Poland and Russia. He likewise took the initiative in connection with the repatriation of prisoners of war.

During the years between the two World Wars, developments in no way lagged. Prince Carl made a valuable contribution in the domestic field for the Swedish Red Cross. In that way it became a pioneer in the field of social hygiene. To a certain extent the activities begun by Prince Carl and his assistants have been taken over by the government. It was therefore quite natural that the membership of the organization steadily increased, and that interest in its activities became more and more widespread among the Swedish population. It is certain that the social work started by Prince Carl was the reason for this increased interest.

We also vividly remember the ambulance which the supervisory body of the Swedish Red Cross sent to Abyssinia in 1935, when the country was attacked by Fascist Italy.

In spite of his advanced age at the beginning of the Second World War, the Chairman of the Swedish Red Cross started new relief work which proved that he still possessed great initiative and a clear understanding of the tasks at hand. The very morning the Russians invaded Finland, he was ready to begin relief action, which resulted in the sending of several ambulances to our eastern neighbour. A proposal from the Swedish Red Cross to send medical help to the Russian front, also brought no results as the Russian authorities never replied. This work was executed without in any way interfering with the clear duty of the Swedish Red Cross to take care of its national responsibilities in connection with the Swedish defence forces. When the home guard was organized, the Red Cross undertook to take charge of the medical care of the men by establishing "home guard dispensaries".

Prince Carl did not concern himself only with Finland. The Swedish Red Cross also gave relief to Norway, Poland, France,

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Belgium and Greece. In Greece, the Swedish Red Cross, in agreement with the International Committee of the Red Cross, Canada and the United States, has made a contribution for which the name of Prince Carl and of Sweden will always be remembered with gratitude.

It was not so strange therefore that I felt a little weak in the knees when, at the end of 1945, I took over the Chairman's gavel. My august uncle must have felt it rather peculiar to leave the gavel to his nephew, whom he quite naturally had always considered a youngster needing all the supervision and advice which an older relative, as a rule, finds it necessary to bestow on the younger generation. I want to declare with gratitude, however, that I felt I had in Prince Carl a counsellor whose sound judgment and rich experience would always be invaluable.

I do not know anyone whom the accolade "a noble person" fits so well as Prince Carl. He has a humanitarian spirit in the best sense of the word, and he leaves no stone unturned in order to help suffering people. When he retired as Chairman of the Red Cross, H.M. King Gustaf instituted the Prince Carl Medal to be awarded yearly to deserving persons who have carried out important work in the humanitarian field. This Medal will always be a living memorial to H.R.H. Prince Carl's unique service to humanity.

XIV

BELGIAN INTERLUDE

IN January, 1946, I spent a week in Belgium. Le Président des Grandes Conférences Catholiques had invited me to give some lectures concerning Red Cross work in Germany during the last phase of the war. What I remember most about this journey is the way in which the name of Queen Astrid is still so much alive among the Belgian people. As a Swede, this gave me a feeling of happiness and pride.

I knew her very well as a little girl in Sweden. I remember her as a very shy and reserved young girl. It is quite amazing that from the moment she came to her new country, she could have shown such an unusual capacity for winning the hearts of the Belgian people through her charm and kindness. I, for my part, do not think it improbable that if she had lived, she could, through her winning personality, have prevented the Belgian royal problem from becoming so acute and from reaching such a precarious state as was the case. Queen Astrid was truly popular in the best sense of the word. This young woman's deeds are proof of what a person full of goodness and with a genuine desire to do her best can accomplish. It is also undoubtedly due to her that the Belgian people think so highly of Sweden today. The Swedish people have every reason to be very grateful to her for what she did; her services benefited not only the Belgian people but also her own country.

Another strong impression of my visit to Belgium is

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connected with a day I spent at the old University of Louvain, where I lectured to the students. It is always inspiring to meet young and determined people, and I felt very strongly that the students of Louvain University were firmly convinced that they should not look back on the dark years but that instead, they should look forward. They were inspired by a strong will to do their part in the reconstruction of their country. The Belgian reconstruction is, in general, very impressive. There is in this country a determined will to wipe out the traces of the suffering caused by the German occupation.

I have always been very interested by the scout movement, and it was only natural for me to get in touch with Belgian scouting. This was all the more interesting since international relations in this respect, except in Scandinavia, were practically unknown during the war. The scout movement which, in Belgium, was prohibited during the German occupation, has been revived after the liberation with the greatest interest. There, as in many other countries, it is judged to be one of the best ways to educate young people. The Youth, whose morale quite naturally suffered during the war, has found support in the scout movement. It gives them a happier outlook on the future and it has given them new ideals.

XV

BACK TO GERMANY

WHILE I was in Belgium, Swedish relief work among the German children had started, and I thought it advisable to go to Germany as soon as possible to follow its progress. On February the thirteenth, 1946, I left with my assistants for Copenhagen, where a British troop transport plane was put at our disposal. Waiting on the sunny spring day at Kastrups air field, we carefully read the Swedish, Danish and English newspapers, which contained reports about increasing want in Central Europe and about the mounting difficulties facing England with regard to their food supply. The British government had stated in the latest meeting in the House of Commons that food rations had to be cut. This message obviously came as a shock to the nation, and was severely criticized by the opposition. At about the same time, *The Times* published an editorial which, under the heading "A Policy for Germany", strongly emphasized the necessity of supporting the German economy and openly stated that government policy had so far been characterized by disastrous indecision. "The German industry needs coal, and German miners need food", the article said. "Of 5,500,000 houses in the British Zone 3,500,000 had to be rebuilt or repaired." *The Times* thought the solution lay in a central administration for the whole of Germany. "Even if it is true that there is a certain political risk in the proposal for a central administration, it is better to take this risk and to meet the con-

sequence while the Control Council still has at its disposal the necessary staff, prestige and military support. Without a central administration every plan for economic reconstruction is doomed to failure. The political rehabilitation of Germany is inseparable from its economic recovery."

The big military airfield where we landed in Schleswig was quiet and dreary. The commanding officer received us and took us to the mess, a very simple wooden barracks, where we had tea with some officers who showed the effects of the monotony and dullness of an English camp in the German countryside. After a while, we were informed that the plane could proceed, and we did not need to continue to Hamburg by car as we had feared would be necessary. Our host told us that he had just been home to England on leave. The first morning he had said to his wife that he was going out to shop, but he had come home with only one thing, a morning paper. There was simply nothing to buy. He said goodbye to us with a melancholy smile. The plane took off and about an hour later we landed in Hamburg.

As I pointed out before, it is necessary with all humanitarian relief work that one sees to it that help is given with strict impartiality, and that those whose need is greatest receive it without regard for social position, creed or political conviction. Therefore the selection of children to be helped must be such that there is certain guarantee that these principles are followed in practice. In consultation with the British authorities, we worked out a system in Germany which I believe was as reliable as possible. Only the degree of need has guided our work.

Much has been written about Swedish relief work during and after the war, and therefore I will give here only glimpses of the activities of the Red Cross in Germany. I can state that

Swedish activities there have comprised the feeding of a total of 121,000 children who, six days a week, received one meal a day from us. From the beginning of these activities to July 1, 1948, about 67,000,000 meals were distributed. As I said, the organization was planned in consultation with the British authorities, but in the practical execution of the work, the Swedish representatives also collaborated with the German authorities, especially with the Landesjugendamt, and with certain German humanitarian aid organizations such as the Red Cross, Evangelisches Hilfswerk, and the Catholic aid organization, Caritas.

If possible, Hamburg made a still more dreary impression that time than before. If one tours the city, one sometimes feels that one has come by accident into an ancient ruined town which has suddenly been populated by people of our own generation, thus giving an impression of macabre unreality. In this town, which at that time still had no street lights or heating, a town where the street-cars and elevated trains functioned only a few hours in the morning and the afternoon, where the few theatres and cinemas opened and closed early, and where there was a curfew for the civilians after half past ten in the evening, the Hamburg population lived, and still lives, a meagre and dreary life. It was not very easy to find out how the population occupied itself. The shops were few and hence so were the opportunities for spending money. They were not interested in spending money. Only goods had any value, and they were very scarce. Barter and black market operations flourished. Cigarettes had become a sort of currency, "a hard currency". An American or English cigarette was quoted at about six marks, a value which can be judged in relation to the fact that a German labourer earned about 160 marks per month. Morale had sunk catastro-

phically. People begged openly in the streets and thefts were countless.

This was the background for our tour of inspections. We first went to the so-called "Big Kitchen", the place where the soup was prepared. The organization functioned excellently. At five-thirty each morning preparations were started, from six-thirty to eight-thirty the soup to be distributed during the day was cooked, between eight-thirty and nine-thirty the containers were filled and thereafter delivered on big trucks to the different canteens. We then went to see these canteens. During the years, I have seen many of these centres for an activity which undoubtedly has been important to post-war Germany. Originally, the food for the children was fetched by the mothers. This system, however, was changed. The children had to come themselves to eat their soup on the spot. At first, the mothers protested. They did not like to have to wait for their children while they were eating, and quite naturally so. The Hamburg women must spend hours in queues anyway to get something eatable for the other members of their families. But this was the only proper way to control the distribution, the only way in which we could convince ourselves that the soup and the cod liver oil which we distributed really benefited the children and not the other members of their family. The following is a typical scene in one of these canteens: The canteen has been opened in a house which used to be a police station, and which now, for the greater part, is in ruins. The children arrive with tin mugs of the most primitive sort, since household utensils are extremely scarce. An empty can is usually desirable, as with modifications, it can be used for many things, among others to hold soup. They come from different social classes, these children who so greedily swallow their daily ration, from the middle class and

workers' homes, but there is not much difference between them. They look and are dressed very much alike. They do not appear completely destitute, at least not at first sight. But one thing is absolutely certain, the meal they are now eating is playing a very great rôle in their lives. The surroundings in which this charitable scene takes place are as drab as can be. The room is shabby, worn and dreary. Looking through the window, one sees nothing but ruined landscape. Its jagged outlines hurt the eye, frighten by their dead monotony and by their skeletal appearance. And if one looks around at the walls, one discovers a few posters which bear eloquent witness to the post-war social conditions in Germany. The posters are put up by the so-called "Suchdienst," working throughout the country to help parents to find their children again. The posters bear pictures of children and list their names, dates of birth, and their home regions. But all this is of little use: it concerns children who have been separated from their parents for three or four years because of the bombings in the last part of the war. It is very difficult, our guide said with a gesture toward the pathetic pictures of the undernourished children's faces, to identify them. "Where are your parents?" the posters ask. It is not very often that this question receives an answer.

From Hamburg we went to Lübeck to inspect activities there. All shipments of food and clothing at that time went from Sweden to Germany via Lübeck. It was necessary to maintain a special transport detachment there which could forward the shipments to our different relief centres. The Red Cross headquarters were located in a house which had been used before by the Swedish Legation. It was in this house that my meeting with Himmler took place on the night of April 23, 1945, during which the Reichsführer declared himself

willing to negotiate the capitulation of Germany to the Western Allies. A sign at the entrance of the house now records this fact. Outside lies a broken iron fence as a reminder of the significant episode which happened after the meeting. Himmler insisted that he would drive the car himself, and in his extreme state of nerves, he drove right into the fence. The room in which the meeting had taken place was now the office of the Red Cross. The two uncomfortable armchairs in which Himmler and I sat during our conversation were still there. This house in the Eschenburgstrasse in Lübeck has its place in German history. Here, in this somewhat shabby structure built in the old-fashioned style of thousands of middle class residences in German suburbs, it was admitted for the first time that the One Thousand Year Reich, about which the Nazis had preached for twelve years, was an illusion and nothing more.

A walk around Lübeck showed that this town was much less damaged than Hamburg. Yet the old Hanseatic town was dreary to look at. The bunker in the centre of the town was a tragic sight. Bunkers are not necessarily built like cellars, deep underground. Some are five or more storeys high. In that case they look like the very awkward and primitive buildings surviving from the middle ages, when architecture was in an early stage of development. Bunkers were built during the war after the ordinary bomb shelters under houses had proved unsafe. They were constructed of concrete many feet thick and proved almost indestructible. In any case, they are still standing and are now used for other purposes.

A bunker is not an idyllic spot during an air raid. Nor is it one when filled with refugees from the eastern parts of Germany. The outstanding characteristic of a bunker is that

it has no windows. It is therefore very dark inside. No daylight can enter and the electric lighting is insufficient. Moreover, it is also very cold, and usually damp. We visited such a bunker that Sunday afternoon in Lübeck and found there refugees from Eastern Prussia.

We were met by a strong and convincing chorus of psalms. On the ground floor, a service was being held which was attended by a great many people. Perhaps this was one indication of the religious awakening, which, according to many witnesses, has taken place in the regions annexed by the Russians; an expression of the enormously important rôle which religion and the church have again begun to play in the East as a result of events there during the last few years. In one of the upper storeys, a young man was playing an accordion and some girls were dancing to a tango melody. It was a pathetic effort to dissipate the endless dreariness which enveloped this dark and cold refuge for people who had been totally uprooted, who had lost all their possessions, and in most cases some of their closest relatives. Despair and apathy characterized these people lying on their bunks. There were no beds, only boards; no mattresses, only thin worn-out blankets; and no partitions, only rags and clothes which they had hung up to gain what privacy they could in their overcrowded quarters. On the top floor, in the coldest but also the freshest air, were some newly arrived women and children eating a miserable meal. The head nurse, who showed us around, addressed some words to them which were touching in their effect: the English authorities had announced that the refugees would be transferred to an ordinary camp in a few weeks. The pale, haggard faces lit up in gratitude. The bunker was not to be the final destination on their long trek from the East.

We continued to Berlin. It was the first time I had had the opportunity to travel to the former German capital by road, and I looked forward to this trip with a certain excitement. The Autostrada on which we drove was in perfect condition. It stretched out ahead of us just as it was built in "the days of glory" of the Hitler régime. The only things to remind one of the great catastrophe were the closely spaced British, and, later on, Russian road signs by which traffic was directed. As we approached the Russian Zone, we came to a control point outside Helmstedt. In the one storey American Red Cross road canteen nearby, to which we were invited, we stepped right into America. "Folks back home," said a sign, had presented the coffee, cakes and cigarettes which were distributed free of charge to visiting soldiers, and now to the members of our Swedish Red Cross group. Here reigned typical American informal and generous hospitality. Here was chewing gum and phonograph music, and pin-up girls on the walls. Here was a sample of the spirited patriotic enthusiasm which was stirred up in America by the catastrophe of Pearl Harbour. Some of the American soldiers said that they liked Helmstedt very much; it was much better there than in Berlin. For those who had seen the town which once had been the centre of the German nation, it was not difficult to understand what they meant.

The American, British, and finally the Russian control points were passed without difficulty. We drove on down the Autostrada into the dark Brandenburg landscape and the Russian Zone, where guards of distinctly Mongolian appearance, stationed at fixed intervals, saluted us as we passed.

My purpose in going to Berlin was not only to inspect the Swedish canteens for children, but also to contact Allied representatives to inquire how we might comply with their

wishes that Swedish activities should be extended from the British Sector to include the other three. It was also my intention to try to get permission to distribute medicines in the Russian Zone. Considerable quantities of medicine had been bought with Swedish government funds, part of which had been put at our disposal for distribution in Germany.

We very soon discovered that shortages in Berlin were very serious, especially among refugees, who were badly clothed. The Russian authorities had declared themselves anxious not only that Swedish medicines should be distributed in the Russian Zone, but also that we should include the Russian Sector in Berlin. Of course, we were very much pleased by their attitude, but I pointed out that we were responsible for seeing that relief was distributed in accordance with the principles of the Red Cross, as I stated them before.

During my stay in Berlin, I had several meetings with the various public health officials in the four sectors, and I also had the opportunity of discussing the matter with General Clay and with the Russian General Smirnov. It proved that the Russians were somewhat suspicious of an organization like the Swedish Red Cross. They wanted relief to be carried out by organizations of a more political character. I remembered the unfortunate developments in the German Red Cross, which I have touched upon before, and yet, though I understood very well that Russian suspicion was probably due to these developments, I had to point out definitely at the conferences that if any help at all was to be given, it would have to be done in accordance with the principles which we had fixed, and therefore by our own organization. I had great satisfaction in learning later that the proposals we had made had been accepted by the Allied Control Council.

While I was in Berlin, it was suggested to me that I should visit certain camps for refugees in order to get an idea of the great difficulties which had to be overcome.

Lehrter Bahnhof is nothing more than a mound of rubble. The most shocking thing we noted when we arrived there, however, was not the tumbledown walls and the totally destroyed roof or the apathetic and poorly dressed people who stood waiting in the snow and slush in a long line to buy tickets. The strange unreality of the place was accentuated by the fact that there was a train standing at one of the platforms. In other words, this heap of rubble still served the function for which it had been built. But these functions had been severely limited. Two small signs announced that there were about five trains arriving and as many leaving. To buy a train ticket in the Germany of 1946, however, was a privilege which few were permitted to enjoy. We had gone to the Lehrter Bahnhof to meet a shipment of refugees from the East. For some reason, the shipment did not arrive, however, and instead we visited the air-raid shelters where the refugees were usually taken after their arrival. They were dark, clammy, cold and bare rooms with wooden benches as the only furniture. In the dim light of another room, an old and miserably dressed man was lying on one of the benches. He obviously had difficulty in moving about. He told us that he came from a poor neighbourhood in eastern Berlin, and that he was now travelling somewhere west to try to find his son. His papers were in order, he assured us, and he also had a ticket. But his health was obviously very poor. He had been wounded in the street fighting in Berlin the spring before, and he complained of pains in the stomach. Lying there on his wooden bench, he did not look as if he had much chance of reaching his son. He

represented a fate shared by tens of thousands of Berliners.

The oppressive gloom of the air-raid shelters in Lehrter Bahnhof was exceeded by that of the refugee depot, which we visited shortly after in Kuppstrasse, in north-eastern Berlin not far from Stettiner Bahnhof. Between twelve and thirteen thousand people had been crowded together in this depot, which was located in an old army garrison. Probably this building had seen its best days in the time of Emperor Wilhelm II, when there still was a romantic veneer on German militarism, romantic because nobody realized the frightful consequences of that militarism when supported by modern techniques. Later on, probably during the Hitler régime, the building in Kuppstrasse had been used as a police station. Now it was a refuge for the people driven from the East.

A rank atmosphere filled the stairways and corridors as we made our way among a contingent of refugees which had arrived in Berlin the night before. Here we encountered the very blackest aspects of the life lived by so many during the last few years in Germany: people who had been uprooted and swept away, people who had been separated from their dearest ones and who desperately tried in every possible way to get in touch with them, to find them again in the ocean of individuals drifting westward; destitute people for whom existence had become meaningless; starved, haggard people who, twelve hours after their arrival, still waited for food; sick people, dying people. We visited the sick room and also a sort of nursery, where the children were brought together during the day. In the evening, they were returned to their parents in the different parts of the building. The children were just going to get their food when we came. There was anticipation in the air. A chunk of bread and a mug of potato

soup is not much for a child between five and twelve years old, but at least it is something, and is eaten very carefully when it is the only meal of the day, when one has to go to bed on an empty stomach, only to wake up with a gnawing hunger. The scene in this nursery in the building on Kuppstrasse gave us a very clear picture of what the Swedish feeding of children in Berlin could mean.

I had expressed a desire to see the bunker in which Hitler spent his last days, and we paid it a visit. It was grim to walk through the now totally destroyed but at one time beautiful rooms of the Reichschancellery, and go down into the shelter. Outside the entrance, the bodies of Hitler and Eva Braun were presumably burned in order not to fall into the hands of the Allies, and in that way prove to the whole world how the Nazi leader left the world in which he had caused so much suffering.

The bunker consists of a number of rooms which had evidently been very comfortably furnished. A Russian sentry and a German policeman, who were guarding the entrance, gladly gave us information which they had probably given to most of the visitors to the bunker. They were of the opinion that it was far from certain that Hitler was dead. They also believed that a fairly large group of Germans would still be glad to see him return. Their words, however, sounded like a memorized lesson. I doubt if they really believed it.

I was, of course, especially interested to see the place where the final act of the war had been staged. The visit there made a very gruesome impression on me. It was not difficult to imagine the scenes which had taken place there during the nerve-wracking and terrifying last days, when a dictator and his closest collaborators realized their life's work, which they had once thought would guarantee Germany's future, now

lay in dust and rubble worse than that of the German capital. They had only to glance out of the narrow entrance of the bunker to get a picture of the situation. In my opinion, it is a shame that this bunker has been blown up. The building should have been preserved as a ghostlike monument, a sinister reminder of the fate which befell the man who stood on the pinnacle of authority but who, in consequence of his own limitations and his unlimited thirst for power, was hurled into an abyss.

We left Berlin for our headquarters in Vlotho. There an invitation was waiting for me from Field Marshal Montgomery to lunch with him in his headquarters in the castle of Osterwalde, near the village of Boern, not far from Osnabrück. During lunch with the Field Marshal, the situation in Germany was discussed from a general point of view. Montgomery regarded the situation as very precarious. Even though he feared that soon rations in the British Zone would have to be cut, he had felt obliged to advise the English government not to send any further food to Germany, as the situation for the British people had recently become much more serious. Montgomery continued to say that Europe's future depended upon the development of the Ruhr and Saar districts. In the first place, the industries had to get started again. In this connection, he decidedly disapproved of the French proposal for the internationalization of the Rhineland, regarding which negotiations were then pending between the Allies. He further intimated that, in his opinion, it was absolutely necessary that a national administration be created in Germany. I interposed that I had noticed that the Germans, as a matter of fact, wanted the English to stay. This, for certain reasons, he said he could very well understand.

Montgomery mentioned that he had just been in Switzerland. On his return, the enormous destruction in Germany struck him anew. Germany has to be materially rebuilt from the ground up. He was very sceptical regarding the German mentality. He believed that the English could not change the German character. In any case, it would take at least several generations to bring about a different way of thinking from that which was responsible for the recent epoch in German history.

During the course of the conversation Montgomery touched on the Polish problem. He intimated that the reason why the English so strongly upheld Poland was that the Poles, and especially the Polish pilots, made fantastic contributions during "The Battle of Britain" which had been of great value, and of the greatest importance to the successful conduct of the war.

Finally, Montgomery mentioned my conferences with Himmler in the spring of 1945. During his offensive against Germany, he had received information about these conferences and he had also been in contact with Himmler. The German plans at that time had been for the German army to retire a certain distance in accordance with a secret treaty with the English. Montgomery had rejected the proposal, as he realized that in that way the Germans wanted to try to save as much of their Wehrmacht as possible.

Montgomery's side of the conversation ended with some very kind remarks about Sweden and the Swedish position. He considered Sweden's neutrality during the war best for all parties.

Quite naturally, it was of extraordinary interest to me to have a tête-a-tête with the world-famous general. Montgomery was childishly pleased with a windproof jacket which he had

recently bought in Switzerland, and which he wore even during lunch. He declared jokingly that this garment was not regulation, and that he would not allow his men to wear it, but it obviously amused him to appear in private company somewhat less correctly attired. Concerning the regulations for British uniforms, he related an episode at which he had been present during the offensive in Italy. When he was driving one day on an Italian road, he wanted to pass a military truck which, in spite of his continued honking, did not move over. Finally, Montgomery's driver succeeded in squeezing by the truck and, as the English general passed, the truck driver raised himself and saluted with a deep bow, at the same time taking off a top hat he was wearing. Montgomery, who clearly saw the humour of the situation, felt obliged to issue an order prohibiting British Army personnel to wear top hats with their uniforms. This little example shows that Montgomery combines with his great military talent and ability a capacity, through his grand sense of humour, to emphasize amusing sidelights in an otherwise arduous and serious military life.

We continued our journey to the Ruhr where, for the first time, I saw the tremendous destruction brought by the war to German industrial cities. Conditions in the Ruhr must be the worst in Germany, perhaps in the whole of Europe. The leaders of the Allied Air Forces considered it necessary to destroy German heavy industry by bombing. The Royal Air Force had been especially assigned to bomb the Ruhr.

Among the towns which were continually "night targets" were Essen, Dortmund, and Duisburg, centres of German heavy industry. The visitor to these towns today can testify that the Allied pilots thoroughly executed their mission. This

part of Germany is so completely devastated that it can only be compared to the central part of Berlin. The Alfred Krupp works were, once upon a time, spread over a large portion of Essen. This area is now a single mass of ruins. One of the world's largest industries has been almost totally annihilated. The destruction had been completed by the obliteration of the statues which were erected in the city in honour of Alfred Krupp, the munitions manufacturer. Only one plinth and its inscription remains.

I had the opportunity of meeting some of the leading officials of the Allied occupation. During my conversations with these men, the attitude of the British authorities toward present conditions was expressed in a very outspoken manner. For years and years, Germany had been England's most important political problem. It was, they said, still a most serious one. Germany, they felt, should be kept under very strict control. At the same time, within certain limits, it should be put on its feet again economically. Germany is the central part of Europe. In order to solve the European problem, civil life in Germany would have to begin anew.

On a grey and chilly February morning I also talked with some outstanding representatives of the German population, one of them a long standing member of the Communist party and a determined anti-Nazi. We met in the canteen which was set up in the destroyed Krupp factories, and where the soup prepared by the Red Cross was being distributed among the German children. Surrounding us, as far as we could see, there was nothing but ruin. The German I talked to had exact figures at his disposal when I asked him about the housing conditions in bombed Essen: fifty per cent. of all the houses were totally destroyed, he said, thirty per cent. heavily

damaged but not beyond repair, ten per cent. were lightly damaged, and ten per cent. had escaped.

The conversation turned to the controversial question of "The other Germany," the possibility that, during the war, there might have been an organized and active opposition against the Hitler régime. The reply to this question was, on the whole, negative. I was told that, politically, active opposition had only existed among certain groups. However, a certain part of the German population had, from the beginning, been mentally opposed to the Nazi party régime. These circles could be estimated at about twenty-five per cent. of the population. They belonged principally to the Communist and Social Democratic camps, and to the church organizations, both Catholic and Evangelical. This anti-Nazi attitude of mind spread during the last part of the war and was shared, as far as can be estimated, by about forty-five per cent. of the population. In the opinion of the German I talked to, this increase was not caused so much by the rejection in principle of Nazi methods, as by the increasing realization that the Nazi régime was about to lose the war.

After our visit in the Ruhr, we motored via Hamburg to Copenhagen. Because of a heavy snowfall it was a rather difficult journey, but it ended without mishap. An amusing episode might perhaps be mentioned. In passing the frontier between Germany and Denmark, we showed our papers in the usual way to the English official, who, without further ado, let us pass. When, shortly afterwards, we passed the German frontier station, one of the Danish soldiers saluted us. We interpreted this as a sign that they considered an inspection superfluous and we therefore continued without getting out of the car. Later on, when we arrived at Aabenraa, we were

stopped by the chief of police, who told us that he had received a telephone call from the border station ordering our return. The message said that we had not permitted ourselves to be inspected but had simply continued without showing our papers. We were obliged to go to the Swedish Consulate, where the matter was soon cleared up after the chief of police telephoned to the border station.

When we arrived in Copenhagen in the evening, we learned that a news agency had snapped up the little episode and sent a despatch to the newspapers to the effect that I had been arrested by the Danish police. Actually, it was an incident of no importance.

XVI

RED CROSS CONFERENCES

IN August, 1946, I came for the first time into intimate contact with international Red Cross work and its wider fields of activity. The International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva called a preparatory conference to discuss the immediate problems with representatives of the local and national Red Cross societies, and to make preparations for the regular International Red Cross Conference planned to take place in 1948.

Before I went to the conference, I had discussed with my colleagues of the Swedish Red Cross and also with representatives of the American Red Cross whom I met during a trip in America, questions concerning the future organization and activities of the International Committee.

The history of the organization is, on the whole, well known. It was founded in 1859 on the battlefield of Solferino, during the war between France and Austria, when Henri Dunant of Switzerland was inspired by a burning desire to do something to humanize war. He wanted to awaken people to the realization that belligerent nations caring for wounded and sick soldiers ought to be obliged to give the same help to friend and foe. In 1865, the first Geneva Conference took place. The juridical basis for the universal concept of the Red Cross was formed here. In order to ensure the observance of the convention drawn up at the first Conference, and to work for the promulgation of the idea of the Red Cross, the Inter-

national Committee was formed in Geneva consisting exclusively of Swiss citizens. This committee has, particularly during the two world wars, executed tasks whose importance cannot be sufficiently emphasized. It has been extremely valuable to have a neutral organization which puts itself above politics in doing relief work, and to have a group which has the will and the ability to follow implicitly the high ideals which the founder of the Red Cross conceived for the world-wide activities of the organization. Switzerland has always followed the policy of neutrality and has, I believe, also succeeded in convincing other nations of its firm intention to maintain it under all circumstances. In view of this far-sighted attitude of Switzerland, it was considered suitable that all the members of the Committee should be Swiss citizens. At the same time, this was a tribute to the Swiss citizen, Henri Dunant, for his great life's work. After the First World War, the idea was conceived of forming an organization in which all the recognized Red Cross Societies of the world could be represented. It was felt that this organization could co-ordinate the activities of all the others, principally in peacetime, and enrich the various societies with the experiences of their sister organizations in other countries. For this purpose, the League of Red Cross Societies, generally called "The League," was formed on American initiative. Its Secretariat has been located in Geneva as a rule, but also during certain periods in Paris.

It can safely be said that without the work of the International Committee during the Second World War, certainly hundreds of thousands, and perhaps millions of lives would have been lost. Nevertheless, it has been suggested that it might be suitable at least to discuss a possible reorganization of the whole International Red Cross. My experiences caused me

to take a personal interest in this proposal. I knew and understood that the idea would meet with strong opposition, especially from the Swiss. Nevertheless, I felt it my duty to make the suggestion in Geneva, as I considered a thorough discussion of this question necessary. There was a possibility that the work of the Committee, especially in wartime, could be rendered even more effective than it had been.

It had never been my intention to propose the dissolution of the existing Committee. The plan simply aimed at strengthening it with a number of representatives from other nations who, if their countries happened to be drawn into war, could be replaced by delegates from neutral states. Furthermore, the International Red Cross Conferences, which of old were generally convened every four years, would still have supreme authority. At these conferences, representatives both of the Committee and of the League meet with those of the national Red Cross organizations and of the governments of the various countries to discuss questions of general importance to all Red Cross work. My proposal resulted in lengthy and lively discussions. A special committee was formed which met frequently. In the course of these meetings I greatly revised my original attitude toward the problem. One of the reasons for this was a certain occurrence during a regional conference in Belgrade in September, 1947, which I shall mention later in another connection. In short, I have become convinced that the International Committee ought to continue in its present form and retain its present composition, but also that there ought to exist a co-ordinating organization which, both in peace and in war, can co-operate toward making the work in the International Red Cross more effective, and which can more easily clear up the complications which quite naturally arise within an

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organization of such enormous proportions. Just to mention one example: During the Second World War the Eastern Powers had made rather serious accusations against the International Committee of the Red Cross, accusations which, in my opinion, were highly exaggerated. The co-ordinating organization which may be formed, and which, of course, will consist of representatives not only from Switzerland but also from other countries, should be able to clear up such misunderstandings and remove sources of irritation which, after the war, have arisen between the Committee and certain national Red Cross Societies.

At the Conference I received the decided impression that, especially in the Eastern states of Europe, there is a tendency to confuse the measures taken by the government of a country with those for which the Red Cross organization of that country is responsible. A representative of the Yugoslavian Red Cross provided me with an example of this. He asserted in a speech that some Red Cross Societies belonging to neutral countries, had, during the war, assisted in the export of weapons from these countries to Germany. After the meeting, I asked the Yugoslavian delegate if he had the Swedish Red Cross in mind when he made this assertion. He replied that he had. When I requested him to explain his views more fully, he answered quite naturally: was it not true that, during the war goods had been sent from Sweden to Germany which had become of the greatest importance to German war production? His statement gave me the impression that perhaps his own Red Cross organization was not independent of his country's government, which, in my opinion, is totally wrong.

The Russian Red Cross Society was unfortunately not represented in Geneva. According to our information, this was

because the Soviet Union is not particularly interested in participating in conferences in Switzerland. Behind this, there is probably, in principle, a Russian suspicion of Switzerland who, for many years, did not want to recognize the Soviet Union officially. This is a clear proof of how the political authorities of the different countries are sometimes confused about these countries' Red Cross organization, a misconception which is extremely unfortunate.

The conference ended, however, in the most cordial atmosphere, and we had ample opportunities to discuss important questions concerning the revision of the now existing Geneva Conventions. First, the preliminary decision was made that the Conventions containing regulations about the care and treatment of prisoners of war should be revised; and second, that a new convention should be drafted with directions for the treatment of civilian populations in wartime.

During the First and Second World Wars there were no conventions regulating the treatment of civilian internees. In consequence of this, neither the International Committee nor other neutral organizations have had any control whatsoever over concentration camps. If the draft proposal is accepted by the International Red Cross Conference in Stockholm in 1948, it will mean that all civilian internees will have the same status as prisoners of war have had hitherto. Of course, this proposal will also have to be approved by a diplomatic conference and finally ratified by the respective governments. This would make it the wartime duty of every country to send lists of names to the large centre of the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva, and to permit neutral representatives to inspect the camps. Furthermore, the internees would have the opportunity to correspond at certain intervals with their

families at home and be permitted to receive food parcels from home. It is evident how extraordinarily important these regulations would be in the event of another war.

On a short visit to Germany, a few months later, I realized how pressing were the problems of reform I have just mentioned. I was able to get some idea of existing conditions in English and American internment camps. A German who had lived in Sweden for a long time, and who had enjoyed the confidence of the Allies during the war, looked me up in Hamburg and told me about the conditions which, in his opinion, prevailed in these camps. After the German capitulation, he had been requested by the Allied authorities to come to Germany to be at their disposal as a witness on certain questions. He was promised that he would receive the best possible treatment, but actual circumstances were not what he had expected. He was transferred from one camp to another, in which conditions, as he described them, were really outrageous.

They were not very different from those which once prevailed in the German concentration camps. This German, when I met him, had been released on the request of that branch of the occupation authorities which was in charge of industrial and commercial reconstruction in Germany. He asked me if I could do something in the matter and I promised to try.

I went down to the British Headquarters where I had a long conversation with some generals who were in charge of these internment camps. It was very interesting to observe their reaction and I remember how one of them declared that this was a terrible thing. It was not, he said, for conditions of this sort that the English had fought a long and bloody war. The

two generals suggested, after I had finished my report, that my German informant should come to their headquarters to give a further account of his experiences and observations. He did, and later on, I was informed by the English that, of course, they considered his story somewhat exaggerated, but that they would do everything in their power to prevent a repetition of similar occurrences.

Since then, I have unfortunately received evidence that similar cases had occurred in other parts of the Western Allied Zones of occupation. I cannot speak for conditions in the Russian Zone, as I have not had the opportunity to visit there.

I remember a statement made by a very prominent American shortly after the war in connection with the exposure of conditions in the German concentration camps. He said that the actions of which the Germans had been guilty could not have occurred in other civilized countries. I also remember that, even at that time, I protested against his statement. Unfortunately, it must be realized that in many people of various nationalities, there are hidden forces which, if given free outlet, express themselves in cruel and sadistic acts. This is especially marked in people who, for some reason or other, have come into positions of power to which, under ordinary circumstances, they are not accustomed. I am afraid that we in Sweden, in that respect, have no reason to climb on our high horses, nor can we definitely declare that the actions which I have indicated as occurring in German concentration camps would be alien to Swedish mentality. War has a strong coarsening effect on human nature, and when certain individuals have the opportunity to exercise their power without control, this leads to frightful consequences.

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A great difference exists, however, between the conditions I mentioned in the English and American camps and those which, as the whole world knows, existed in the German concentration camps. In the first place, to my knowledge, there have been no cases in the Allied camps of prisoners being tortured to death. Secondly, and in my opinion this is extremely important, cruelties inflicted by the representatives of the Western Allied occupation powers happened without knowledge of their superiors. I can give examples that the authorities have intervened forcefully when cases of sadism or cruelty have come to their attention, and that the culprits have been severely punished. The conditions in German concentration camps existed, as everyone knows, with the sanction of the Nazi leaders, which makes them appear in a different and much more frightful light.

I can very well understand that it can be tempting for weak and unbalanced individuals to take the same measures against their previous enemies as these enemies were guilty of when they were in power. They followed the motto: "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth." Nevertheless, it is quite clear that such reasoning and behaviour are absolutely unpardonable. It is debasing oneself to the low mentality of the Nazis, a mentality which these individuals judged so harshly.

I will once more point out that I cannot speak authoritatively of conditions in the other parts of Germany, as I feel that I cannot judge cases which have come to my attention only by word of mouth, without having checked them personally.

There is, however, good reason to believe that the conditions, for example, in the concentration camps of the Russian Zone, are still worse than they have ever been in the Western Allied Zones. Nevertheless, it seems hopeless to try

to make improvements in these reprehensible conditions, as the Russian authorities do not permit representatives from the humanitarian organizations of other countries to visit their camps. Furthermore, correspondence with the Russian authorities is rendered impossible since they appear to have a deeply rooted aversion to answering letters. This at least has been my experience.

★ ★ ★

From the end of the summer and the autumn of 1946 my memories are of Germany, France and Sweden. On Swedish initiative, the Junior Red Cross held an International Congress in Stockholm in which Soviet Russia, to our great pleasure, participated. This congress was characterized by a very congenial atmosphere. About thirty nations were represented, and the congress gave us good reason to expect that international collaboration between the various Red Cross organizations could be maintained and perhaps even strengthened.

In November of the same year, I was in Paris, where the Executive Committee of the League was meeting. Important questions were on the agenda. I was very interested in the fact that a Russian delegation had arrived at the conference. I requested a private interview with the chairman of the Russian Red Cross in order to find out what possibilities existed for more intimate contact between his organization and the Swedish Red Cross. The fact was that the Swedish Red Cross had already, at the end of 1945, written to the Russian Red Cross to inform them that we were prepared to give relief to the Russian people who had suffered so incredibly during the war. We asked, through the Russian Minister in Stockholm and through the Swedish Minister in Moscow, how a Swedish contribution could be made, as naturally our understanding of

the situation in Russia and our information about the need for help among the Russian population was very vague. Despite repeated reminders, we had never received any answer to our questions. I therefore took the opportunity to ask the Russian Red Cross delegate if he could make some suggestions. I explained to him that we felt an honest desire to help, but needed to know how our relief should be planned. The Russian delegate was extremely polite but also quite evasive. He did not give me any real answer. Finally, I asked quite frankly the reason why Russia was evidently not very kindly disposed toward the Swedish Red Cross. After I had pressed him on this point, he said that in Russia they could not understand why the Swedish Red Cross had awarded the Nobel Peace Prize to the International Committee of the Red Cross. I replied laughingly that we had nothing to do with the matter, as this prize is awarded by a committee appointed by the Norwegian Parliament. The Russian delegate rejoined that in theory this was certainly the case, but that in reality the Swedish Red Cross must have exerted great influence before the awarding of the prize. I assured him that we had not had the remotest idea who would receive the Peace Prize, and, like everyone else, we only learned of the result through the press and the radio. This information seemed to strike home, and my Russian colleague stressed that this was exceedingly interesting to him.

My reason for relating this episode is that it seems to me new evidence of the value of personal contacts, especially in international relations. The suspicion which characterized the Russian attitude toward our organization was clearly based on inadequate knowledge of actual conditions; probably this explains why international collaboration is not always as free

INSTEAD OF ARMS

of friction as is desirable. Of course, the same reasoning can be applied to our attitude toward, and our understanding of, Russian problems. It is therefore desirable that representatives from other countries should be given the opportunity to visit Russia. It is possible that such visits might induce us to revise our opinions in certain respects, and remove mutual distrust and suspicion.

Another episode during my Paris visit especially pleased me. This was the opportunity I had of meeting a great number of French women who had been prisoners in Ravensbrück concentration camp and who had been repatriated via Sweden. This meeting provided marvellous proof of people's ability to forget what has been dark and tragic in their past. It was evident that many of these women had still far from completely recovered from the sufferings and privation they had undergone. Yet there prevailed a happy, even gay atmosphere. They touched only upon the brighter aspects of their days together behind barbed wire, and it was in a joking spirit that they told stories of the frightful days in Ravensbrück.

As I said, I have also memories from the Germany of that autumn, a Germany where conditions were rapidly becoming worse. On my way back from the conference in Geneva in August, I was the guest of Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir Sholto Douglas. The fact was that during the summer months we had suspended our activities in the soup kitchens for children. The English government had requested the Swedish authorities to resume these activities in the autumn. I could now inform Douglas that the Swedish government had given permission for this and that we could resume work about the first of October.

It was not difficult to convince oneself that this was essential.

I will never forget certain scenes I witnessed on my visit in Hamburg in November. With a Major of the English Salvation Army as a guide, I went through the most devastated parts of the town. In a cellar, under an enormous mound of rubble, which had once been a house, we saw a faint light. We knocked and a dirty, haggard and tired old woman met us. When we had gone down into the cold, damp and frightfully grim cellar, she told about her present existence. She lived here with her son and daughter. Her husband had been killed in the war and her son was an invalid. He used the only bed in the room while the two women had to sleep on the floor. "It is cold and horrible," she said in her toneless voice. "And it is not easy to sleep. There are hordes of rats in the cellar and they attack us during the night. We hardly dare fall asleep, as we have to be continually prepared to defend ourselves." The daughter, who also looked like an old woman, though she was really only thirty or forty, had evidently suffered even more than the mother. Through talking with her one soon realized that she was a mental case.

When we emerged from these terribly depressing surroundings, we saw a little boy about eight years old in the street. "Do you see that little boy?" the English Major asked me. "He supports his mother and his two small sisters by stealing. Whatever he finds, it may be automobile tyres or coal, he takes to the black-market and trades for money or food. Without him, the family would certainly perish. I just wonder what a child psychiatrist would say about his case. Many might possibly condemn him as a criminal, but I, for my part, think he is a little hero." I could not but share the Major's opinion.

Looking back, I have only depressing memories of this German trip in the late autumn of 1946. For example, I recall

the tribunal in Hamburg where the trials of the leaders of the Ravensbrück concentration camp were held. Both men and women were sitting on the bench for the accused. I saw faces reflecting only complete scorn, while others seemed to display deep despair and remorse.*

I further remember some refugee camps in Schleswig-Holstein, camps which eloquently bear witness to the fantastic upheavals in the lives of the German people since the Armistice. Normally, Schleswig-Holstein has 1,400,000 inhabitants. Now there were, on top of this, 1,200,000 refugees, of which 700,000 were still in camps. People were continually pouring in from the eastern regions, for the greater part people who were unable to work. At the same time, the number of men able to work decreased, as they could not find employment in this part of the country and were drawn to the industrial districts in the south and west. The British authorities had done their best to better the situation, but conditions were still extremely desperate and primitive. The overcrowding was frightful. I witnessed the effect of cold and dampness, poor rations and the ravages of tuberculosis. The people driven together in these camps seemed to have given themselves over to total apathy. They had completely surrendered as if they had lost all capacity to struggle against their misery. Utter hopelessness prevailed.

With these gruesome impressions in mind, I returned to

* The British prosecutor at this trial provided me with very interesting information. He told me that certain documents which the Allies found after the end of the war showed that in the German concentration camps, soon after my first conversation with Himmler, they had stopped using the crematories for exterminating prisoners. Of course, this was very happy news to me. But I pointed out to my English informant that I could hardly take the credit for this; as a matter of fact, it must have been Schellenberg's intensive efforts which induced Himmler to give the necessary orders. I later informed Schellenberg's defence counsel of this.—*Author.*

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Sweden to celebrate Christmas with my family in peace and quiet. I cannot deny that the Christmas joy was subdued when I reflected on what I had seen, on my experiences in the world of suffering, on the drastic evidences of misery and need, on the struggle for existence which hundreds of thousands of people still had to fight.

XVII

FINNISH TENACITY

A MOVING atmosphere prevailed in the old 17th-century church in Torneå, where we were greeted on a frosty day in March, 1947. A choir sang some beautiful psalms and afterwards the pastor, tired and shivering, spoke from the altar. I still remember the text he had chosen: "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over." These words took on a special meaning if one reflected upon the heroic struggle of Finland against her overwhelming enemy. It was very cold in the old church. Breath rose like smoke from the singers and the pastor. But one felt a strong inner warmth from the gratitude being shown by the Finns to Sweden for the help she had been able to give. Neither did the pastor omit mention of the many Swedish memories connected with this Finnish region.

We had been invited by Governor Hannula of Lapland to visit the north of Finland. The purpose of the visit was in part to give us an opportunity to study post-war conditions there and in part to investigate ways in which we could help the suffering people. What we experienced in this barren region, with its industrious and persevering people, greatly impressed us. We encountered unforgettable evidence of the firm will of the Finnish people not to give up despite devastating war and incredible internal difficulties—of their unshakable determi-

nation to build their country anew. We met the first example of this spirit when our host, Governor Hannula, escorted us from Torneå to Kemi, a settlement in Toivola. It was quite clear that the material phase of the enormous reconstruction necessary in northern Finland had to come first, but they did not want to neglect moral reconstruction. For more than twenty-five years study groups and evening courses had been arranged for young people in the region of Kemi. Also included in this work were theoretical and practical courses in the care of children. During the war, studies had to be suspended. But now they had been begun again. When we visited the project there were about eight hundred and fifty pupils taking part in the various courses, a truly remarkable achievement.

Our next destination, and the most important of our journey, was Rovaniemi. There is a Finnish children's hospital there to which the Swedish Red Cross had been able to give material assistance. This we wanted to visit. In Rovaniemi we were to see the destruction which befell that part of Finland during the last months of the war.

We found what we had so often seen in other countries: Rovaniemi, the capital of the province, was completely in ruins. Hundreds of chimneys were sticking up out of the snow, remains of the houses burnt down during the German retreat. Our Finnish guides explained the situation to us. When the war trumpets had been silenced in Lapland, when the hordes of warriors had crossed the frontier, the whole countryside had been laid waste. No one believed that soon people would return to rebuild and live there again. Of the 145,000 inhabitants of the province, 111,000 had been evacuated. A total of 37,000 buildings were destroyed in Finnish Lapland.

But the evacuees began to return. With strong feelings of

nostalgia they journeyed back through the wastes to the ruins of what had once been their homes. They took refuge in cellars or temporary wooden huts. It was the will to live, the well-known Finnish tenacity, which gave them the strength to get back to work again. Now fifty-four per cent. of the buildings destroyed in the province had been rebuilt. This achievement is the more admirable since, at first, difficulties seemed almost insurmountable. Naturally, there was a great shortage of labour and construction material. After they had succeeded in acquiring the necessary material, the problem of transport had to be solved. The railway stopped two kilometres south of Rovaniemi and the country roads had been almost completely blasted. In addition, land mines were a perpetual threat to the builders. But their will was indomitable. They had also experience in reconstruction work in Karelen. Trees were felled in the forests. Hundreds of makeshift saw-mills transformed them into planks, and as early as July 1945 the railway had been extended to Rovaniemi.

There were, however, other difficulties which these people had to struggle with, difficulties which were of special interest to us. When the population was evacuated, our guides told us, all medical personnel naturally went with them. The result was that in the autumn of 1944, there was not a single nurse to be found north of the Arctic Circle, including Rovaniemi. Such was the situation at the beginning of the reconstruction work. Some years later, at the time of our visit, the reconstruction of the regional hospital had progressed so far that they counted on completing it by the following summer. This short visit to the north of Finland gave us a vivid picture of the internal problems Finland had to cope with after the war. We witnessed marvellous achievements, heroic expressions of an

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indomitable will to live. It was with the greatest satisfaction that we agreed with the Finnish health authorities that Sweden should try to give economic help for the construction of a small hospital in Outakoski, a place far to the north, close to the Finnish-Norwegian frontier. Thanks to the contributions from the Swedish European Aid Society, this plan was realized.

XVIII

IN EASTERN EUROPE

“**H**ow does it feel to stand in front of a firing squad?” I asked the vice-chairman of the Polish Red Cross who sat next to me in the car.

It was at the end of April 1947, on their invitation, that I had started a trip to Poland, Rumania, Hungary and Austria to contact the Red Cross organizations and the governments of these countries. We had flown from Stockholm to Gdansk. When we flew over the Polish coast we passed over a row of sunken warships in the bay of Danzig. We could see their rusty hulls awash in heavy seas. At the entrance to Gdansk harbour we saw the derelict German warship *Gneisenau*. I suddenly remembered the time when, about twenty-five years ago, I last flew over Gdansk. Then, I was a light-hearted young cavalry officer on the way, with some comrades of my regiment, to Zoppot, where we spent a pleasant but hectic weekend. Now I was on my way to new centres of devastation of the Second World War in countries where, as far as could be judged, conditions were anything but satisfactory. We landed in Gdansk, according to reports fifty per cent. destroyed, where the population made a sad and dreary impression. With the vice-chairman of the Polish Red Cross, we continued by car to the Polish-Swedish refugee home for children in Dzierzazno.

How does it feel to stand in front of a firing squad? Strangely enough one reacts very little, the Polish Red Cross man explained to me. He had been very active in the Polish resist-

ance movement. The Gestapo had caught him and he had been taken to a place of execution. "One feels almost apathetic when facing the inevitable," he said, "apart from a certain satisfaction about having worked for a righteous cause." Fate had intervened, however, and he had succeeded in making his escape. At the moment he was to be executed, a Gestapo officer had discovered that he had a very fine wrist watch. The German had asked him if he would give him the watch, in return for which he would help him escape. The result was that the firing squad, on the order of the Gestapo officer, had fired into the air. The Pole was allowed to escape. He had succeeded in returning to Warsaw, where he had gone underground and once more joined the resistance movement.

The Polish and Swedish flags were run up as we arrived at Dzierzazno, where the Polish children were lined up in the yard. The Polish and Swedish national anthems were sung, and after that we made a tour of the home. The impressions we received were, on the whole, most favourable. There seemed to be excellent co-operation between the Polish director and the Swedish superintendent. In this refugee home, which was supported by the Swedish Red Cross, needy children from different parts of Poland were cared for. Also a fairly extensive school programme was carried out, for which adequate quarters were available. I was not, however, impressed by the fact that the Polish teachers were extremely fond of drilling the boys and girls. Oddly enough, it seemed as if they had followed the example of the leaders of the *Hitler Jugend*. The Swedish people in charge had commented on this situation, but it had proved impossible to induce them to change. Later on, I had similar experiences when I went to visit the Polish Scout Movement in Warsaw.

Warsaw seemed to me to be one of the most severely devastated cities I have seen. When, after a visit to the Polish Red Cross, we surveyed the town, I soon discovered that here the Germans worked more systematically and more thoroughly than usual. The old parts of the city, possessing exquisite examples of Gothic architecture, had been mostly destroyed. The capital had been totally levelled. Innumerable Jews had been suddenly wiped out. I was not able to gather figures in terms of percentage which would throw more light on this terrible destruction. On the other hand, Swedish and Polish people told me that the reconstruction work had recently made rapid progress. The Warsaw we visited was therefore not nearly so grim and depressing as it was immediately after the war. The Polish Foreign Minister informed me that it would take fifteen years to rebuild the town completely.

In 1944, a revolt was attempted in Poland, the last to date in a long line of revolutions which has marked the tragic history of Poland. It was suppressed. Thereafter the Germans started their work of destruction. High explosive bombs were placed in the houses. Block after block was destroyed. During the clearing up, unexploded bombs were found. Attached to them were notes showing how exactly the Germans calculated the quantity of explosives necessary for each house. Warsaw had been evacuated before the destruction started. When the city finally fell, it was totally empty. Not a living soul was found except German military and Gestapo personnel.

It is also a well-known fact that the Russians did not support the Polish attempt to revolt. The motives behind this Russian passivity are obscure. Various explanations have been given. One version is that the revolution was started too early and that it was so poorly organized that the Russians did not

believe it would achieve anything. Another explanation is that they did not want to support the movement as, in their opinion, it was inspired by the exiled Polish government in London. One thing is absolutely certain, however, and that is that the greater part of the Polish resistance groups lacked arms. They had planned to acquire them from fallen Germans, but their scheme failed.

During these spring days of 1947, Poland presented a dark and dreary picture. Our gloomy impressions of Warsaw were intensified when we drove through a region about one hundred kilometres north-west of the capital, where, during the winter of 1944-1945, intense fighting had taken place between Germans and Russians. The forests we drove through were totally laid waste, and we were told that it would be more than a hundred years before the Polish forests would be what they were before 1939. One can understand what this means from the economic point of view, if one considers that timber and coal were Poland's most important exports before the war. One can also understand the very bitter feelings of the leading groups in Poland toward the Germans. However, at the same time, I can say that according to reports, animosity toward the Russians is just as great. "It is the Germans who did this," my Polish guide told me when he drove through one completely razed village after the other, villages to which the inhabitants were gradually returning. It was not difficult to see that this destruction had not only been achieved by artillery fire. Here, as well as in Warsaw, systematic and planned demolition was carried out.

The great difficulties with which Poland still had to contend were aggravated by the flooding of the Weichsel which had occurred just before our arrival and which had caused great

damage. There was great destitution, especially among young people. At that time there were in Poland no less than 3,000,000 orphans, one-eighth of the total population. Of these, 1,800,000 were in children's homes in which the most primitive conditions prevailed. As in other war-devastated countries, morale had sunk among the young people; intemperance among children from eight to ten was unfortunately common. How blessed an institution like the Swedish hospital in Otwock seemed against this background. Here at that time, 275 Polish children were being cared for. This hospital, which I visited, is totally supported by Swedish government funds. With its excellent organization, it was a good example of Swedish thoroughness and competence.

"Noch ist Polen nicht verloren,"* the old, well-worn phrase came to mind again as I wandered through the ruins of Warsaw. It is easy to understand the almost overwhelming problems which Poland has to struggle with. But one also sees a stubborn will and a strong purpose to rebuild what has been destroyed, a will rooted in the Polish patriotism which has so often triumphed in the course of history.

★ ★ ★

"The Rumania of today," a very authoritative English magazine stated in the spring of 1947, "is at the same time a Communist state and a constitutional monarchy, looking for capitalist support for finances controlled by Russia." The visit I paid to Rumania soon showed how exact and perceptive this description was.

This was the background of the situation: Two years before, on the order of the Assistant Russian Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Vyshinsky, the parties combined in the so-called

• "Poland is not lost yet."—*Translator.*

National Democratic Front had formed a government. In reality, this was a Communist régime. However, in order to disguise its character, they had appointed as head of the government a non-Communist, Groza. With the same aim in view they had entrusted the post of Foreign Minister to a man who, in the past, had played an important rôle, the Liberal, Tatarescu. He had acted as Premier as well as Foreign Minister during the dictatorship of King Carol.

For the young King Michael, this development had been a heavy blow. In the *coup* of 1944 he had overturned the Fascist Antonescu government, put an end to German influence in Rumania, and concluded an armistice with Russia. Now he had to struggle with the increasing Communist infiltration directed by Moscow. This struggle seemed pretty hopeless. One could hardly be in doubt which way the wind was blowing.

I was first told of this situation by a leading and well-informed Rumanian. I met him at a dinner in Bucharest, and he talked at length, frankly and freely, about the situation. He first said that there had always existed a group opposed to the Nazis. As early as 1936, in connection with Hitler's *coup* in the Rhineland, they had got in touch first with Bulgaria and then with England and France to discuss how they could put a stop to the growing power of Nazi Germany. Both Rumania and Bulgaria had at that time been prepared to take action, but England and France had said no. The same thing happened in 1938 in connection with the Munich crisis. Then came 1940. My informant told me that one night the then Foreign Minister had suddenly been called on the telephone by Molotov, who informed him categorically that Russia, which at that time was still allied with Hitler Germany, demanded that Rumania should cede, among other things, certain parts of Bessarabia to

Russia. After consultation with King Carol and his colleagues in the government, Foreign Minister Tatarescu had sent a negative reply. After the German defeat he had informed the British Foreign Minister Bevin and his American colleague, Secretary Byrnes, of all this, in order to prove that Rumania had done everything in her power to stay neutral and to avoid being drawn into the war. She had even wished to ally herself with an anti-German coalition, an intention which, for the reasons given above, could not be realized. The Western Powers themselves had rejected it.

This was the background as it was explained to me. But what of the situation at that time? The answer to my direct question was immediate and frank: Rumania was no longer free. She was dominated by Russia. Both for the government and for the population, the situation was more unbearable than ever. At one time, the Germans had taken away all the chickens. The Russians now did the same. But at the same time they demanded that the Rumanians, despite this, should deliver eggs to the Russian occupation forces. This was my informant's way of demonstrating the difference between German and Russian methods. However, he had one reservation. He said that, apparently, Communism was a powerful force in the country, but that basically all the Rumanian Communists were good patriots. Deep down they were even royalists.

The head of the government, Groza, had been described as a Russian puppet, and probably there was much truth in this opinion. When we met him, we were first impressed by his kindness, sociability, and praise for Swedish relief work. But he could not hide his anxiety. Rumania, he said, had a couple of bad years behind it and because of a catastrophic drought, it seemed as if the harvest would again fail.

Economic distress, tension in internal politics, and increasing Russian and Communist influence were apparently the dominating factors in the Rumanian situation. This was confirmed by what we saw and heard during the next few days. We saw a number of depressing sights when we went to study the activities of the Rumanian Red Cross and to inspect at the same time Swedish relief work. This comprised the feeding of children and, equally important, the distribution of clothing. In the military hospital in Bucharest, we visited two pavilions one of which, under the protection of the Queen Mother, was very well organized, while the other was in a deplorable state. There, almost everything was lacking, especially sheets. I promised to send a considerable shipment of electric light bulbs, of which there also was a great shortage. We realized the joy with which our clothing shipments had been received, especially those of the Swedish Navy, which were changed into Red Cross uniforms. We could very well understand this enthusiasm when, in the neighbourhood of the Bucharest railroad station, we saw crowds of ragged and emaciated peasants who had come from the country to get food and clothes. They were just sitting there on the pavement hoping for help.

I had expressed the wish to visit those parts of the country which had suffered most from the continuous drought, and it was decided that we should fly to Jasii, the capital of Moldavia. Swedish relief work under the auspices of the Save the Children Society had been going on there for a long time. The conditions connected with our departure gave evidence of the degree of Russian influence in Rumania. When we arrived at the Bucharest airport, we were told we could not take off. The Russian control commission had given no instructions, there was no gasoline, and so forth. We started to telephone everywhere,

and finally we were informed that we could leave the airfield.

In Jasii and its environs we saw a number of heartrending scenes. I remember a camp for children, very primitive and dilapidated. The small, obviously undernourished patients were sitting there in temporary barracks, which often lacked both mattresses and sheets, with hands folded and empty eyes staring; it was painful to witness their unhappiness. I also remember a hospital where a typhoid epidemic had broken out, and where one saw as many as three patients in one bed. Nor shall I ever forget the crowd of exhausted, ragged, hungry and crying people which stopped our car in a country valley. These people, with their stiff haggard faces had gathered to ask us to open a canteen in their village nearby. Mothers held out their babies, their faces wrinkled and old. They showed us bags of the flour with which they baked their bread. It looked totally unfit for consumption. After brief negotiations by one of the Rumanian representatives in our group, we promised that a canteen would be established.

Then there was the Rumanian relief organization, *Cars*, which we contacted when we visited a hall where about four hundred students of the University of Jasii were being fed. I had been told that *Cars*, which managed this food distribution, was in the first place, inefficient and in the second, entirely political.

Of the two thousand students at the University, only those who belonged to the Communist Party shared in the food distribution. *Cars* had tried to compel the Swedish Aid organization to adopt the same policy, but the Swedish representatives had succeeded in warding off this manoeuvre.

"Yes, *Cars* is completely on the Communist leash," a Rumanian confirmed to us after our return to Bucharest. This Rumanian had formerly held a very prominent position, and

during a lengthy conversation with me, he gave a picture of the prevalent conditions, which was particularly interesting to me as he proved to know a good deal about the organization of the Rumanian Red Cross and the circumstances in which it was obliged to work. "There prevails in Rumania a Communist front which is supported by the Russian Control Commission and the Russian troops. This is the more remarkable as the elections which took place last autumn must in reality be considered to have given a clear anti-communist mandate. According to official information, eighty per cent. voted Communist. This was a false figure; actually it must have been about eight per cent. There were local examples of the results of the election being published before the election had finished or even begun. The majority of the votes were cast for the Agrarian Party and for the Liberals. But these votes were suppressed by the Communists, who were supported by the Russian military.

"Rumania will never really turn Communist," continued my informant. "Eighty-five per cent. of the population are land-owning peasants as a result of an agrarian reform put into effect after the First World War and extended since. Peasants who own their own land never become good Communists."

And what were the results of this enforced régime? "Look at Constanza, the port on the Black Sea. There the Russians have taken possession of whole districts of the town for their officials and their families. Look at the raids and the arrests, without due legal authority, which have taken place during the last year and which have forced many members of the Liberal and Social Democratic Parties to go underground. Those who had been caught have been put into camps either here or in Russia. The conditions in the camps here are fully

comparable with those in the German concentration camps. All those who are not Communists are considered Fascists. I can mention the name of a high Rumanian officer and his aide-de-camp, who were both suddenly carried off some time ago, and yet during the war they had been fighting *against* Germany."

It was then that they heard for the first time the name of Anna Pauker, the woman trained in Moscow who was the leading power in the Rumanian Communist Party; "Red Anna," destined to become Rumania's Foreign Minister. "It is she," continued my informant, "who gives orders to the politruks,* who control the greatly reduced Rumanian Army. From her, instructions go to all the other institutions. For instance, take the Red Cross. According to an order recently issued by the Communist Party, all the Rumanian officers belonging to this organisation must immediately resign. Take also the Swedish relief groups. As you know, they have occasionally employed, for example as provision supervisors, Rumanian officers who no longer are in active service. These men have now received a secret order to hand in their resignations.

"The Communist Party looks askance at all foreign relief work. The organization *Cars* has put signs on trucks containing American relief shipments stating that these goods came from Soviet Russia. Rumours are also spread that among their big shipments of army canned foods, Americans have smuggled weapons into different parts of the country in order to encourage a revolt."

From another source, I heard the following: On different occasions, it had been noticed that the trains with which the Russians, according to an existing agreement, were to transport oil from Rumania, in reality contained grain. If the Russians,

* Political commissars in the Russian army.—*Translator.*

in violation of the agreement, had not made these food shipments, the food problem in Rumania would have been much less disastrous for the country.

The last day I was in Rumania, April 30, I paid a visit to Sinaia to the King and his mother, Queen Helena. I met two isolated people. King Michael had hardly any remaining contact with his government, and he had no other advisers in his difficult situation. Both he and his mother were fully conscious of the fact that almost anything could happen to them. They knew that their days in Rumania were probably numbered and they feared that they would not escape with their lives.

We all know what has happened since. At the turn of the year 1948, King Michael was forced to abdicate. The Rumanian Monarchy was abolished and, after the well-known pattern, Rumania was proclaimed "a people's republic" with a one-party system. Moscow, Anna Pauker, and her Communists triumphed.

I have also learned that even before the abolition of the monarchy, the Rumanian Red Cross was totally communized. The old leaders were dismissed and a Communist management was organized. One of the consequences of this change has been that the Rumanian Red Cross in its aid activities has helped "General" Markos' revolutionary organization in Greece.



I see that after my return to Sweden from this journey to the countries behind the Iron Curtain I made the following note: "In all the countries I have visited this time, except Poland, the officials have voluntarily taken up the question of Russian influence and quite frankly expressed their fears and their feelings. Storm clouds hang heavily over Central and Eastern Europe."

This was true of Bucharest. It was also true of Budapest and

Vienna. The day we arrived in the Hungarian capital, May 1, large demonstrations were being staged. Everywhere in the streets, one saw pictures of Rakosy, the Communist Party chief, at that time Vice-President, and since promoted to the highest post in the government. It was asserted that participation in the demonstrations was nearly one hundred per cent. Afterwards we heard that shop owners and managers of industries had long before the first of May received a clear and concise directive informing them that if they and their employees did not participate in the demonstrations, they would not be permitted to continue their work.

Freedom in Hungary, a person in a very responsible position told me, was almost non-existent. Fear of Moscow was great. Deportations to Russia were daily occurrences.

It was for the most part the same situation I had encountered in Rumania. Terror and distress were the two main elements. During my visits to the President, to the chief of the government, to the Foreign Minister and other members of the régime, and to the city officials, as well as during my visits in camps and hospitals, I tried to form a concrete opinion about the internal situation. I was confronted with some of the most important problems. There was a great shortage of hospital beds which was the more felt because of the increasing prevalence of venereal and tubercular diseases. Of an estimated 55,000 orphans in Budapest, 37,000 had been grouped together and cared for in children's homes, which were, for the most part, very primitive, escapes from them occurring regularly. Three hundred and fifty thousand Hungarian prisoners of war were expected in the near future from Russia. These soldiers had suffered frightfully in the Russian camps. In some way they had to be found homes and rehabilitated. Against this back-

ground, Swedish relief work in Hungary was of real importance. It consisted of material contributions which had enabled the reconstruction of the Hungarian Red Cross Hospital in Budapest and the distribution of food and clothes organized by the Swedish Red Cross and the Save the Children Society. Clothes were distributed according to the degree of need to people from various groups of the population. A substantial quantity had also been reserved for the returning prisoners of war.

I could not leave Hungary without first mentioning one name to certain people, that of Raoul Wallenberg.* I brought it up during a conversation with Rakosy. He explained that he knew the name very well. He further said that he might possibly have met Wallenberg himself, in Debreczen, but he was not sure. On the other hand, he considered himself in a position to say two things with certainty: first, that Wallenberg must be considered dead—so bold a person as he could scarcely have escaped death during the chaotic conditions of the last phase of the war—and second, no more information about Wallenberg could be expected from Hungary. Only the Russian authorities could furnish such information.

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“Stability cannot be achieved in Central Europe unless the Austrian democracy is strengthened,” the Austrian Foreign Minister, Dr. Karl Gruber, once said. These words reflect his conviction. They also characterize the wishes and dreams of all non-Communists, in other words, an overwhelming majority of the Austrian people. The Austrians are fighting

* A member of the Swedish Legation in Budapest who risked his life during the war to do marvellous work helping Hungarian Jews escape from the German Gestapo. During the chaos resulting from the Russian invasion of Hungary, he disappeared. It is still not known whether or not he is alive.—*Translator.*

for their existence and the freedom of their country as an independent state against Russian subversive activities. At that time they were doing this on a diet of 1,250 calories a day: in reality, there were many citizens who did not even get this ration. Starving Austria was, in 1947, certainly not a country where freedom from fear prevailed.

And yet, the gay element in the Austrian character was not denied. Now, against the dark background of internal and external difficulties, it was even more inspiring than before. One can still hear the seductive melodies of the old Viennese waltzes and one can still marvel at the famous flowers in Schönbrunn. The Austrians still know how to enjoy what pleasures life offers. In spite of their sufferings and fears, they have not become fatalists.

When I met a number of the Austrian leaders during some days' visit in Vienna, the last stop on this trip, it was my impression that they had great capabilities. Chancellor Leopold Figl, leader of the largest party in the country, the People's Party, is a forceful personality. He was known as an active opponent of Nazism and had spent no less than six years in concentration camps. Foreign Minister Karl Gruber is also an imposing figure. He is still a fairly young man, but one cannot mistake his power and drive. As acting member of the Catholic youth movement he also has an anti-Nazi past. He is considered an optimist and a man with great sympathy for the Anglo-Saxon democracies. If he could choose, however, he would probably avoid allying Austria with any particular great power, since he is convinced that the future of the country will be served best by good relations with all.

Relief work was very welcome and very necessary here. This was easy to see when we drove through Vienna to

inspect various charitable institutions and hospitals. It was pleasant to observe the very warm and cordial atmosphere prevailing among the personnel in the buildings where Swedish food distribution activities took place, under the auspices of the Save the Children Society. It was also particularly interesting to see the general hospital. Its chief, the well-known Professor Leopold Schönbauer, showed us round. This hospital has a section for the care of a particular group of war victims: people with spinal injuries or burns resulting from bombings. They were lying in warm baths at a temperature of about 90 degrees Fahrenheit. Many of them had been in that hospital for years and the Professor explained that there was no hope of their recovery. I could not refrain from asking if it was really right to prolong the lives of these people if one knew they would never regain their health. But Professor Schönbauer rejected this observation very firmly: the science of medicine, he said, should not give up; it is the duty of every doctor to do everything to prevent death. He confessed that there were cases when even a doctor would lose faith. But in any case one should not deviate from the duty of medical science to maintain life as long as possible. Look at Naziism, he said, they started to introduce the principle of killing off incurables and look at the horrible consequences.

What is the nature of Russian policy in Austria? It was this question which, before all else—internal, social and economic problems—was debated in the leading circles in Vienna. I was told of an illuminating episode. It was suggested on one occasion by high ranking Russians that the Austrian government should acquire dictatorial power. The reply was that Austria was to be governed according to democratic principles. The Russians answered that even a democratic state must

apply dictatorial principles in order to achieve lasting results.

The Russians aimed quite openly at the confiscation of as many of the Austrian possessions and resources as possible. In so doing, they referred to the decision of the Potsdam Conference in 1945, according to which all Austrian possessions which had been in the hands of the Germans were to be surrendered to the occupation authorities as war indemnity. But, should one count as former German possessions even the properties which Germany took by force after the occupation of Austria in 1938? Yes, the Russians said, and thus interpreted the decision. Their methods are illustrated by the following example. One of the largest and most valuable estates belonging to the Austrian government was declared former German property by the Russians. The Austrian government protested, but the Russians insisted, and confiscated the harvest of the estate. The Austrians then declared that the government simply could not do without the property, as it was of decisive importance to the sustenance of the country. Austria had to pay out a very large sum for a property which, judged objectively, can never have been considered German-owned. It can be added that, according to a statement I received, the Russians have confiscated up to 48,000 hectares of Austria's best farmland.

Another problem: Austria, which had 600,000 prisoners of war in Russia, was in great need of manpower. At that time, there were still in Austria some hundreds of thousands of Germans, but those they were not allowed to use. They had to be sent home. They expected that the Russians would send labourers in their place. Such a measure, however, would have created a minority which, in a given situation, might prove disastrous.

In a given situation. This pre-occupied every Austrian. They believed that if Russia's position in Austria and in the Balkans

were to remain as strong as it was then, an open conflict could hardly be avoided. This would lead to a new war. But there were other ways of interpreting the signs of the times. There was the possibility that Stalin would learn from Hitler's defeat, that he would avoid expending too much of his power and consolidate his position instead; in other words, that he would gradually withdraw his forces from Austria, Hungary and the Balkans. Finally, I heard the following from a reliable source, a glimpse of life in Austria as it was yesterday and as it is today. A representative of the Russian authorities asked an Austrian in a leading position if he could do him a service. The Austrian answered that the greatest service he could do was to see if it could be arranged for his brother-in-law, who was a prisoner of war in Russia, to be sent home. He knew that his brother-in-law was alive. On several occasions he had received greetings from him through the Red Cross and he had even heard him speak on the Russian radio. The Russian promised to investigate the matter. Since that day, all communications from the brother-in-law have ceased. Evidently, the Austrian's request had aroused the suspicion of the Russian authorities. The man was never heard from again.

The curtain which the Russians have drawn before the countries dominated by them is impenetrable.

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We were reminded anew in the autumn of 1947 of the increasing Russian activities in various countries during a regional conference of European Red Cross organizations which had been arranged in Belgrade in September on the initiative of the Yugoslavian Red Cross. At this conference, the Swedish Red Cross was represented by its Secretary General.

I have mentioned before that for a time I felt I ought to

recommend certain changes in the organization of the International Committee of the Red Cross, but that afterwards I had gradually revised my opinion. Certain events at the Belgrade conference were more than anything else responsible for this.

One of the most important items on the agenda was a discussion of the principles on which to base the organization and operation of relief programmes in various countries. The Russian delegate, supported by representatives of several of the Eastern European countries, took the floor. He demanded that all so-called supervisors from aid organizations abroad be sent home immediately. Their presence is, he said, an infringement on the sovereignty of the countries receiving aid and a proof of unjustified and damaging lack of faith.

The debate was hot. Sometimes those present had the impression that, from the Russian viewpoint, it was simply a question of provocation on the part of the aiding countries, a provocation whose connection with world political events was clear. The impression was strengthened by the demands presented that in carrying out relief work, priority be given to "the victims of Fascist aggression", "victims of Fascism", and so on. No satisfactory definition of the word Fascism was given. The word was used with various connotations, sometimes referring to the former régimes in Germany and Italy, sometimes with a clear reference to the West.

The delegates representing the countries giving aid explained during the discussions that, in the first place, the presence of representatives of these countries was in no way an expression of distrust. It simply provided a welcome opportunity for contacts between corresponding relief organizations, contacts which should be the more valuable for the aided countries as these representatives could often stimulate continued relief con-

tributions from their own countries. In the second place, the delegates of the aiding countries pointed out that in these countries, the deepest sympathy was felt for the victims of Fascism and that they wanted to do everything to help them. They stressed, however, that this confused political concept could scarcely be included in the resolutions which were meant to be valid not only in the present situation, but in the future. Finally, they also pointed out that the fundamental principle of the Red Cross, aid to all according to need without regard to race, nationality, creed, or political affiliations, should be sufficient guarantee for the impartial execution of relief work. As I said, the debate in the Resolutions Committee was heated and lengthy, but no agreement was reached.

The Russian delegate then explained his attitude more precisely. In a long speech, he made a number of very sharp accusations against several of the Western European Red Cross organizations, among them the Swedish.

The Swedish Red Cross had, he said, thwarted the repatriation of displaced persons in Germany. At the same time, they had supported the pro-Fascist elements which lead the refugee camps and the anti-democratic committees which had been formed in these camps.

The Russian delegate said further that the Swedish Red Cross, when distributing clothes to displaced persons in the British and American Zones in October, 1946, through its representative, Professor Kundsinsch, had exclusively favoured such persons as had applied for work in other countries at the expense of those who wanted to be repatriated.

The actual situation was as follows: The Swedish Red Cross has never had anything to do with the leaders of the camps for displaced persons in Germany. It had nothing to do with a

distribution of clothes and other textiles to such people in the autumn of 1946. It had never been represented by a person named Professor Kundsinsch. Later investigations revealed that Professor Kundsinsch had formerly been at the university in Riga and that at that time, he had a position of responsibility in the Baltic Humanistic Society. With this organization, the Swedish Red Cross has never had any dealings.

The Swedish delegate, of course, gave all this information. A representative of one of the countries which is politically dependent on Russia then came to the rescue of the delegate from Moscow. The French had stated that the Red Cross organizations in Sweden and in other countries could not be condemned without a thorough investigation of the accusations and without giving the accused the opportunity to make a proper reply. The representative said that this was totally unnecessary. When a statement was made by the Russian delegate one could assume that it was absolutely truthful. Its correctness should not be doubted by the delegates of the conference. With that remark, all further discussion was cut short.

I have emphasized before the simple and fundamental principle that Red Cross organizations must, under all circumstances, refrain from mixing in world politics and that they must keep themselves free from political pressures. However, the Belgrade conference gave striking evidence that this opinion was not shared by all Red Cross societies. This was the reason why I revised my former attitude on the question of the composition of the International Committee of the Red Cross. It is absolutely indispensable that both in peace and in war, there should exist a completely neutral organization which stands above politics and which, by virtue of this can contribute objectively to future Red Cross activities.

XIX

THE GERMAN PROBLEM

WHEN, in November of 1947, I was again in Germany to inspect Swedish relief activities, I was reminded more strongly than before of the global significance of the German problem. This emphasis was due to the fact that the Germany I now encountered was not the same as had existed immediately after the Armistice and the start of the occupation in 1945. Germany had changed, and in most respects this change was depressing.

Let me first record a few facts and observations to clarify the internal situation. On my way from Copenhagen to Hamburg, I met the chief of the German railways in the British Zone. He talked about his work and his experiences connected with it. They were rather dismal. He told me that German rolling-stock had suffered great damage during the war and was now in bad repair. There was no way to rebuild the carriages and locomotives at the necessary rate. One result of this, among others, was that the capacity of German industry was more and more curtailed. He continued that, in the Russian Zone, the occupation authorities had removed the greater part of the only double-track lines on the more important railroads. Efficiency had declined considerably. No timetables existed in the Russian Zone and trains were coming and going without schedule.

The German railwaymen had their own special problems to struggle with. It was very difficult, he said, for them to get

enough rations to enable them to carry out their responsibilities efficiently. They therefore attempted to steal coal, to which they had access, to exchange on the black-market for food. Finally, he brought up the subject which is the standing topic of discussion in present-day Germany: the dismantling of factories. He could very well understand, he said, that factories which had worked exclusively on war production were shut down. But he could give examples of a number of industries which had had nothing to do with war production and which, nevertheless, had been shut down or were going to be dismantled. This factor highly complicated the German reconstruction programme and delayed its execution.

The same subject was also touched upon by Major Max Brauer, of Hamburg, whom I met shortly after. He repeated that the dismantling of factories must necessarily handicap German industry. But he further pointed out that now at least they had been told which factories were going to be shut down and which were to continue. This information had clarified the situation.

Major Max Brauer, a man in his fifties, with powerful and sharply defined features, a searching but humorous glance and greying hair, has an interesting past. He is one of the men who was driven from Germany by National Socialism. For some time, he had worked with Chiang Kai-shek, but later on he settled in the United States and became an American citizen. In America he maintained active contact with the labour movement, being a Social-Democrat himself. After the Armistice, he returned to his home town, Hamburg, gave up his American citizenship, and became a German citizen again. He wanted to identify himself completely with the cause of the new Germany. His loyalty to his country has impressed the British authorities, with whom he is on the best of terms. He is con-

sidered to have the qualifications to play an important rôle in the Germany of tomorrow.

When I met him, his chief preoccupation was the Conference of Foreign Ministers in London concerning the solution of German problems. Upon the result of this conference, he said, depended the fate of Germany and perhaps of all Europe for the near future. The situation in Germany was so difficult that the conference simply had to reach a decision. He even said that he would rather see Germany cut into two parts, an eastern and a western, than that nothing should happen.

Then Brauer brought up the question of monetary reform, the question which, since then, in June 1948, was solved in such a way as to cause not only a German but also an international crisis, the most serious since the Armistice in 1945. What he told me at this time gave me an interesting picture of conditions prior to this reform. Brauer declared that a revaluation of the German mark was absolutely necessary. During this period, there was no control whatever over the amount of banknotes printed by the various occupation authorities. If the printing presses were allowed to keep on working at the same tempo as they had hitherto, he said, the German people would very soon be in the same situation as after the First World War. He felt that a new currency should be introduced, and that simultaneously, effective restrictions regarding the printing of paper money should be put into effect. The time for carrying out the reform was, however, a difficult problem. He said that, if it came too soon, before there was sufficient food, the new currency would soon lose its purchasing power.

Finally, Brauer also touched upon another important German question, the plight of the farmers. They suffered under too high taxes, which they simply could not pay without

demanding higher prices for their goods than they were allowed by the price control office. Consequently, he said, they tried to overcome their difficulties by hoarding goods which they never mentioned to the authorities, in order to sell them on the black market. The taxes must be reduced, Brauer declared energetically. The pressure of taxation was one of the most important causes of the prevailing state of misery in Germany. But could taxes be reduced without stranding the authorities? Yes, declared Brauer, simply by running the administration more economically. In his opinion, there were three times as many people employed than were really necessary. This was far too costly, and above all, man power which could not be spared was kept away from commerce and industry.

The next German I met was the man in charge of reconstruction work in the harbour of Hamburg. I had expressed a wish to make a tour of the harbour in order to get an idea of conditions. He also gave me information which eloquently witnessed the severe internal conditions in Germany. He needed, he said, four thousand men on a forty-eight hour week. However, he could not get them. Until then, he had only succeeded in recruiting a force of about two thousand. Moreover, he had a certain number of men who worked less than a forty-eight hour week. This group worked a few days a week with the peasants in the country. There, they were paid in kind. They received food, the most valuable and desirable thing in Germany today.

The conversation turned to political questions. My informant explained to me that Naziism had no future in Germany, as everyone realized that this was what had brought the country to ruin. On the other hand, they could visualize another dictatorship, but not a Communist régime. I, for my part, replied

that *any* kind of dictatorship in Germany must result in about the same conditions as had existed under the Nazis.

He further told me that the German population had been kept completely ignorant of what was happening behind the scenes during the war. My informant himself had never heard anything before the capitulation about the concentration camp of Neuengamme, though he had lived in Hamburg for many years. When I looked surprised, he declared on his word of honour that this was true. It was not until the end of 1944, when he served as a Battalion Commander in Poland, that he heard about the cruelties against the Poles and especially against the Polish Jews. I left him with a strong feeling that we have no reason to look too optimistically at internal developments in Germany. What this man told me is, as far as I can understand, indicative of the attitude and way of thinking of the average German.

During this trip through Germany, in the autumn of 1947, everything seemed, superficially at least, very familiar. The Fourth Reich was still a country where city streets were totally dominated by ruins; where shops were open again, but with little of value to sell; where black market dealings were one of the most important ways of making a living and cigarettes one of the most important items of exchange. The street cars are functioning again in the Fourth Reich, but they usually lack window panes. They look ghostlike, with their windows covered with tar paper or wooden boards. Local trains leave the railway stations, and it is not difficult to buy a ticket, but the trains are overcrowded with people who, day after day, go out into the country to make the rounds of the farms in order to pick up a potato here and a carrot there.

Superficially, all was about the same. But the atmosphere had changed notably. As I was soon able to see, economic conditions

had deteriorated still further. The western Allies had evidently completely failed in their efforts to improve the standard of living in their zones. The English acknowledged this. The Germans commented on it in bitter and accusing tones. The sometimes quite open criticism of the Allied authorities underlined the new element which had come into the picture. The criticism sprang from the graver economic conditions. It was also connected with the increasing tension between the occupation powers, between East and West, and with the important fact that the civil administration of the British Zone, from the first of January, 1947, had been back in German hands. According to a regulation which was put into effect that day, the occupation powers would henceforth function only as consulting authorities. The experiment had not proved successful. In building up the new administrative organization in Germany the English had tried to introduce the most valuable institutions born of the development of democratic countries. Sweden has in some ways served as an example. But the new system does not suit the Germans. In order to be efficient, they evidently must be directed. They must feel themselves led by definite orders. The authorities failed to reach any degree of efficiency, and the unfortunate results have been openly criticised. Germans do not show any respect for those who occupy their country. They are irritated because they let themselves be defeated in the Second World War by such inadequate organizers as the English.

“We let our chance go by”, a high-ranking English military officer said to me. “We have been guilty of two great mistakes. The first is that, on the whole, we have been sending inferior people to Germany. The second is that we handed over the civil administration to the German authorities. Regarding internal administration, we have now only advisory authority. Instead,

we should have acted in the following way: Immediately after the occupation we should have declared very decidedly that it was now we, the British, who were in command and who were going to command until a new spirit developed in Germany. In return, we should have promised to send to Germany the best men of our country as officers and civil officials. We should have chosen our personnel here with the same care that we have taken traditionally when choosing our colonial civil servants. We have not done this. We are not going to be able to lead and control the German development."

In my opinion, it is inconceivable to undertake the occupation of a country by way of democratic procedure. The process in itself has little to do with what we in Sweden mean by democracy. Many examples undoubtedly could be cited to show that the Germans have real cause to feel disappointed. I am not only thinking now of the arbitrary measures which an occupation power must take for purely practical reasons, measures such as commandeering houses and office buildings, with the result that thousands of people suddenly have to leave their homes and are forced to live under conditions they never dreamed of. No, I am thinking more of the problem touched upon by the British officer I just mentioned, the fact that the minor officials of the occupation have by and large not proved equal to their tasks. It is not easy to find first-class people. It is quite natural that the best representatives of the various professions prefer, after a war, to return home to more peaceful and productive activity. As a result, the occupation authorities do not have access to the type of personnel they want. Another drawback of the system is that officials in the British administration in Germany are only given short term contracts. This means that personnel changes often, especially in the minor positions

and this in turn leads to a lack of continuity and stability.

It may have appeared in 1947 that the Russians had succeeded better than the western Allies. It is true that they had not "democratized" the people, that they had brought about greater order in their zone than the English and American in western Germany. The Russian methods were applied straight after the German capitulation, when the Germans could understand better that a defeated nation must be treated severely.

The problems I have touched upon here are so complicated that it may perhaps be considered presumptuous for me to express an opinion upon them. One thing, however, is certain. The problem of the character of future German development is of such great importance that it will probably be decisive in the future of Europe. It is also certain that the problem is an extremely difficult one to grasp. If I were to try, however, to outline the conclusions I have drawn from my recent travels in Germany, I would say this:

To whatever extent the average German of today is capable of overcoming his apathy and depression, of freeing himself from his economic worries, to whatever extent he is able to suppress his longing for one decent meal and to raise himself above the misery of life among ruins, he looks forward, as far as can be judged, to finding a new leader—an heir to Frederick the Great and Bismarck, to Wilhelm II and Hitler. He looks forward to subordinating himself in an endeavour to rebuild, to create order out of the chaos into which the deeds of his last leader have thrown him. He reflects on himself and his position with bitterness, and on his country with a feeling of compassion. He thinks of how he lived not so very long ago, and he thinks of the firmness with which the country was governed at that time. But he purposely does not think about the means by

which this efficiency was achieved and finally destroyed. He compares the past with what he experiences today, and he is by no means favourably impressed. Deep in the German national soul, deep beneath the veneer of daily existence, which reflects destitution, political quarrels, and effects of the struggle between East and West, there lives a primitive national spirit, which is indistinct as to aim but strong as the power of nature. The German has not changed as a result of the Second World War, of its consequences, or of what it unmasked. He repudiates the old Nazi party. This does not mean, however, that he repudiates Naziism in the broad sense. To be fair, one must admit that the international developments after the Armistice in 1945 have not given the German much reason to want to change his ways. These developments hardly make it clear to him that he is so very much worse than many others. In any case, they give him reason to say, and he gladly says, that the others are not much better. He has the Russians on top of him, in the worst cases in his community and in his own house. He has ample opportunity to study the tug-of-war between the powers which, together, crossed Nazi Germany in order to found a permanent peace with justice. It is only human nature that the German of today should laugh at the drama played on German soil. It is also human nature for him to feel a certain malice. Nevertheless, it is something frightening. Europe and the world need a reconstructed and vital Germany. But it can only have permanent benefit from it on the condition that this Germany decides once and for all to bury its past, and to adopt a humanitarian and democratic attitude in its international relations.

"Every Western German ought to vote for a union with the British Empire," a well-educated young German businessman said to me. "But the English do not give us the chance. They

could have met us half way. But they did not. By their suspicion and short-sightedness they have spoiled relations between the Germans and the English. They have ruined everything."

"Can they never leave us in peace?" the little chauffeur from the Rhineland exclaimed. He was an ex-soldier with wartime memories of sunny days in Italy, the country of such wonderful wines. "What is it they believe? What kind of foolish suspicion do they nourish against us? They believe that if we as much as get hold of a tin can, we immediately make a gun from it. If you would only leave us in peace, things will pick up again. Then we shall show what is meant by work. Then we shall clean up the ruins and build up our towns anew. Then we shall create a new Germany."

These are typical German voices, voices which could easily be organized into a chorus of protest. Typical of the German way of thinking today are some words which I quote from a speech of Max Brauer: " 'The other Germany' which from 1933 to 1945 offered tenacious opposition, which in a wonderful way endured innumerable sufferings, the Germany whose hundreds of thousands of champions populated the concentration camps as martyrs and who struggled and suffered in exile in order that the ideas of truth and justice should triumph, this 'other Germany' deserves a privileged position in the reconstruction of public life in Germany. It also deserves, however, that the world should distinguish between the Nazi Germany which was capable of every possible crime and the Germany represented by the imprisoned, the mistreated, the tormented and the tortured but yet freedom-seeking democrats, socialists and real Christians."

This time I went to Hamburg and Hanover, to the Ruhr district and Berlin. I had conferences with representatives of the

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English occupation authorities as well as with those of the German governments in the various districts, with university people and workers, with war prisoners returning from Russia and with refugees from eastern Germany. As a Red Cross official, I was most impressed by the despair and black pessimism which characterized the German population. The seriousness of the situation was best expressed by the English, who stated that they hoped the food situation in the winter of 1947-1948 would be a little better than it had been the winter before; they hoped to be able to keep up the daily rations, 1,550 calories. This showed best how essential Swedish aid was.

Looking back on this journey, a whole procession of different figures pass in review. I see Lord Pakenham, adviser for German questions in the British government, speaking to a gathering at Hamburg University. He talked about the significance and task of the University. He did this in a shy way, as he was obliged to speak through an interpreter, but he was obviously inspired by the best of intentions to try to promote understanding between the Germans and the English. Lord Pakenham made an excellent impression at this time. He stressed that the contacts between German and English universities should be strengthened and broadened. A start had already been made: two hundred German students had been the guests of various universities in England during the past summer. After Lord Pakenham's address a new president of Hamburg University was installed at a ceremony. He spoke about eternal peace.

I see the workers whom I met during a visit in the mines of Gelsenkirchen. They received an average wage of ten and a half marks a day, not much if one considers that an American or English cigarette, at that time, was quoted at five to six marks on the black market. On the other hand, their rations were

much greater than those of ordinary citizens. Because of their important occupation, they received 3,500 calories a day. But their faces reflected depression and despondency when they told me how they looked at the situation. Everything was uncertain, they said, the future very insecure. They responded sharply at the mention of the dismantling of factories. If, they said, the English thought that by dismantling the factories they could get manpower for the mines, they were wrong. In the first place, skilled labourers are needed in the mines. And in the second place it usually proved impossible to move labourers from one place to another. In the heavily bombed mining towns there were simply no houses.

I also see before me the German government representative in a refugee camp outside Cologne, one of those camps filled with thousands of people who illegally crossed the frontiers between the Russian and western Allied zones. He was arrogantly critical when he talked at length about the unhappy fate of Germany, and accused the French authorities of being inhuman in not permitting refugees to settle in their Zone. Here was a man who had learned nothing from the Hitler régime.

It was a joy after this experience to meet the old and cultured President of the University of Cologne, Professor Kroll. He sat there talking quietly and wisely about his students, about their enormous difficulties in acquiring books and other study materials, and about their political interests and attitudes. They did not care for Naziism, he said. They were generally convinced that it was responsible for the present position in Germany. On the other hand, neither did the majority of the students care to enter one of the new democratic parties. They feared that developments might be such that if they had joined one, they would be held responsible in the

future. It was the same as in the case of the old Nazi party.

Finally, there was Sir Brian Robertson, the British Supreme Commander in Berlin, who had kindly invited me to lunch. At that time, the increasing tension between East and West cast its shadow over the former German capital. It also shadowed our conversation. He said that the English and Americans should not leave Berlin. Otherwise he could not be very optimistic about German developments. The Germans could not agree among themselves about their administrative tasks. The volume of industrial production left much to be desired.

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We left the headquarters of the Swedish Red Cross in Berlin on a dreary, grey November morning in the pouring rain. In the still dark streets tired figures moved. Some were evidently on their way to work. Others, dragging their shabby and poor belongings, perhaps meant to try to cross the frontier, bound for an unknown destiny.

The Stettiner Bahnhof was very depressing. The rain fell through holes in the bombed roofs and hundreds of refugees filled the big hall where we literally waded through the water. They crowded around the ticket windows before joining the long lines waiting in front of the gates, faces grey in the morning light. Such, in essence, is Germany a few years after the Armistice, a country of people without definite aim, without hope and without joy. The train pulled out of the station. After about an hour, we passed Oranienburg and Sachsenhausen, places which I knew so well and which still showed traces of the frightful destruction of the war. It looked strangely familiar, with one exception: now there were other people lined up for roll-call and morning inspection. It was an eloquent illustration of the motto: "The victor has the power, the victor is always right."

XX

ANKARA—ATHENS

“HALF of Turkey’s expenditure goes for defence purposes,” the Turkish Foreign Minister, Nedjmeddin Sadak, said at a press conference in February, 1948. “This proves that Turkey is the nation which today is most exposed to pressure.”

“The nations of the world live in fear of new wars,” His Excellency the Turkish Minister said some months later. “Not even the most optimistic can maintain that a more stable period is in sight.”

“The Turks are reactionaries,” the Russian press and radio declared at the same time. “They have sold their country to imperialists for one hundred million dollars.”

I had been invited by the Red Crescent, the Turkish counterpart of our Red Cross, to go to Turkey to study the situation there. During the week I was there I was received with marvelous hospitality and was able to make a number of extremely interesting observations. When, at the end of April 1948, I sat in a plane bound for Istanbul and Ankara, I remembered what the press had said concerning statements of the type quoted above. Nor had I been many days in Ankara before I understood how seriously a statement by the Turkish Premier Hasan Saka was intended: “Defence requirements are more important than anything else.”

Turkey is a democracy and yet not a real democracy. Kemal Ataturk, modernized the country. He engineered the revolu-

tion which, it has been said, is the greatest that any people (next to the Russians) have undergone in modern times. He Europeanized Turkey. He did this by creating a dictatorship where his will, with the help of the military, the police, and the one-party system, was supreme. He was of the opinion that the Turkish people were not yet ready to rule themselves, that they should be led step by step to a democratic form of government. It is said that, at the time of his death, he was prepared to loose the ties in the near future and give the people much greater freedom than they had enjoyed before. Certainly his successor and heir, President Ismet Inonu, has done this. He has given liberalism free rein. He has permitted the foundation of a new party, the Democratic party, which represents the opposition. He has granted greater freedom of the Press and still Turkey is not yet what we call a democracy.

Turkey's money goes for the greater part to the Army and it has done so for years. This practice is based on stern reality. Undoubtedly it has caused stagnation in internal development.

The will to carry out extensive reforms has been great, but the possibilities of accomplishing them much less. We were reminded of this when the Minister of Health, Dehzet Uz, showed us the plans for a medical education centre in Ankara. This man once made a short visit to Sweden and showed a lively interest in Swedish charitable institutions. The plans were magnificent. The centre was to comprise 3,000 beds and give young medical students a six-year education at government expense. Following their graduation, they would be obliged to work for four years in the service of the government, after which they would be at liberty to look for other employment or start practices of their own. Nevertheless, all this was only a project, and people who knew Turkey told us that the prospects for

carrying it out in the near future were extremely slim because of the economic and political situation.

We had a similar experience when we visited one of the government hospitals, which contained a maternity ward and a tuberculosis research clinic for people who lived in the district. The head physician, an energetic and reliable person, told us that eleven such hospitals had been built, and it was their intention to build, during the next ten years, a chain of at least a thousand such institutions all over the country. Do you have the money for this? No, was the answer, not if armament expenditures continue as high as in the past.

"But the defence forces *must* get their appropriation," emphasized the chief of the General Staff, General Omurtak, when we met him. At the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939, Turkey was already mobilized. Of the 18,000,000 inhabitants of the country, one million were called into service. Mobilization was one hundred per cent.; it remained so throughout the war and is still so today. In the spring of 1948, the responsible leaders of Turkey judged the international situation to be extremely serious. They shared profoundly and with deep conviction the opinion of President Truman that Turkish independence and Turkish democracy were in danger. They were prepared for an attack. They were, and are, ready to defend themselves to the utmost.

"We Turks once said no and we still say no and we always will say no," a Turkish spokesman wrote some time ago in a leading English magazine, referring to "the dark and heavy clouds" which, in the spring of 1945, gathered over Turkey. In their opinion, which the Turks often express, they rendered great services to the Allied nations during the war. In the first place, they signed a non-aggression pact with England in 1939.

In the second place, by their mobilization, they prevented Hitler's advance into the Middle East. Finally, in February of 1945, they declared war on Germany. It was then it happened. One of the Allied Nations, Soviet Russia, suddenly made a sensational declaration that spring. Kemal Ataturk had at one time concluded with Lenin a Russian-Turkish alliance. This pact had been the cornerstone of Turkish foreign policy. Now Moscow informed them that she did not want to renew the pact if Turkey did not do her a service in return. The Turks were to give Russia a certain degree of control over the Dardanelles by granting her bases there and also they were to cede certain territories near the frontier to Georgia. The Turks, who are one of the most nationalistic people in the world, and who proudly remember the rôle they have played in history, categorically refused. Since then their relations with Moscow have been characterized by an increasing tension. It went so far that Moscow recalled her minister and, for a couple of years, was represented by a *Chargé d'Affaires*. When I arrived in Ankara, the post had just been filled again. The arrival of a new Russian minister was surrounded by rumours and speculations. It was quite interesting to notice that no personal relationship developed between the legation personnel of the Western and Eastern powers. A painful situation arose if they were invited to the same dinner.

The Turks are convinced that at the moment they block the way for Russian expansion through the Middle East and that their fate will be decided by this fact. Whether they belong to the government party or the opposition, the Democratic party, they hate and despise the Russians wholeheartedly.

Life in Turkey has for four years been dominated by one thing only: the menace of Russia. No one in responsible circles

denies how serious the situation is. The greater part of the population live under very primitive conditions and they probably will do so for a long time to come. The opinion that airplanes are more important than schools and hospitals is generally prevalent. They get planes from America which, apart from money and material, has also sent military instructors, officers and road construction crews. They have been welcomed with the greatest satisfaction by the régime which, led by the President, Ismet Inonu, has achieved a rapprochement with the Western powers, first with England, and now with America. The régime has emphasized the Turkish desire for freedom and its intention to oppose every effort of a foreign power to interfere in Turkey's internal affairs. They have outlawed the Turkish Communists. Well informed people seem to be of the opinion that if the Russians should choose to start a war this year, they would be able without great difficulty to push through Europe in a short time, all the way to the English Channel. But they also have great faith in American armament and foreign policy. The Russians are bound to realize, it is reasoned, that even the greatest initial successes can be of temporary nature because of the rapid pace at which America can arm. This is considered a guarantee that the danger of war can be avoided. Soviet Russia, of course, is conscious of the fact that its strategic position would be greatly strengthened if Turkey was annexed to the belt of satellite states which girdles her. But Russia also knows that an attack on Turkey would result in England rushing to her assistance. Turkey now hopes that the United States of America will pledge that, in the event of Russian attack, she will place her resources at Europe's disposal.

Turkey needs new markets for her exports to replace those

she has lost, Germany and Rumania. She needs foreign currency in order to increase her imports. She needs to develop her industries and to exploit the rich oil deposits which have recently been discovered. In other words, she needs peace.

But the Russian press continues to thunder against the Turkish government, while over Ankara circle American planes of the latest models.

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If Turkey has reached a position which can be considered on the brink of war, Greece is right in the middle of one. She is a very unhappy country. She suffered terribly during the Second World War. The German methods of occupation here were unusually brutal and after the German armies were defeated, civil war broke out.

It has been said that the middle way is the only one the Greeks do not know.

After a few days in Istanbul, I returned to Ankara, leaving on the thirteenth of April for Greece. When I arrived in Pireus, I heard that martial law had been proclaimed in Athens. A member of the government, the Minister of Justice, Ladas, had been murdered in the street, and it was feared that the attack on Ladas was only the overture to a series of attempts by the Communists to do away with the entire government. There was apprehension in Athens. Strong police forces were stationed along the streets through which the funeral procession was to pass, about an hour after our arrival. The presence of American military personnel was also very noticeable, and reminded one that the chief of the American Military Mission, General Van Fleet, was now the most powerful man in Greece. Otherwise, everything looked calm on the surface. It was a holiday. The Greeks were celebrating their Easter, and large crowds of

Atheneans strolled through the streets in the beautiful spring weather.

I remembered what I had heard from a reliable source about the way in which the Greek rebels treated their prisoners, horrible details of barbaric torture and cruel methods of execution. Now we could also witness the extreme severity with which the government, after the murder of Ladas, treated the rebels: Communists were lined up against a wall and shot; not without due legal procedure as the authorities so greatly stressed, but passionate hatred and bitter enmity characterized the situation. Trouble started immediately after the war when armed bands, largely under Communist leadership, made an attempt to gain control of the country. This attempt had been suppressed, thanks to British military intervention, but ever since, guerrilla feuds have continued, and caused the population to suffer terribly. The Communists are indirectly supported by Moscow through their satellites, especially Yugoslavia, bordering Greece to the north. The action in Greece is a link in Russian efforts to wipe out western European influence in eastern Europe. During the course of the years, the struggle has become more and more passionate. The guerrilla feuds turned into real civil war, when "General" Markos, the chief of the rebels, proclaimed at the end of 1947 that he had formed a Greek opposition government in order to put a stop to "Anglo-American intervention" in Greece. The American Mission, provided with large funds by President Truman, had already established itself in Athens to support the legal government. Its chief, General Van Fleet, evidently aimed to crush the guerrillas by a quick offensive. It was said that he hoped to be able to accomplish this during the late summer or autumn of this year.

It is high time that anarchy be ended. Destitution, starvation

and disease speak plainly. For years the resources of the country as well as the very extensive help given by foreign countries, have been swallowed up by the civil war. "Seldom have our people, during their long history, been confronted by as great danger as they are now," said the legal government's Prime Minister in the spring of 1948.

The Swedish Red Cross had indicated that they would finance the construction of a children's home in Patras on the northwest Peloponnese. Because of chaotic conditions, masses of Greek children have become orphans, badly in need of care. This was the reason for my visit to Greece, and I had thorough discussions regarding this question with a Greek architect and a representative of the American Mission. The plans drawn up by the architect would enable the hospital to take care of 120 children to start with. At a small additional expense, however, the capacity could be increased to two hundred.

We went to Patras the day after our arrival in Athens. We flew over cloud-banked mountain ranges to a military air field thirty kilometers south of the town and continued by car through the fertile valleys. A military escort armed with machine guns and automatic pistols was assigned to protect us. One of the mountain regions through which we passed was a hide-out for a guerrilla band. Of late, there had been no bloody clashes, but not long ago the members of the band used to raid the valleys.

The Bishop of Patras welcomed us in the old monastery of the town and after proceeding to the projected site of the children's home, he blessed the ground in a religious ceremony. I laid the cornerstone for the building and gave a short speech in French which was translated into Greek. During lunch in the dining room of the monastery the discussion turned to

present-day political conditions. I was told that at that time there were half a million refugees in the south of Greece, people who had left their homes to escape the guerrilla bands. These bands operate with great rapidity all over northern and central Greece and on the Peloponnese. The tactics of the government troops are to try to surround and disarm one band after another, but it is not so easy to catch them. When they see their position is untenable, they hide their arms, come down from the mountains, and mix with the population of the villages until the government troops have left the region.

After my return to Athens, the Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs told me that the guerrilla troops had at their disposal more than twenty-five to thirty thousand men spread over various groups. The head of them all is Markos, but it is a known fact that he has no military knowledge or experience. The real leader is supposed to be a professional military man of another nationality. The situation will become really critical when the government troops have driven the rebels back to the Albanian-Yugoslavian frontier. If the rebels then cross the frontier and receive support from the northern neighbours of Greece, the Greek civil war might easily lead to a general European conflict.

Leading circles in Greece are well aware of this fact. It was emphasized by King Paul during a luncheon to which I was invited by the King and Queen. The Queen gave me interesting glimpses of life in Greece today. She is tremendously interested in the committee which takes care of the innumerable refugees. In her opinion this is the most important humanitarian task. She stressed the necessity of securing clothes and other necessary articles for these refugees after the war is over and they have been able to return to their own communities.

Once last winter, when the King was ill, the Queen paid

a visit to the front. Near the town of Konitsa there had been heavy fighting, but the rebels had been repulsed and the Queen had insisted on visiting Konitsa immediately after its liberation. The government had opposed this as the risks were far too great, but finally, they had agreed on condition that the Queen was escorted by four government ministers. This, however, did not suit the Queen. She got hold of the commanding general and forced him to take her along in a jeep. It was an adventurous trip along very difficult roads. Twice she was forced to cross a gorge on foot because the bridges had been blown up, but she reached her destination. She got rid of the escorting ministers, and she and the general were the first to enter the town after its liberation. The troops scarcely believed their eyes when they saw their Queen in their midst, and tremendous cheering broke out. One of her first steps was to go to the children's home which she had organized. During the siege of the town the home had been totally cut off, and she was told that the children had been compelled to lie on the floors for days in order to avoid the bullets. A ghostlike silence filled the house when she opened the door. But when the children realized who it was that came to visit them the cheering never ended. The visit of the Queen in Konitsa nearly led to a political crisis which, however, was quickly solved. It is certain that her courageous behaviour has greatly helped to increase her wide popularity.

There is no doubt that Greek children need more help, both the refugees who are cared for by the Queen's committee and the Greek Red Cross and the children sent by the rebels to the neighbouring countries of Albania, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Hungary and Czechoslovakia. During my conversation with her, the Queen strongly emphasized how anxious she was to help even the children of the rebels. Before I left Athens I drew up

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a plan for such relief in consultation with a representative of the League, M. de St. Aubin. I was glad to have achieved this, at least. The foreign reporter who summed up his impressions of the Greek situation in the following words was entirely right: "More than ever before, need is the inseparable companion of the Greek people."

XXI

THE IDEALS OF THE RED CROSS

IN view of the technical development of modern warfare and the bounds which total war has proved it can encompass, is it purely Utopian to maintain that the Red Cross should try to humanize war? For my part, I definitely refuse to answer this question in the affirmative.

In peacetime the initiative can be taken for the drafting and ratification of conventions by which wounded, ill and imprisoned soldiers are assured of assistance, even if they belong to the enemy. Such conventions have not yet lost their importance, and it is exactly this kind of initiative which must be taken by the Red Cross.

Moreover, it is of great importance that we should try to bridge the feelings of hatred and bitterness which are born of war, not only between the belligerent nations but also between individuals engaged in conflict. It is the task of the Red Cross to try to promote recognition and respect for the contention that a wounded enemy must be treated as if he were a comrade in arms. We must learn to look upon even an enemy as a human being, one who perhaps hates war and killing but who, in spite of this, considers it his duty to fight for his country.

This is not sufficient, however. The most important task of the Red Cross in war and peace is to campaign in all countries for the maintenance of peace in the world. The representatives of the Red Cross organizations of many countries have had rich opportunities to understand the terrible development and

catastrophic results of modern warfare. With this and the high ideals of the Red Cross in mind, it is only natural that the Red Cross organization of every country should strive to become an effective instrument of peace. World conditions at the time of writing are such that one has to be quite an optimist to stand by this. But it is exactly this optimism which must inspire all Red Cross workers, and, in fact, all people who want to make active contributions in the humanitarian field. One is not allowed to reason: "It is of no use to continue. What can I, or we, with our small resources, accomplish? The task is so gigantic that it is vain to believe that we could achieve results of any importance." It is admitted that it can be tempting for the individual to reason thus, but this reasoning should not take the upper hand. All good forces having the same aim in view should unite in order to carry out work which can benefit mankind.

It is this which makes the work in the Red Cross or similar organizations so rewarding and fascinating: whether one is occupied in a national or international field of activity, one is inspired by the aim of aiding unhappy and suffering people, of helping to rebuild what has been destroyed and of assisting them to regain what they have lost. The gratitude of unhappy people who can perhaps in this way begin to have faith again in the future and see a gleam of light in the darkness is the greatest reward for this work. In this connection it is worth stressing that the significance of Red Cross work is by no means exclusively concerned with war. This opinion is often expressed, but it is totally false. The Red Cross organization of every nation has a continuous task to perform in peace and in war.

Especially during the Second World War, many of the national Red Cross organizations had to face very difficult situations. I am thinking in particular about conditions in the

occupied countries. The national organizations had to decide if they should continue their activities, which meant that certain contacts with the occupying authorities were necessary, or if they should discontinue their work. If, under such conditions, a Red Cross organization severs relations with those in power, the result is probably that this organization ceases to function in the form it has taken hitherto. It is transformed into an organization directed by people willing to collaborate with the occupation authorities. A refusal would seem only natural. This is an expression of an indomitable patriotic feeling for an honest attitude against the invaders. This has, of course, its disadvantages. It makes it impossible for the organization to continue its humanitarian efforts and especially to come to the assistance of such patriots as have been imprisoned or otherwise tormented by the occupation authorities. During the Second World War there were many examples of Red Cross leaders continuing their activities in an occupied country while, at the same time, showing a firm attitude toward those in power. In this way, and also through their connections with the International Committee of the Red Cross, they could carry out activities which were important and a blessing to their countrymen. It has also happened that Red Cross workers, during and after the war, have been accused of collaborating in spite of the fact that many of them were solely inspired by an honest desire to fulfil their humanitarian duties to the best of their ability in a very difficult and delicate situation.

The problems touched upon here are extremely complicated and very difficult to judge, particularly for a person who has not lived in an occupied country. I imagine, however, that in a way, it is easier for an individual to leave the organization to which he normally belongs and to join, for example, the resistance

movement, than to stick to his former post. I also believe that the only thing the leaders of a Red Cross organization can do in such situations is to try to keep in view as clearly as possible, the aim of the organization. It should by no means be impossible to continue working and at the same time keep one's self-respect. Those who do this must, however, be prepared to be misunderstood and accused of lack of patriotism.

The Red Cross should try to continue its efforts as long as possible, but if the time comes when it risks being forced to use measures which are contrary to the dictates of honour and conscience and contrary to the unwritten laws of humanity, these efforts, of course, must cease. Then courageous and straightforward conduct must make it clear that co-operation is no longer possible. Then all considerations, even the discontinuation of activities, must be subordinated.

The Red Cross must be prepared to contribute to all fields of humanitarian activity. It must keep an absolutely straight course without being side-tracked. It must not only be a symbol of love for mankind but must also embody a firm determination to fight for high ideals. I have emphasized before how important it is that the Red Cross should not allow itself to become involved in political disputes, and that it should not attach political considerations to its activities. That rule must be kept. Now there exist, however, dictatorial régimes and totalitarian tendencies of such a nature that the results of their activities must be considered worthy of condemnation from a human standpoint. In my opinion, it is only right that the Red Cross should express its opinion about them clearly and distinctly, not by starting a politically coloured discussion about these systems as such, but by condemning their effects. The Red Cross simply cannot avoid doing this. The only reservation on this point is

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that it can sometimes be fatal to do so in public. A public utterance can often endanger lives and severely jeopardize the possibilities for relief. I myself have been criticized because, during the last war, as one of the leaders of the Swedish Red Cross, I did not publicly denounce Naziism and its methods. I am convinced, however, that if I had done so I should have spoiled all chances for carrying out the rescue activities which actually were accomplished.

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At the time of writing, the future is obscure. I have told of my experiences in various countries during recent years, experiences which may give a picture of the world of today as seen from the point of view of one engaged in humanitarian relief activities, and which may indicate what such work can and should be able to accomplish in the present situation. Often it may seem as if people do not speak the same language. We live in times of great conflict. As I mentioned before, even in Red Cross international activities, there have unfortunately occurred disagreements brought about by the conflicting aims and methods of various political groups. Must we be afraid that this means that the great ideal of the Red Cross, that help be given to all those who suffer, irrespective of nationality, creed or political affiliation, cannot be fully applied? It would be regrettable if not even the people and organizations who want to serve humanity could agree. It concerns people who, if they follow the ideals of the Red Cross, have the same aims, who belong to an international organization which, in times of war and crisis, has shown itself strong enough to carry out magnificent and blessed work.

Distrust and suspicion between peoples should be overcome. This can only happen by an open and honest exchange of views.

These exchanges may become sharp and heated; in any case they serve their purpose if they are characterized by a strong desire for understanding. The weapons used may be sharp—but if they are clean there are possibilities that the wounds will heal. It is my hope and conviction that the Red Cross will become one of the most efficient organizations which can contribute to the settling of differences of opinion, which, because of the weaknesses and faults in human nature, have always existed between the peoples of the world.

We must work without prejudices, in the spirit which General MacArthur expressed so well when, after the end of the Second World War, he said:

“The questions concerning the different ideals and ideologies have been settled on the battlefields of the world, and this is not the place for discussion or debate. Nor is it befitting to us as representatives of the majority of the peoples of the earth to meet in a spirit of distrust, ill-will or hatred, victor as well as vanquished, but we must raise ourselves to the higher dignity which alone serves the sacred purpose to which we are about to dedicate ourselves. It is my fondest hope, in fact, the hope of all mankind, that a better world will rise from the bloodshed of the past, a world founded on understanding and good will, a world dedicated to the dignity of man and to the fulfilment of his wish—freedom, tolerance and justice.”

When Henri Dunant, in 1863, started the Red Cross, he gave the organization the following motto: “*Inter Arma Caritas*”. What has happened since, especially the experiences after the Second World War, inspires a desire to extend this motto to “*Post Arma Caritas*”. At some time in the future mankind may perhaps reach the aim which could be expressed in the words: “*Pro Armis Caritas*”—“Mercy Instead of Arms.”

POSTSCRIPT

OVER THE BLUE MEDITERRANEAN . . .

I HAD just finished the last chapters of this book when one day at the end of May, I received a telegram from the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Trygve Lie, inquiring if I would be willing to undertake the mission of acting as United Nations mediator in the Palestine conflict. My first reaction was a feeling of deep gratitude to have been considered for such a complicated and responsible task. But, at the same time, I naturally felt great hesitation as to whether I ought to accept. I knew of course that the chances of success were very slim. On the other hand, I am of the opinion that one should not only undertake tasks whose chances of success are evident, and that one should not be guided by consideration for personal prestige when it is a question of carrying out a difficult task.

My knowledge of the situation in Palestine was very superficial. It is true that I had received a general orientation from people who had concerned themselves with the question. But I cannot say that I had made a thorough study of the subject. Some of my friends definitely advised against my undertaking the mission. It was pointed out that, in the first place, I was responsible for the very important International Red Cross Conference in Stockholm in August, and in the second place, that my name and reputation would be at stake. Perhaps it was an advantage that I had not concerned myself with the Palestine question before. There was always a slight chance that an outsider might contribute new points of view toward the problem. But I gladly admitted that the conscientious work done by countless commissions in respect to this question argued against

such a possibility. That I finally decided to accept was mainly due to the fact that, because of the serious character of the problem, I did not feel that I had the right to husband my strength. Even if, at that time, the Palestine war was limited, it was evident that it could spread. Considering the tense international situation, it did not seem impossible that the Jewish-Arabian conflict might become the spark which would ignite the world. I therefore decided to accept, after first having acquired further information about my authority as mediator, having pointed out that I did not want to commit myself for more than six months and that I wanted to have the opportunity to be present at the International Red Cross Conference in Stockholm in August. After a few hectic days of preparation in Stockholm I went to Paris, where I met a group sent from Lake Success to collaborate with me. From there we continued via Athens to Cairo in a Dutch plane which was to be at my disposal from then on. It is true that voices had been raised on different sides suggesting that I should first go to Lake Success to acquire information. However, I rejected this proposal. I was not of the opinion that one could prevent a war in Palestine by turning one's back on that part of the world and going to the United States.

That the task was enormously complicated I knew in advance. After my arrival, and after having contacted both parties, my first experiences strengthened this impression. The Arabs and the Jews have diametrically opposed opinions about deciding the fate of Palestine and on no account will they discuss compromise. The decision of the United Nations on the twenty-ninth of May, by which a concrete proposal for armistice was put before both parties, was a great help to me. Thus my first task was to try to induce them to accept this proposal.

It is perhaps easy to imagine my joy when, after many

negotiations and countless travels, I received an answer on the night of June the ninth from both Jews and Arabs that they unconditionally accepted this armistice proposal which we had drafted on the basis of the Security Council resolution. With that, however, my task was not finished. The negotiations now had to be continued in order to reach, if possible, a final peace in Palestine. I then chose Rhodes as my headquarters, since I naturally had to look for a neutral place and could not stay within a region dominated by either of the belligerent parties. Rhodes seemed to me a suitable place to continue the negotiations. It is true that the island is situated rather far from Palestine, but with a plane at my disposal I could cover the distances from Rhodes to Cairo or Rhodes to Tel-Aviv in three and one-half hours.

On the twenty-eighth of June I handed to both parties a draft of my proposals for the settlement of Palestine's future. At the same time I invited them to Rhodes for further negotiations. I had intentionally made my proposals very vague in the hope that it might be easier in that way to induce the parties to continue negotiations on the basis of the draft. It was also clear to me in advance that there was no prospect that either of them would completely accept my point of view.

On the third and sixth of July I received answers from the Jews and Arabs respectively. In essence, they indicated that they did not want to consider my proposals as a basis for continued discussions. However, at the same time they pointed out that this did not mean that they considered all further negotiation hopeless. They left the door open, and expressed the wish that I should not tire and give up my mediation.

My proposals to prolong the armistice and to demilitarise Jerusalem were accepted by the Jews but not by the Arabs. On

the other hand, the Arabs, but not the Jews, conditionally accepted another proposal I made about the demilitarisation of the oil installations and the harbour of Haifa; my idea was that the various countries of the world need not suffer for lack of the important Haifa oil exports.

I noticed, however, that neither party was inclined to start war anew. A secret meeting with King Abdullah of Transjordan confirmed this as far as the Arabs were concerned.

If it could make a quick decision, the United Nations Security Council had a great opportunity of inducing both parties, by firm conduct, to adopt a more sensible attitude. In that way, the whole question could be solved. Now the time had come for me to go to Lake Success. On the morning of the tenth of July we left Rhodes.

As I am dictating these lines, my plane marked with the Red Cross is over the blue Mediterranean. My negotiations are now entering their second phase. I am not pessimistic. It seems to me that the door which both parties have left ajar has opened a little wider. It is my firm resolution to concentrate all my energies during the coming days on convincing the Security Council of the importance of their impending decision.

Captain Viruly, our pilot, has come into the cabin to inform me that we have just completed one hundred flying hours since leaving Paris.

In a few days I hope to return to Palestine, with the aid of this white plane, to resume contacts with the fascinating leading figures of the Middle East. It is still an open question whether or not I will succeed. I am, however, firmly resolved to try in every way to fulfil the hopes placed in me.

In the air between Rhodes and Rome on the tenth of July, 1948.

