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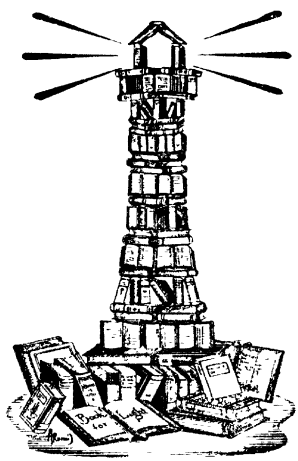
WHY I AM A DEMOCRAT

A SYMPOSIUM

EDITED BY

RICHARD ACLAND, M. P.



KITAB MAHAL

ALLAHABAD

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INTRODUCTION

By
RICHARD ACLAND *M. P. for North Devon*

ALL of those who write in this book would find themselves inside the barbed wire of a concentration camp within a fortnight of a Fascist triumph in this country. They would find themselves there, because each one, in his own way, and from his own point of view, proclaims his belief in the value of the individual, and holds that the success or failure of the State is to be judged by the standard of spiritual and material well-being which it can achieve for its citizens, and not by the extent of its territories nor the power of its armed forces. Each one believes that the State exists to serve the individual, and not the individual to serve the State. And this is the faith which is intolerable to dictatorship.

This common faith is the only thing, I believe, which all the contributors hold in common with each other, and it is for this reason that they are assembled here. Under this common faith they proclaim widely different points of view. At least one maintains that the system of discussion in the workshops and communal farms of Russia, even without the right to organise what we would call a political party opposed to the government, gives to the Russian people a greater measure of freedom than we enjoy ourselves. Others, though they look upon Russia as a dictator country, nevertheless take all their examples of the evils of dictatorship from Germany and Italy. At least half of the contributors believe that there can be no real democracy until the means of production are in

the hands of the State. Opposed to them are the views of those who believe that a full democracy can be achieved while some or all the means of production remain in the hands of individuals. More than one would appear to dispute the right of anyone who has voted in the House of Commons in favour of our present Government to claim the title "Democrat," but no one will read Ronald Cartland's contribution, with its powerful plea for freedom from the party machine, without realising that such independence would be repugnant to a Hitler, a Mussolini, or even a Mosley.

But with all their differences, each one of those whose name appears within the covers of this book takes his particular place in the struggle that is now being waged furiously all over the world, the struggle against the claims of those men who would say to the peoples of whole nations, "You shall not read. You shall not hear. You shall not speak. You shall not think."

Proclaimed on every hand today are the theoretical advantages of dictatorship. Stridently they shout at us, subtly they insinuate to us, how much better we would be in theory if only we would agree not to think. A dictator acts quickly, acts secretly, acts efficiently. He need not consider sectional interests opposed to the "true" interests of the State. He need not discuss ; he need not persuade. When he speaks, the whole resources of the State are geared at once to his decision. With these resources thus co-ordinated, thus efficiently directed to their common purpose, how much greater will be the production of goods, how much higher the standard of living of the people—in theory.

I know of no theoretical answer to this argument.

But there are two answers—one practical and one spiritual—which are overwhelming. The practical answer is that it does not in fact happen in that way. In fact, those who win dictatorial power direct the resources of the State to other ends than the well-being of the people. In fact, the dictators achieve a lower and not a higher standard of living for their people. But the spiritual answer is far more important. Even if in practice the dictator produced for his people more butter and not more guns, even for this gain, the price is too high if men must give up the right to think. It is the power and the right to think that differentiates mankind from cattle, and a race of cattle, however well fed, however well housed, is no substitute for a race of men.

I have said that the one thing which all the contributors have in common is that they are prepared to take their part in the defence of democracy against those who would say, "You shall not think." There is something else they have in common. Not one of them, I think, believes that as a democracy we are today putting up the best defence.

We are not putting up the best defence. Our leaders, we say, have let us down. Indeed, more than one of the contributors will show how leaders of the Right and of the Left have let us down. But before he makes too certain that all the fault lies in our leaders, I invite each member of the rank and file to consider whether he personally is putting up the best possible defence.

There is no Member of Parliament, and no prospective candidate, who will not know from his experience exactly what the Duchess of Atholl means by her young people who shuffle and stamp at the end of a dance-hall while she is allowed her ten-minute political

speech. "Oh, politics," they say, "and what is that to us?" They think that democracy is something which falls into the lap like some ripe fruit produced by the struggles of the past. They will tell you, if pressed, that they do not want to be governed by a dictator who will tell them what work to do, what wages to receive, what taxes to pay, and will tell them where to go if they express a contrary opinion. But they have not understood that there are two alternatives and only two. Either men govern themselves or someone else governs them. There is no third possibility. And if they would govern themselves, then they should understand that to govern themselves is a job of work which they have to do. The right to think carries with it a duty—the duty to think.

In theory, the statesmen, the leaders of political parties, democratically elected by the members of the parties, proclaim to the nation the policies they would pursue and the benefits those policies would provide. The people consider the policies put before them, and choose which policy will benefit them most. In practice, because the people do not choose to consider or to understand the real issues before them, the leaders of political parties too often find that they stand to win, or to lose, far more by one good election trick than they could gain by months and years of faithful exposition of their aims and policy. I cannot take examples out of our too recent political history without injustice to one or more of those I have invited to contribute to this book, but, looking back to the election of 1924, and admitting for the sake of argument that the decision to put the Conservatives in office may in fact have been the right one at that time, does anybody regard it as a credit to our democracy that that decision was reached, or at any rate the size

of the decision was immensely increased, by the circumstance that a Russian had written a letter to me who was represented as an obscure British agitator giving him advice on the subject of seducing the loyalty of British troops? No doubt it was a wicked thing to do—if it was in fact done—but was it the relevant consideration on which the British public ought to have been asked to make up its mind at that moment? Was it not, and is it not admitted now to have been, a supremely successful political trick?

And here again the ordinary citizen will turn his criticism against the political leaders. What can you expect of us, he will ask, if our leaders think more of tricks than of the truth? But that is not the whole story.

The politician wants to win. He wants to win, says the cynic, in order to enjoy the fruits and the salaries of office. But there is a better reason. He wants to win because he thinks he is right and his opponents are wrong. He thinks his policy is for the benefit of the nation, and his opponent's to its detriment.

Say, if you like, that the Conservative politician subconsciously thinks of the nation as a nation of shareholders; that the Labour politician thinks of the nation as a nation of trade union secretaries; that the Liberal politician thinks of the nation as a nation of would-be independent traders who have just inherited a legacy of a thousand pounds. Say that in thinking of the good of the nation they are subconsciously thinking of the good of shareholders, trade union secretaries, or independent traders. For my part, I am not much concerned with subconscious thought. The conscious thought is sincere, and if it is said that it is influenced by subconscious assumptions then that to me is another way of saying that the conscious thought, though sincere, is wrong thought. And it is the duty of the citizens of a demo-

are engaging in the real work of government when they belong to organisations which spend long sessions working out the last dot and comma of a resolution which they hope will galvanise vast numbers of people into activity when it appears, or does not appear, in two or three inches of space towards the bottom of one of the columns of the national or local Press. If a man has thought of the government of his country and knows in his own mind that one course is right and another is wrong, it seems to me he is failing to do his duty as a democrat unless he will proclaim his belief to other people, persuading them to his view if he is right, adjusting his view to theirs if he is wrong.

But how can the plain, ordinary citizen proclaim his belief to his fellow men? There is really no magic about it. In the first place, he can put his point of view, his faith, to those people he may meet. This is called "talking politics." Why is it held to be bad manners to talk politics? I remember an older man saying to me when I was much younger, "Oh yes, let me see, you're interested in politics, aren't you?" By his tone of voice he might have been asking me if I were interested in the White Slave Trade. I confess that at the time I was not sufficiently quick-witted, and subsequently I have not been sufficiently courageous to continue the conversation in this way.

"Yes, and aren't you?"

"Good Lord, no!"

"But do you mean to say you don't even vote?"

"Oh yes, I vote."

(I am assuming these would have been the answers—they seem to me the most likely.) But what would have been the legitimate answer if I had then said, "You have no right to"?

Talking politics, however, is the least of the possible

forms of democratic activity. In addition, one might perhaps invite people to one's house for the very purpose of proclaiming one's faith. In political life we call this a "drawing-room meeting." Or go to the houses of other people to explain the truth to them. This is called "canvassing." Or stand at the street corner and speak to such as will listen, or take a hall and invite people to come in and hear, or distribute to them written statements of the case and persuade them to read. There may be other means by which a man can proclaim his faith to others, but if so, there are many now engaged in the business of trying to secure good government for their country who would be delighted to hear of them.

But what prospect does this reveal to the minds of those who have not stopped to think that democracy cannot exist except through the active participation of thousands upon thousands of the citizens of the State? What nightmare of endless controversy is this that is raised up before them? Why can we not all agree?

Why can we not all agree with whom? With some dictator who tells us what to agree to? Indeed, I have found one remarkable thing in common among all those who ask, "Why can't we agree?" (They mean, of course, "Why can't we be compelled to agree? Why can't we just put a muzzle on those who don't agree?") They always mean, "Why can't we all agree with me?" No one I know of has ever stopped to ask, "Why can't I be compelled to agree with you?"

Are we to assume that the only choice is between sordid party controversy as we know it today and the prohibition of all free expression under a dictatorship? Can there be no such thing as informed discussion? Surely there can. And if such a goal is ever to be achieved, urely it can only be achieved if more people

will take their part in active political discussion today. Indeed, if the straight questions were asked, whether anyone should be prevented from expressing any political opinion he chose to express, whether anyone should be compelled to agree to any political opinion to which he did not agree, a substantial or even an overwhelming majority would give an answer in the negative. And yet in practice, unless greater numbers of our people are prepared to think and act in what concerns the good government of their country, we are in danger of being compelled in fact to agree to all sorts of things which we do not agree to without there ever being removed from us the theoretical right to make our voices heard at election times.

American conditions are different from ours, and I would not hold forth on American conditions on the strength of one visit to that country, but in an American city of some two million inhabitants, the following state of affairs was described to me in 1929. Gangsters and racketeers sold alcohol to the community, kidnapped children, and extorted protection money from traders to protect those traders from the damage that might otherwise have been done to them by the racketeers themselves. A small percentage of the money received was paid over to the managers of a closed party machine to which no one could be admitted without the consent of the managers. Thus financed, the machine successfully secured the election of its candidates, who protected the racketeers and gangsters from justice. The rich men of the town, through the chamber of trade, approached the "democratically" elected government and made their terms with them saying, "There are certain things we want; a new boulevard here, electrical development there, or whatever it might be. Do those things, and we will get ahead with business, and you

can do the governing. But if you do not do these things, then we will raise an election fund and turn you out."[1]

Then why did the people of that city, with all the formal machinery of democracy intact, live under the domination of a government which each one of them separately detested? Was it because of the wickedness of gangsters or the connivance of the chamber of trade? Perhaps. But it was also because each one of two million people who could have ended that state of affairs if they had all given 25 cents and one hour a week to political work concluded that "My small effort will make no difference; so it isn't worth while."

If everyone insists that his small effort will make no difference, how can democracy exist? What is democracy except the sum total of the infinitely small efforts of an infinitely large number of people?

Each individual feels his strength puny when he compares it to the power of the machine. The party machine is no doubt far too powerful. But what is a party machine? It is a group of people who, having been politically active for many years in a world where political activity is unbelievably rare, find themselves at the head of an organisation which has the power of selecting those who shall occupy or stand as candidates for all sorts of posts. They have this power because when there is almost nobody prepared to take a political initiative, political initiative is only taken at the instigation of the machine. Given a country in which even

1 Since then, partly owing to the fact that the depression forced Americans to realise that they could not afford such corrupt government, partly because the repeal of the prohibition laws removed the largest item in the gangsters' balance sheet, partly through the genuine revival of a real spirit of democracy, that city, though not so famous as New York, has produced its own counterpart of Racket-Buster Dewey.

one in ten of the electors would concern himself to think and one in a hundred would concern himself to act in relation to matters of government, the power of the machine would cease to exist.

We have then the theoretical form of democracy. Theoretically we can develop within it any form of social or economic structure which the majority of the electors may desire. But we shall not achieve the substance of democracy, and we shall be in permanent danger of losing even the form, until an infinitely larger number of people will take the business of governing their country as seriously as the business of running their lives.

I believe today in this country and in Europe we stand on a watershed. If we are saved from war—and if we are not, all calculations are futile—either quite soon the handcuffs of dictatorship will close more firmly than ever upon the peoples of Europe, not to be removed until, after many years, developments now quite unforeshadowed will break them ; or the peoples will themselves, quite soon, shake off their bonds. In this country, I believe it will be quite soon decided whether we are to pass into an era in which it will be considered ever more and more intolerable to think or talk of politics, an era in which this country will be governed by a narrow clique ever more and more removed from the people, ever more and more confident that the wishes of the people are not a matter in which they need to concern themselves, an era in which no spiritual and no material advance will be made ; or whether, on the other hand, we are to experience a renaissance of political thought, political activity, and political courage leading to social and economic and spiritual developments without parallel in the whole course of our history.

By

C. R. ATTLEE, M. P. *Leader of the Opposition*

IT is perhaps a commentary upon the times in which we live that anyone occupying a position in the public life of Britain should be asked to give reasons for his faith in democracy. Until two or three years ago such a question would have seemed unnecessary. It would be assumed without question that a British Member of Parliament would necessarily be a democrat. He belongs to a nation which had fought a great war under the slogan, "Make the world safe for democracy." It is, however, worth remembering that up to quite a late period in the nineteenth century the word "democracy" was still not wholly respectable. It still had a flavour of Jacobinism. Its principles were certainly not accepted by influential sections of society in this country. It was not until after the War that the right of every citizen of full age and mental capacity to share in the Government of the country was admitted. Sex and property qualifications restricted the exercise of the franchise. The conception of a governing class was still strong and, indeed, has always had its adherents, especially in the remoter parts of the country where squire and parson even today consider themselves as the people who ought to rule. Nevertheless, it is broadly true that democracy as a principle had up till recently been accepted in this country and in Western Europe. Even those States where in practice authoritarian methods still obtained had a sense of inferiority. The ruling Powers in the world were democratic and set a fashion to which all gave at least theoretical allegiance.

Today the principles of democracy are being

seriously challenged. In the greater part of Europe popular government has been either destroyed or put on the defensive. The conception of government by the people of the people for the people is attacked and derided while the cult of dictatorship is exalted. This attack extends not only to democracy as a method of government, but to the underlying idea, the value of the individual as distinct from his membership of a particular society. Essentially the present attack on democracy is a denial of Western civilisation. It is a frank return to barbarism.

It is, therefore, useful that those who believe in democracy should give the reasons for the faith that is in them.

The question which is put to me obviously admits of a wide conclusion. It invites an examination into my fundamental conceptions of the position of man in the scheme of things. Democracy is not just a certain method whereby human beings in society can manage their common affairs. It implies a certain philosophy of life. I have not the space at my disposal to enter at length into the fundamentals of the democratic faith, but it is essential, if I am to answer the question, to state in broad terms the reasons which impel me to believe in democracy, not only as a method of government which in practice I prefer to any alternative, but as a governing principle in the relationship between human beings which I hold to be right.

In the first place, I think of society as existing in order to give to every individual the opportunity of developing to the full his or her personality. I reject the conception of the individual as only an inconsiderable unit to be sacrificed in the interests of some abstraction such as Germany. Equally, I reject the conception of the superiority of a particular class in

society which is of such value that the mass of ordinary people must suffer conditions which cramp and contract their opportunities of development in order that the few may grow to perfection. I believe that, despite the great differences of quality between individual and individual, every human being has the potentiality of enriching the world by his or her qualities, and that we have no infallible means of selecting those who should be given space to grow and those who should be allowed to remain stunted.

To my mind, the first principle of democracy is the acceptance of equality. I hold that all should have equal rights and equal duties. Equality is, however, not identity. On the contrary, it is of the essence of democracy that while people should be considered as equal, they should be recognised as diverse. They are diverse in their capacities, in the service which they can give to society and in the nature of the desires which they wish to satisfy. Democracy is antithetic to the ant-heap view of society.

The second principle of democracy is liberty. If every citizen is to give of his best to society he must be free to develop his own personality. He must be able to think and speak freely. He must be able to discuss freely affairs of State. He must as far as possible be able to choose his way of life, subject to his respecting the rights of others to do likewise. It is obvious that such liberty of action cannot be absolute. Man living in society must accept with its advantages its necessary restrictions. The question is, "Who is to impose those restrictions?" As I cannot accept the divine right of kings, the superiority of a particular class or the superwisdom of a single individual, there is no other possible authority than that of the majority will of the citizens. The only restraint which I accept is one in the im-

position of which I myself share. Therefore the acceptance of majority rule is implicit in democracy, but such rule is, in my view, subject to the acceptance of the principle of tolerance. Tolerance is an essential condition for the successful operation of democracy. It means respect for the opinions of others and an unwillingness to enforce on others any restrictions that are not necessary for maintaining the common interests of society. It has a double implication. The first is that the majority should exercise their power in such a way as to carry with it as far as possible the minority. To drive a minority to revolt is a failure of democracy. There is also, however, a less realised obligation of tolerance incumbent on the minority, which is to accept the will of the majority in every case unless the reasons for resistance are overwhelmingly strong. Tyrannous majorities and hopelessly recalcitrant minorities are the enemies which destroy democracy. After the fullest rights of discussion have been exercised and every opportunity has been given for the influence of public opinion, the democrat accepts the will of the majority, not as divinely inspired, but because the method of counting heads is the only practical one in the absence of any means of evaluating their contents.

I have stressed the importance I attach to giving to all individuals freedom to express their personalities, because of my belief in the right of equality. I have rejected every form of dictatorship and all totalitarian systems because they are denials of equality and freedom, but these are not the only enemies. Human personality is not cramped and confined only by political systems. Political equality is not enough. The possession by the few of economic power is not less an invasion of liberty and a denial of opportunity.

I am, therefore, a believer not only in political but

in economic democracy. All political systems are the expressions of economic forces. The unreformed Parliament of the eighteenth century was the political expression of the landed interest. The Victorian Parliament, with its restricted franchise, marked the achievement of power by the capitalist. The full political democracy of today aims at the transference of economic power from the few to the many. The weakness of political democracy in the face of the totalitarian challenge is that it is the political expression of social democracy maintaining an economic system which is contrary to its fundamental principles.

I am, therefore, a social democrat. My object is to complete democracy by introducing into the economic sphere those principles which I have endeavoured to explain above. The man who is wholly dependent upon a property owner for the right to exercise his faculties in the economic sphere is not free and is not equal. The successful operation of the principles of democracy is not easy. It is, indeed, the most difficult form of government. It requires more than adherence to abstract principles. It needs great practical common sense. It has often been said that the British system of democracy only works because its operators will that it should work. It is theoretically possible to expose it as liable to constant breakdown owing to its contradictions. Yet, in fact, it does work.

In the same way, in the achievement of economic equality, it is possible to raise every kind of objection by assuming a complete absence of common sense and tolerance. It is easy to show the possibilities of oppression or inefficiency in the conduct of industry by the community as it is to stress the weaknesses of the British system of political democracy, but there is no reason to believe that the one will be less efficient in

practice than the other.

I will now turn to the consideration of democracy in its practical aspect. There is much propaganda to-day designed to suggest that the methods of autocracy are more efficient than those of democracy. This is helped by the fact that there is a thick veil of obscurity thrown over the actual workings of the governments in the totalitarian States. What is allowed to come through is of the nature of special pleading either for or against the system. I am quite ready to admit that democracy is often slow in action, but it must always be considered how far in fact defects are due to the system or to those who work it. Making every allowance for its failures, I claim that in fact democracy works better than any other system of government. It is a system for adults and requires adult minds to operate it. The failures of democracy on the Continent have not been due to its intrinsic demerits, but to the fact that in countries such as Germany, the ordinary citizen is politically immature. There is bound to be failure if one expects a man's sense of responsibility from a child. It may well be that judged from the standard of, say, the production of aeroplanes or arterial roads, the totalitarian State can work more rapidly and effectively than a democracy, but if the criterion be the production of human happiness or responsible citizens, the totalitarian State is outclassed. I do not myself believe that the kind of Government which now obtains in the totalitarian States can endure. It is possible for a time to put a whole nation into a political strait-waistcoat and enforce an outward conformity, but to attempt to maintain such conditions permanently is bound to fail. Behind a facade of strength there is in fact great weakness and instability. Quite apart from the difficulty which must attend the question of succession to power

which has always been a weakness in all autocracies established on the basis of particular personalities, there will inevitably be discontents which if allowed no vent will set up strains in the structure. Where there is no democracy, it is inevitable that all movements for fundamental change are driven underground. It is true that it is possible for an individual ruler or a governing class to allow a certain degree of criticism of the regime, provided there is no suggestion of any radical alteration. Particularly where class rule or monarchy has been long established under tolerable conditions, the rulers may feel strong enough to allow considerable latitude to opponents who do not appear to be too formidable, but the limits even here will tend to be fairly narrowly drawn.

Whenever there is the possibility of serious challenge, the safety of the State will be invoked and every dissident individual will be closely watched. The most important functionary will be the head of the police. In these conditions all liberty is in danger. A secret service of police will be organised, delation will be encouraged and the whole of society will become surrounded by an atmosphere of suspicion. Not only actions contrary to the interests of the holders of power will be banned, but all expression of opinion will be regimented, and every endeavour will be made to allow only one view to prevail. The same methods are necessarily adopted by every tyrant and every tyranny in history.

In the absence of constitutional means of redress, violence seems to be the only resort. Violent methods, whether in revolution or counter-revolution, lead to callousness and a relapse into barbarism. The last few years in Europe have seen a steady degradation of moral standards and a tolerance of cruelty which seems

to be quite amazing to those who were bred in the more civilised atmosphere of the pre-War era. To what extent this has been due to the brutalising effect of four years' warfare is uncertain, and undoubtedly this had its part, but in my view it is, far more, the direct result of the establishment of the totalitarian regimes. In many parts of Europe the pre-War conditions were such that the change is not really very great, but in Germany and Italy, countries which had been in the main stream of European tradition and culture, the degradation of standards is tremendous.

The shallowness of the veneer of civilisation over the brutality of many human beings has often been ignored by revolutionary idealists who preached violence without understanding its effect on those who practised it.

The British Labour Party has always advocated constitutional action, believing that the changes which it wishes to see in society must be brought about by a convinced majority, leading a half-convinced, or at least, acquiescent, minority. It has never ignored the possibility that there might be an attempt to overthrow the ballot-box by the bomb and the bayonet. Should such conditions arise, it would use all the forces of the State to defend democracy. It might even be, on the other hand, that the oppression of a majority might be such as to render inevitable forcible resistance where liberty was endangered, but it has never advocated violence as a method of social change. It realises that the very expedient adopted for securing the triumph of democracy and freedom would endanger what it was hoped to save. To change one tyranny for another or to substitute one dictatorship for another by force does not alter the essential character of the regime; slaves remain slaves with a change of master. Socialists, however, are desirous not only of altering institutions,

but the lives of those served by those institutions. Nationalisation of the mines, the banks, or the land are not advocated as ends in themselves, but as changes necessary in order to create a social order in which the citizens can live peacefully, happily, and securely, but especially freely. To achieve any of these material aims by sacrificing the spiritual advantages which they are to subserve would be to attain not victory but defeat.

This insistence on democracy by the Labour Party is not always understood and is often misrepresented. The refusal of the Labour Party to form a United or a Popular Front with the Communists is often regarded as mere narrow-mindedness on the part of a few office holders. It is really an expression of the profound principles of the Party. It cannot join with those who advocate methods which are detrimental to democracy and who envisage as at least a stage in their progress towards a co-operative commonwealth a period of forcible dictatorship, by a class-conscious minority. The Labour Party realises that to acquiesce in such doctrines would be to betray its democratic faith and to destroy the very thing it seeks to save. It is equally impossible for the Labour Party to join with capitalist parties for, as I have shown, its socialism is an essential part of its democratic faith.

The Labour Party has therefore rejected all short cuts to the achievement of its aim and remains firmly wedded to democracy. It believes that it is important to practise democracy and to preach democracy, because, as Andrew Marvell wrote :

The same ends that did gain
The power must it maintain.

The Labour party does not wish to rule in a police State.

Finally, I might answer this question in the sense of

proclaiming my faith that democracy will prevail. There is so much defeatism being preached today that I think it is as well to testify to my faith. As I see it today, the struggle which is going on in the world is a struggle between light and darkness, between good and evil. What is at stake is nothing less than the soul of Western civilisation. Our conception of the value of the individual has been built on the great thinkers and teachers of the past. The heritage of Greece and Rome and the doctrine of Christianity has brought man to a stage in his onward march to civilisation from savagery. The achievements of physical science have now put it in his power if he wills to create the conditions in which all can share in that advance. On the foundation of material prosperity and security now attainable, it is possible for every human being to have the opportunity of developing his faculties to the full and of being free. The dark forces of cruelty, intolerance, and greed are raising themselves to frustrate its attainment. It rests with the democracies to see that this attempt is defeated. I believe that it will be. I believe that if democracy can be extended from the political to the economic sphere, so that freedom is based on social justice, immense forces can be rallied in its support, not only in the free countries, but in those which are now in chains. I want Britain, the home of the most successful democracy on a large scale, to lead those forces, and I have faith that victory can be won.

By
THE DUCHESS OF ATHOLL

BEFORE giving some of the reasons which make me a democrat, it may be well to make clear that my faith in democracy is not inspired by the following beliefs:

I do not believe, for instance, that democracies cannot, or rarely, make mistakes. The freedom which democracy implies necessarily multiplies issues and conflicting voices, and if essential facts are not made clear to the electors, or personal or party issues are allowed to outweigh national ones, the majority in a democratic community, be it a single electoral division or an entire country, may well fall into grave error.

Nor am I a democrat because I think that at the age of twenty-one all young men and women in this country automatically become possessed of the wisdom which will guide their steps successfully through the maze of political questions which the British elector must tread. I know only too well the humiliation of endeavouring to explain my views on the main political questions of the day to an empty ball-room floor at the far end of which stand young people who are obviously longing for the end of the ten-minutes' speech which will enable them to resume their dancing. There is certainly no magic wand which can be relied on suddenly, at the age of twenty-one, to arouse an intelligent interest in public affairs.

Nor do I believe in democracy because of the type of man or woman it necessarily brings to the front. One of its great weaknesses is that gifts of expression by voice or pen—especially the former—may carry more weight than the matter expressed justifies. Many may therefore

find their way to the House of Commons who have little of merit to say. But if they have a ready tongue —above all a witty one—they will commend a hearing even there.

Democracy, moreover, makes a severe strain on moral courage. It may require great strength of character to withstand showers of post-cards urging a course which a member cannot honestly support, or to advocate a policy less attractive than that proposed by others. There are many temptations therefore to mere vote-catching.

Again, the history of this country in the last five or six years inevitably raises doubts as to whether democracies can be relied on to safeguard the defence of their respective countries as efficiently as authoritarian rulers. Rulers bent on national aggrandisement may easily steal a march in armaments on democracies, unless the latter are led by men who are strong enough to convince their people of the necessity for increased armaments and the heavy expenditure these entail, and unless the people themselves are willing to submit to the discipline necessary for their own defence.

Nor, unhappily, do I believe in democracy because it necessarily makes us a united people. One of the hall-marks of democracy is the right of political association, the right of men and women to form, or to join, any association they please for any political aims that do not involve transgressing the law. That has given us our party system, and our party system, however legitimate, however desirable in itself, irresistibly leads to cleavage —cleavage, in its turn, too often to misunderstanding and bitterness. And such misunderstandings and bitterness, while at any time to be deplored, necessarily are a source of great weakness at a time of any external danger. Democracy, therefore, unless party feeling can

be restrained in times of external peril, may well bring about its own downfall.

Least of all do I believe in democracy because I think it is a nice easy system to work, which, if we have duly installed it, will enable most of us, or many of us, safely to become absorbed in our own business or pleasures. That is the lot imposed on subjects of a dictator, unless they are among his fanatical adherents. It is no less true today than one hundred and fifty years ago that the price of liberty is eternal vigilance. The convinced democrat, therefore, is one who is called to a life of incessant alertness, study, and action, more especially in days such as these, when the system is definitely challenged.

And it is because democracy to me is synonymous with freedom that I am a democrat. If, on the one hand, it is love of freedom that has inspired the system that democracy implies—freedom of speech, of the Press, of election of representatives to a free Parliament, freedom of political association—it is no less true that only such a system guarantees to us that we remain a free nation. Only through these free institutions can the publicity be given to any possible encroachments on liberty which will enable them to be denounced. And, once made clear to the general public, such encroachments are hardly likely to be approved.

For surely freedom is the most precious of all things to us. The desire for it is so basic that it begins to show itself from the earliest days of life. The baby is never so happy as when he can kick his legs free of their tiresome multitudinous wrappings. The toddler is ever struggling to escape from the limits which his elders put on the exercise of his new-found powers. The main story of childhood and youth is one of perpetual reaching-out for greater freedom than the sheltering care of home or

the discipline of school will permit. As life goes on, indeed, our freedom of action may be trammelled in various ways. Lack of means, for instance, may prevent our entering the calling most congenial to us, or may restrict our activities. Personal or business ties may restrain our speech. Our own liberty must never infringe on that of others. The strong must be ready to submit to legislation which seeks to prevent exploitation of the weak. Yet every citizen of a free country can be master of his mind, "Captain of his soul," as Henley puts it—in other words, master of his own personality, of his political and religious faith, and therefore of things of more eternal value than merely material possessions.

And he who is freely master of his mind, and of his gifts, cannot only utilise them to open up channels of culture or activity which will enrich life for himself, but, in association with others, he can use them to promote what he conceives to be the interest of the community of which he forms part. Life in a democratic community, therefore, offers a variety of interest and opportunity to the people at large such as could not be possible under any authoritarian system.

But if these opportunities are to be well and wisely used in the national interest, there must be an educated electorate. British electors in particular have many things to learn. Like citizens of other countries, they must know the main facts of the history of their country, more especially during the last four hundred years. To this they must add some knowledge of the history, the many racial differences, and the varied economic production, of the British Commonwealth and Colonial Empire. They should also know, anyhow, the main facts of European history from the French Revolution onwards, and the history of the United States.

But, above all, a democratic electorate needs to develop its reasoning power, its capacity to examine dispassionately and as far as may be without prejudice "slogans" and other statements ; to test them, wherever possible, in the light of personal knowledge or experience ; to consider the reliability and the disinterestedness of those who make them ; to spare no effort to get at the facts before deciding how a vote is to be cast. Lord Morley, I believe, said that the supreme test of education was the ability to sift evidence. It is the quality on which before all things the successful working of democracy seems to me to depend—anyhow, so far as intellectual attainments go.

Above all is this ability to sift evidence, this unprejudiced endeavour to get at the facts, necessary in days such as these, when the British elector not only has to weigh up the conflicting statements and aims of different political parties in his own country, but has to meet much propaganda from totalitarian countries, backed up by rigid Press censorships. Both make it extremely difficult for him to arrive at the truth. Never before have our people had to meet anything of this kind on anything like the present scale. Conservatives more especially need to be on their guard, as propaganda from Fascist countries is above all aimed at them.

At any time the existence of a true democracy must depend in large measure on broadcasting and on the Press. The vast majority of the electors will regard these as their main source of enlightenment on public affairs. Their responsibility is therefore great for giving the information necessary, and in such a way that it can be easily heard or read, and understood. For the problem is not merely one of giving facts, but of stimulating the interest necessary to a healthy political organism.

But under present conditions a special responsibility rests on correspondents of British newspapers and news agencies in totalitarian countries. For on their vigilance in ascertainment of facts and their courage and tact in presenting them, we must mainly rely for our knowledge of events which are often of vital importance to us. There are few greater roles today than that of the men who work, often under great difficulties, sometimes even dangers, to fulfil this task.

An equal responsibility rests on owners and editors to pass on to their readers the facts their correspondents send them.

One form that totalitarian propaganda takes is the attempt to belittle democratic systems by making us believe that the loss of parliamentary liberties is not regretted in these totalitarian countries, or at least not by the great majority of people; that one must not imagine that all countries in Europe are ready for a parliamentary system such as ours, and so on.

Granted, as implied above, that the successful working of democracy must depend on an educated and thinking electorate and on the readiness of conflicting elements to replace the sword by the ballot-box as a means of settling differences, who could say that the great mass of the people of pre-Nazi Germany, for example, could not meet these tests? A sense of grievance arising from defeat in war, widespread unemployment and lack of sufficient critical faculty, indeed made many ready listeners to demagogic oratory and the lavish promises of the Nazi Party; but no majority vote of the electors brought the present dictatorship into existence. Dictatorial powers were only secured by banning newly elected Communists from debate on a charge of having burned the Reichstag—a charge which a prolonged trial before the Supreme Court ultimately

failed to establish. And as the advent of the dictatorship has meant complete loss of all civil liberties, no vote taken since then can be regarded as a true indication of the wishes of the German people.

In the same way there are some people who say that the Spanish people were not ready for democracy. It is true that when the Monarchy fell in April, 1931, some 50 per cent of the people were illiterate, but the vigorous steps taken by the First Republican Government and by the Governments which have held office since February, 1936, to remove this handicap, even under the stress of war, showed their recognition of this fundamental condition for a democratic system. The people themselves, moreover, by the avidity with which in villages and trenches alike they seized the opportunities given them by the Republican Government for eliminating their illiteracy, gave touching proof of their desire to fit themselves for democracy. A British prisoner-of-war in Franco's Spain even tells how Republican prisoners-of-war who were educated, devoted themselves to teaching their illiterate comrades to read and write and to giving them lessons in Spanish history and in the events leading up to the war. He describes their grasp of democratic principle as amazing.

And though Spain includes elements prone to quick and violent action, there is much evidence to show that the violence of which so much has been heard as occurring in the months preceding General Franco's rising was mainly due to the incessant provocation given by Falangists and Requetes who had been helped into existence by German and Italian influences.

No greater proof of the devotion of the Republican leaders to democratic principles could have been given than the fact that, gravely handicapped as they were in the early months of the war by party differences among

their supporters which for several months made a unified military command impossible, they never made the smallest attempt to suppress any party or to force any amalgamations. Anarchists in the early days caused much trouble. Many individuals in due course were severely punished, but no attempt was made to suppress their party.

I mention the cases both of Germany and Spain because, when doubt is thrown by some on the readiness of the people of these countries for democracy, we not only do them, I am convinced, a grave injustice, but show the weakness of our own democratic faith. No one wants other countries slavishly to imitate every detail of our system, but I find it hard to believe that a people of any general standard of education who have once tasted civil and religious liberty can lightly acquiesce in its loss. As already said, the love of liberty seems to me something absolutely fundamental in human nature.

As we have seen, however, the democratic system does not bring immunity from mistakes. But its great merit is surely that it implies the freedom to strive both individually and collectively to remedy them. It therefore can work its own cure, or go some way at least towards it. And though there may be many whose political activities are restricted by economic difficulties, three months' residence in one place entitles them to a vote on all matters raised at a parliamentary election and they are free to influence their fellows to a more energetic effort than may be possible for themselves. Contrast that with the position in totalitarian countries, in which it is a punishable offence, which people are told it is their duty to report, to criticise the Governmental regime, even in the seclusion of the family circle.

Democracy is then a system which offers a real

message of hope to those who are conscious of imperfections in the law or of the need for improvement in social conditions. They have complete liberty to form organisations to promote their ends, to urge their adoption on Government or political parties, and, through Press and speech, to press their consideration on the public. Everyone in a democracy has a chance to work individually or collectively for what he believes to be for the welfare of his country.

Another weakness, however, that we have noted, is that the democratic system may give mere gifts of expression undue weight. The fault may be partly that some of the more level-headed and best-informed Englishmen and Scotsmen tend to be unduly diffident of their powers of speech and therefore hesitate to offer themselves as candidates for Parliament. They too often have an idea that rhetoric and brilliance are required when what are chiefly needed in order to secure election are explanations of policy, made in terms simple enough to be intelligible to the mass of the electors, and in the House of Commons itself, knowledge of the subject under discussion.

Another reason tending to keep back some of the best is undoubtedly the disparagement of Parliament common in some circles. Granted that many speeches delivered there are not up to standard, no one is obliged to listen to them except those who are themselves hoping to be heard, and there is plenty of work on parliamentary committees for those who are ready to attend them. But criticism of this kind is usually very superficial.

Again, then, we find that the remedy for a weakness noticed in democracy rests with its citizens. If those who have most to contribute in brains, experience or character stand aside, the weakness will grow, and there

will be rejoicing among the enemies of the system. But if those who have most to give will pool their contributions, the weaknesses can be overcome.

The expense of parliamentary elections, however, is a stumbling-block to many, and in so far as this limits the choice of candidates it is a blot on our democratic system. But here again constituency associations or other political sympathisers can find the remedy by helping to provide the necessary funds. This is preferable to candidates being dependent on a central party fund. It makes for the greater independence of thought which is the very essence of democracy.

Again, if we find that party cleavages incidental to a democratic system are embittering our national life, have we not the remedy in our own hands? Can we not refrain from all personalities and violence of speech, and through personal contacts and co-operation on non-party matters, do much to promote better feeling in the political sphere? Is not the tolerance which admits the right of others to hold views contrary to our own, and enables us to listen to the expression of these views, something basic in democracy? And if we pride ourselves that blood moves more slowly in our northern veins than in those of our southern neighbours, should we not excel in showing this tolerance? Moreover, if this can be achieved, it should help others to exercise the moral courage which, as we have seen, is often severely strained by the misrepresentations and denunciations incidental to party strife.

But party strife must not alone be blamed for lack of moral courage. A highly developed party system has resulted in a rigidity and narrowness of outlook to which we owe it that Members of Parliament, generally regarded as the symbols of a parliamentary system believed to be a "free" one, have less freedom to express

publicly differences of opinion with their respective parties than any other of their fellow citizens—always, of course, excepting those in Government service. They may, indeed, express their views in the House of Commons, but are liable to be brought to book for votes adverse to their party or even for abstention from voting on important occasions. And a rule which forbids them to speak even for a humanitarian purpose in the constituency of a member of the same party without that member's leave may result in a member who differs from his party on an important subject having few opportunities of expressing his views anywhere in the country. More especially is this the case if he be a member of a party strongly represented in the Commons.

The excessive rigidity of party, therefore, may rob Members of Parliament of that freedom of speech which is the very life-blood of democracy.

Moreover, it must inevitably make difficult the achievement of that unity which is essential in any time of national danger. When totalitarian rulers are pursuing frankly aggressive policies, political parties surely should be ready to sink their differences of internal policy in order to show as united a front as possible in all matters concerning national safety. Democracy is indeed in danger if in present circumstances the interests, or supposed interests, of parties can be placed before those of country. It is this lack of perspective, indeed of patriotism, which is one of the chief factors on which dictators appear to rely to ensure the success of their policies.

Yet if so, their memories are short, anyhow as regards this country. Nothing was more stirring in those early days of August, 1914, than the manner in which party differences, with a few exceptions, vanished with the

outbreak of hostilities. The writer well remembers that one of her first duties, as the wife of the then Unionist Member for West Perthshire, was to go on tour with the Liberal Member for Perth, addressing meetings explanatory of the war. That was only a tiny demonstration of the marvellous spirit of unity and service which made those days memorable.

If this unity could have shown itself even a week or two earlier war might have been averted, but the Irish Home Rule Bill then passing through the House of Commons was causing a deep and bitter cleavage between Left and Right.

It is all the more regrettable that today, when war clouds have been far more apparent on the horizon for some years past than in the years prior to 1914, and no domestic legislation is acutely dividing the parties, there is still such lack of general co-operation even between those who are agreed on this vital question of foreign policy.

Greater national unity along these lines should certainly be a factor in helping to avert the tragedy with which today we are threatened.

It appears then that democracy has it in its power to correct the weaknesses that are so apparent on the surface. But there is much more to be said than this. In nothing, for instance, is democracy so clearly superior to authoritarianism as in its system of justice. It is difficult for British people to realise that their age-long protection against illegal arrest and imprisonment without trial, their right to be tried in public, to engage counsel and to summon witnesses freely in their own defence, all of which they had come to regard as the heritage of every citizen of a civilised country, have vanished in countries under totalitarian rule. And no one knowing anything of the results of

the loss of these rights could fail to be revolted by the human suffering thus entailed.

But liberty does not only point the way to justice. Partly because of the free rein it gives to religious and humanitarian influences, and partly on account of the emphasis that it necessarily lays on the value of the individual, it makes possible a development of human kindliness and philanthropic effort in striking contrast to the harshness—too often, indeed, brutality—which unhappily we have learned to associate with dictatorships.

Again, the fullness of opportunity resulting from mental freedom must bring about a development of individual intellect, initiative and character, impossible under any system where there is rigid purging of libraries and bookshops, stern repression of the critical faculties, and all must echo slogans dictated by personal or racial prejudice or the desire for national aggrandisement. There is no one from whom the student or research worker in a democracy is not free to learn : no subject that he cannot make his own if he has the necessary ability. The contribution which he can make to the progress of his country, be it scientific, social, political or humanistic, has no external limits whatever placed upon it, and its expansion may therefore be indefinite.

The country in which the activity of the mind is cribbed and confined, must, on the other hand, sooner or later become an intellectual desert. And any impoverishment of the mind in days when success in war depends so largely on scientific research, inevitably must affect in the end a country's power to achieve success, even in the field to which it may have devoted special attention.

Democracies, then, not only carry within them the

means of remedying their own defects, but they can command a wealth and variety of service that enables them to progress in the arts both of peace and war in a manner impossible in a totalitarian State.

And because it is safe to say that the vast majority of all educated people desire peace, if democracies should today become involved in war, it could only be on account of the aggressive policies of totalitarian rulers. In that event, the freedom which is so precious would be at stake, and citizens of a democracy would fight with a conviction and a tenacity that would be unlikely to be felt by more than a minority of a dictator's subjects. Not only, therefore, on account of the superior development of intellect and initiative, but because of the universal appeal that freedom makes, in any clash of arms the victory should in the long run lie with those who would remain free.

But we are told by some that in any future war there will be neither victor nor vanquished, because any war must mean the very destruction of our civilisation. Granted that no country emerging, however victoriously, from a modern war can hope to escape terrible loss of precious lives, general impoverishment, and probably the destruction of many national treasures, yet if liberty be that without which life would be unthinkable, intolerable, to the citizens of a democracy, and if a struggle results in a democracy retaining the liberty so dear to it, can we say that its victory would be worthless, however costly? The greatest treasures of our civilisation are not things made with hands, however dear to us, but the ideals which have inspired our race. So long as we are free to preserve these and to develop others, can our civilisation really be said to have been destroyed? But if freedom be lost, civilisation, or that in it which we most value, will have

received a mortal blow.

No one who gives careful and unprejudiced consideration to present conditions can doubt that democracy today is in danger through the triumph of authoritarianism in other countries, the aggressive policy of some authoritarian rulers, and the extent to which they can exert influence in democratic States through skilful propaganda.

And it should not be forgotten that modern science, with its wireless, its aeroplanes, its armaments in general, has so greatly added to the power of governments that no one can say when, if a dictator be once installed in however freedom-loving a country, he can be unseated. The world has not yet seen this happen, and no one can reckon the toll of human life which would be necessary to achieve it. Surely, then, no service, no sacrifice, can be too great to prevent the loss of that freedom on the possession of which everything else we value most depends ?

By *Chairman of the*
ALFRED BARNES, M. P. *Co-operative Party*

TO declare oneself a democrat is a confession of faith. I would not favour the equalitarian principle implicit in a democratic system of society unless I was convinced that its results are superior to authoritarian systems, and that it is capable of practical application in accordance with our present-day productive capacity, our standards of morality, and our intelligence.

Temperamentally, I have found that I value freedom to express creative thought, and that I have seldom experienced any desire to use the responsible positions I have held to suppress opposing views. Freedom of expression and tolerance towards opposing views are as essential to democracy as liquids and solids are for the human body.

Ethically, I am a democrat because I believe democracy to be the only sound moral basis of human society. It is better that all who can should enjoy the opportunities of the age into which they are born than that a few should be endowed with special privileges.

I have been confirmed in my belief in a democratic system by the practical experience I have gained from a life-time spent in the service of the British Co-operative movement, in my view the best form of democracy the world has so far evolved.

What I mean by Democracy

In deciding whether a system is democratic or not, three tests should be applied to (1) its economic structure, (2) the forms of its political organisation, and (3) its results, as expressed in the happiness of the

individual men and women whom economic and political organisations are intended to serve.

The economic structure should be based upon the principle of partnership, *i.e.*, public, collective or co-operative ownership of land, the instruments of production and the machinery of distribution. Individual possession should not be of a character that become the means of exploiting community needs. They should arise from the use to which the individual applies his own reward for services rendered, and they should be expressed in forms of personal enjoyment, added comfort, and security.

The political organisation of a democratic State should be based upon the implicit acceptance of the equalitarian principle in the civil rights of the individual. I, generally, favour the expression of this principle through representative democracy based upon a system of adult suffrage, such as we have already established in the organised working-class movements, local authority and parliamentary elections. Many of the abuses within our present political experience which spring from vested monied interests directing, biased propaganda to mislead the public, would disappear in an industrial democracy founded on the principles of economic co-operation.

The final test, of course, must be the results that emerge from any industrial and political structure; results expressed in the happiness of the whole body of citizens, in their material comfort, in the freedom and tolerance of their relationships, and in the amount of leisure available for the cultural and spiritual development of their personalities.

In these days when dictatorship methods are so attractive, even to some who noisily profess their belief in democracy, it is refreshing to examine a great demo-

cratic movement like co-operation and to find there that the three tests I have referred to—partnership in industry, equalitarian rights in government, together with the mass enjoyment of the results—have been tried out for nearly a century with remarkable success.

Co-operative Democracy and Its Achievement

1844 is taken as the commencing year for the Co-operative Consumers movement. The men who launched this great economic discovery upon the world are known as the Twenty-eight Rochdale Pioneers, for it was in the Lancashire town of Rochdale that these weaver workmen opened their first co-operative store in a little back street called Toad Lane. In the intervening ninety-five years, flourishing co-operative stores have been established in practically every town, city, and village of Britain. Behind these distributive stores is a vast network of factories, workshops, mills and purchasing depots producing and merchanting for these retail shops.

The system has developed its own banking and insurance arrangements. Its wholesale, productive, and retail turnover now exceeds £400,000,000 a year. Its shareholding membership exceeds 8,000,000 and it employs over 350,000 persons. The extent to which it has already become an integral part of the nation's life can be judged from the fact that it is already responsible for supplying one-fourth of the nation's bread and one-fifth of the nation's milk supplies.

Success was achieved at the beginning and has been maintained because these simple sturdy folk of a century ago hit upon and practised the essential principles of successful democracy. They cherished freedom and tolerance in their personal relations within the co-operative society. They secured equality in the govern-

ment of their societies, irrespective of capital holding or sex. They distributed the profit or surplus on trade to those who made it—the consumers—through their purchases.

Theory of British Co-operation

The practical success of the British Co-operative movement demonstrates that its theory of consumer ownership and control, together with its evolution towards a form of what might be called "functional democracy" by growth and experience, is sound. Not less significant is the fact that the most spectacular successes of the State and local authorities are in those services where they have accepted to the full the theory that the service should be organised primarily in the interests of the consumers or users. Highways, parks, education, health, and water, all offer excellent examples.

The experience of the worker-producers themselves, in experiments they have made to win economic emancipation, is of value. Before Rochdale, there were numerous efforts to establish industrial production based upon workshop ownership and control. Despite enormous sacrifice, these efforts have little to show in the way of practical results. A contemporary effort was the formation, in the immediate post-war period, of the Building Guild to construct houses by the direct employment of the building operatives themselves. The demand and the opportunity existed, yet the attempt failed.

In the marketing boards we see a revival of the effort to organise industry from the producer end. This type of organisation was not advocated by any political party before 1929. The legislation that gave it birth was introduced by a Labour Government. Thus it would be

fair to describe marketing boards as a move towards National Socialism, although they leave private ownership and profit intact. As we gain experience of these Marketing Boards it can be observed that their eagerness is always to ration rather than expand the market. It was significant that, when the Milk Industry Bill of 1938 was under discussion, the Milk Marketing Board used to the full its powers to oppose the appointments of independent commissioners for the milk industry. The development of the system of controlled production, price, quotas, and licensing, all largely within the determination of the owner-producers to the exclusion of the worker-producer and consumer can only lead to Marketing Boards becoming commodity enclosure boards. Marketing Boards spring from the failure of farmers to organise agriculture as a service. For the State to reward farmers by conferring on them legislative privileges is fundamentally wrong. Marketing Boards are already developing towards cumbersome and expensive bureaucracies. They are dependent on amending legislation for adaptation to changing circumstances. Their administration tends to become increasingly rigid. I doubt whether important food industries like milk, fish, potatoes, and bacon can be run indefinitely on bureaucratic lines. The big, rich, influential producers will steadily eliminate the small producers. Marketing Boards have not brought town and country closer together. Indeed, they have precipitated a dangerous conflict between the rural farm and the urban home.

There is little evidence yet to justify this effort of the Government to plant a form of commodity control on the British people. Certainly they are not natural growths. Farmers apparently want these market monopolies, but object to the regulations inherent in such a

type of organisation.

Marketing Boards have already ceased to be a political asset to any political party. It will be interesting to observe the modifications that they are bound to undergo in the future.

Apart from State and municipal services, no effort has been made by governments to establish any form of democracy within industry itself.

In Britain, the people have undertaken this task themselves, through voluntary co-operation, and have succeeded to an extent that should encourage all who are prepared to accept the full implication of democracy. They have created in a single structure a political, economic and cultural democracy. Industry built up on this voluntary basis is so extensive now that it constitutes an alternative whether to rationalised capitalism, the National Socialism of Fascist countries, the Collectivism of Russia, the Marketing Boards of England, or State and municipal management and control.

Experience of voluntary co-operation has convinced me that there should be a large field for this form of industrial democracy even under a Socialist regime. Sufficient evidence has accumulated at home and abroad to warn us that we must not extol the State as such without taking into consideration the quality, morality, and equity of the results that flow from various forms of State action. Blind worship of the State may end in destroying instead of advancing democracy.

As one who believes in democracy, both politically and economically, I consider that there is much to be said for fostering the growth of democratic institutions by voluntary methods and particularly by industrial democracy on co-operative lines. By this method the individual is influenced to turn to and use a democratic process to meet a personal need. To gain an individual

advantage he enters into co-operation with his fellows. Thus his advantage is transformed from a personal gain into a mutual benefit. Industrial democracy growing upon this basis is more flexible and, I am inclined to think, will prove to be more durable than any form of organisation based upon compulsion.

Nearly a century of experience of co-operative democracy, both in Britain and abroad, proves that it works provided it is recognised within the law of the State. In its structure and functions, it becomes adjustable to the needs, habits, and environment of each State, and, subsequently, to each locality within that State. For instance, in Great Britain co-operation is primarily an industrial consumers' movement. In New Zealand and Denmark it has been most successful as an agricultural producers' movement.

In Great Britain there are some 1,100 co-operative distributive societies, members of the Co-operative Union. Co-operative societies in seaside resorts like Bournemouth and Torquay conduct their business within a different environment to, say, Sheffield or Wigan. The principles, structure, and functions of the societies are the same although the views and outlook of the members, reacting to varying local conditions, may be very different on many matters. The fact, however, that each society is completely autonomous and self-governing avoids the stress and strains and divisions which arise in democratic movements when decisions are uniformly enforced from a central body.

It has been this clear recognition of the essential principle of democracy—the freedom of the units to find the limit of willing co-operation—that has enabled the Co-operative movement to grow under diverse conditions and yet to maintain its unity of purpose and avoid any splits or breakaway movements in the ninety-five

years of its existence.

Of course there are disadvantages in an industrial democracy, based on the local autonomy of its member societies and the voluntary attachment of the individual to his society. But the real test is, does it work ? The answer is definitely—Yes.

It can always be argued that where some central body is in advance of its constituents, then with compulsory powers it can accelerate progress by gingering up the laggards. I do not think, however, that there is any conclusive evidence yet that, as a general rule, initiative, risk, courage or creative work springs from central authorities. I rather favour the view that change springs more readily from the circumference, parts or individuals.

Finally, I am a democrat because I want to see a condition of affairs that will provide an equal opportunity for service and enjoyment to all.

To extend educational facilities to the masses is to enlarge the area of creative and inventive capacity within the community. The evidence we have already gained of improved education, even under the capitalist system, supports this democratic view. The variety and rate of progress in all walks of life has increased enormously in recent years with improved educational standards.

It may be true that, in so far as this increased knowledge is diverted to war purposes, science may destroy civilisation before it can emancipate mankind from poverty, disease and tyranny. This threat is disconcerting to the general theory of democracy, but how far it is a passing phase in man's struggle towards the light time alone can show.

I do not take the catastrophic view of the present world situation, although the dangers of the totalitarian

threat to world democracy should not be underestimated.

In the conflict of the democratic and totalitarian ideologies, the advantages appear to be definitely on the side of the democracies, despite the efforts of their leading statesmen to give them away. The dictatorship states appeared to gain an initial advantage from the rapidity of their decisions to arm and their ruthless use of violence. The resources and staying powers of the democratic nations, however, now they are being mobilised, appear to be more than capable of meeting any challenge to their existence. The remarkable resistance of the Chinese and Spanish peoples to unprovoked aggression backed by overwhelming armed forces suggests how quickly the position will be reversed when the democratic peoples of the world are prepared to combine and meet force with force. The capacity of peoples to defend their land and liberties has been proven. What has still to be demonstrated is that the Jack Boot rule of Fascism can call forth the same heroic spirit from the masses.

That there has been a rapid growth of the dictatorship spirit in government and industry throughout the world cannot be gainsaid. Its feeding grounds have been the widespread disillusionment of the masses in almost every country at the frustration of their hopes and aspirations following the 1914-18 war. In both the vanquished and victorious nations the peoples were denied any compensation for their unprecedented sacrifices. Politicians bungled, muddled and frittered away the vital years atter the War until despair took possession of the people and made them easy victims for the demagogues turned dictators.

But dictatorship is already proving to be Dead Sea fruit.

In dictatorships, as in democratic countries, it is apparent that the heart of the peoples is not in these gigantic armament programmes. Longer hours of labour, lowering standards of life, increasing insecurity are producing the inevitable revulsion of feelings. The response of world opinion to the quality of thought and expression in the speeches and leadership of President Roosevelt appear to me to be full of vital significance to democrats at the present moment. It is a sign that democratic opinion is moving beyond national limitations. It is a new and hopeful omen in internationalism.

Whereas the actions of dictators have emphasised national patriotism, the response to President Roosevelt indicates that world opinion will respond to and accept a true democratic leadership from wherever it comes.

If this lesson is grasped quickly and men and women who really believe in democracy will sternly set themselves new standards of conduct in public affairs, there is hope that this period, instead of proving to be the graveyard of democracy, can be its renaissance. People in all walks of life and, particularly, in the various political parties within which they express themselves should distinguish more clearly between the ends we seek and the means by which we hope to reach them. One often hears the expression that if only a leader would emerge equal, in the democratic sense, to Hitler or Mussolini, how great would be the response! Whilst it is true that in the most critical period of British history we have been caught short with unparalleled mediocrity in our political leadership, it is also true that great numbers of the people are less attached to party politics than previously, and that a growing body of influential opinion in the country sees, with a rapidly increasing sense of unity and consciousness, that

the vital foundations of Britain's greatness in its free institutions at home and abroad are being threatened.

A mass movement of democratic opinion compelling action within our political system to preserve the basic conditions that enable democracy to function would, I believe, have more profound and beneficial consequences to humanity than further eruptions of magnetic or abnormal personalities. That faith in democracy exists in Britain now, no one with experience of political affairs can doubt. Because it does exist and is developing in all parties and among all classes, I have felt my faith in the spirit of democracy grow stronger and not weaker as the international crisis works itself out.

I observe throughout the world the moral, law-abiding, and democratic opinion slowly but steadfastly gathering cohesion and strength to defend what it realises are the precious things of life. The retreat of the democracies from Fascism is slowing down. The revolt against the policy of surrender is spreading. Taken at first by surprise by the brutal directness of the dictators, dismayed at the betrayal of Czecho-Slovakia by the Premiers of Britain and France, finding themselves unprepared for meeting force with force, the democratic peoples acquiesced in the early stages of Fascist aggression. World opinion, however, would have been more ready to meet the challenge of Hitler had it been made in January, 1939, than it was in September, 1938.

Whilst there is time, I think all those who place the fact of democracy as being greater than its forms should exert a resolute pressure to mobilise the full spiritual and material resources of the British peoples to defend and preserve all that we, who profess ourselves democrats hold dear.

By
RONALD CARTLAND

M. P. for the King's Norton Division of Birmingham

WE are constantly being asked nowadays to contrast our system of politics with that of the dictatorships. For the last twenty years Sovietism has issued a challenge on its own account, but the great majority of British people have persistently refused to take it seriously as a form of government for this country. In its early years, Italian Fascism was regarded half-humorously, and even its most ardent admirers did not go so far as to advocate its application here. While some of those who are genuinely anxious to welcome Mr. Stalin's regime as an enlightened civilising influence have been puzzled by the purges, many who criticised Signor Mussolini's restrictions on liberty and his militarist philosophy were attracted by the punctuality of the train services in the new Italy, the retention of the Royal Family and the Concordat with the Vatican. The Duce, too, declared that Fascism was not for export. It was not until the Abyssinian adventure that the English, as a whole unwillingly, recognised that they were confronted with a challenge in the international sphere. Nothing which happened in Russia and nothing which happened in Italy caused more than a mere handful of people to foresee that democracy might thereby be challenged at home.

It was when Herr Hitler came to power in Germany, and in the years that followed, that our people began to realise that they were confronted with a challenge that might affect each one of them in their daily lives. And now, in the face of brutal aggression and manifest intention of domination, no one is left in doubt that England is faced with a conflict in which

her whole being is involved, in which there can be no compromise and in which the future of the Christian world is at stake.

The most serious aspect of the conflict only gradually came to be appraised. National Socialism issued a challenge to our existence, not merely through force of arms, but through the force of ideas. The fundamental beliefs on which our national character rests, the ideals so deeply rooted in our people that they are unconsciously accepted, were called to account. Our people found themselves almost inarticulate in their own defence. They could not express their faith, they fumbled for words, and they watched with dismay the pathetically feeble attempts of their leaders to meet the new forces in Europe with appropriate language and action.

The boys and girls in Germany, Italy and Russia were being daily instructed in their own nation's philosophy of life and purpose. The spirit of their nation meant something to them. Our adults, let alone our children, were quite unable to formulate in their minds their position as citizens of an Empire or the part that the Empire should play in the world's development.

The words "democracy" and "freedom" are bandied about and become the counterfeit coin of many a politician. But it is with England that our people are concerned. The challenge to which men seek desperately for an answer is not from the dictatorships as such, but from Germany and Italy : for Italy has learnt her lesson from Berlin and finds the methods of Fascism are suitable for export in furtherance of Italian aims.

The battle today, however, is in fact between Totalitarianism and Christianity. It is because we

have refused to recognise this that we have attempted compromise. There can be no compromise. The Christian world is the world of the spirit. In so far as man is concerned, Christianity demands respect for each human personality. Totalitarianism can have no respect for individuals ; its very ideal is the subordination of the individual to the common will.

In practice, of course, there may be compromise, but in the ideals to which States aim, there can be no compromise. Totalitarianism is less inclined to waver from its path than those who oppose it. In the perfect world, as the Christian envisages the world on earth, there would be no need for compulsion in any form. As it is, society finds itself forced to compel some of its members, who are not prepared willingly to make restrictions on their own desires, to perform acts which it deems essential or to refrain from those which it regards as harmful. But that this is, in an evil world, direful necessity should be recognised.

What is commonly called "democracy" is no more than the first steps to the attainment of Christian principles in the practice of living in society.

There is an important distinction between representative and democratic government. Our English parliamentary system has something in it of both. Democratic government implies that the leaders of the people are in fact the people's servants. Representative government is based on the principle of trust. Representative government may easily degenerate into tyranny, but democratic government suffers from almost inevitable corruption. Again, one must seek the ideal. Should man govern himself or be governed ? Is the title of "governor" to be coveted ? Only if the *fuehrer-prinzip* is approved.

In democratic government there are more numer-

ous safeguards for the individuals who disagree with their fellow men, though courage in the minority is required more frequently and in greater measure than charity in the majority.

Leadership does normally imply the surrender of freewill. To the Christian there can be only one absolute allegiance—to God. This should be openly avowed and generally accepted, for it is the foundation of the whole structure of democracy. Leadership must be judged from the standard of what demands it makes upon the common man. There is no better definition of leadership than the business of preventing the abandonment of the long aim for the sake of the short view. Many a statesman prides himself on being a realist when in fact he is a rationalist. To deny the spiritual basis of democracy is to destroy at once the only argument in its favour.

The world problem today is the problem of existence. The dictatorships and the democracies face identical issues from the growth and development of industrialism during the last century. It is the major transformation of the modern age. It has already affected, must affect still more, every condition of our life. Is it possible to find in the solution to the tremendous economic dislocations of today a place for the free development of each individual? Industry is of itself dynamic. The structure of the new authoritarian states, the philosophy which underlies them, marches in time with modern industry. If the democracies in an effort to keep up and keep in step sacrifice man to the machine, the conflict between Christianity and Totalitarianism will temporarily be over. For there is no question which system is more efficient and Totalitarianism, because of its nature, must absorb every activity of man. It may well be that

what have become to be regarded as the visible sign of democracy will be retained. The Reichstag continues to meet, and Signor Mussolini's Corporative State presents a facade of self-government. But the spirit of democracy will cease to be, and soon the results will appear of the systematic and intensive training of youth, the like of which has not been known.

What we must settle at once is whether we rate freedom above equality. For divisions of opinion on beliefs which are fundamental must weaken our defence against those who would destroy us. Why are we assailed? Our material possessions naturally attract those whose materialist philosophy is openly asserted. Our place in the world is due to those possessions. But, shorn of them, should we make no contribution to the development of mankind?

To me, there is only one explanation of man's existence: that with God's help and through His mercy men and nations may add their quota to the stream of life. Can it be seriously contemplated that all men's contributions are the same? It is the variety and assortment in the qualities of men and nations that make the sum total of life. Respect and acknowledgment of each man's opportunity to add his quota entail that tolerance and equal justice which are possible only in a democracy.

It is at the shrine of equality that the totalitarian nations worship. Equality involves subjugation and repression. The development of man in God's image implies freedom of judgment between right and wrong. In totalitarian States there are no right and wrong. There is only the morality of the State and for the sake of equality laws take the place of morals

Only through freedom will man find salvation. Only in freedom can a man add to his natural worth.

What, then, is our defence against democracy's foes and rivals?

Let us recognise first our failings, the most serious of which is the growth in power of the political party machines and the centring of power in the hands of a few individuals. In the totalitarian countries the party rules the State. The faith which it instils into its followers, the rigid obedience it demands of them is comparable only to a religious order, and the faith itself to a religion. In England the party system has grown increasingly rigid and the party machines more powerful. Men who hold views contrary to their party leaders are termed rebels, and subservience is held of more account than originality. Members who are not in step with their party whips are threatened with expulsion and attempts are made to undermine their position in their constituencies. Measures are taken to prevent their voicing their opinions, both inside and outside the House of Commons.

Is Parliament any safeguard for our liberties? The history of the September 1938 crisis, which resulted in the Munich Agreement, provides an answer. Even the King's privileges were flouted. Those few weeks witnessed unconstitutionalism run mad. But this is not an isolated case. Power is passing from the hands of Parliament into the hands of the executive and of the Civil Service, and with the assistance of the party machines the process is being accelerated.

The large Government majorities of 1931 and 1935 may turn out to be in retrospect national disasters, for it is the feeling of security from defeat on the one side and the sense of hopelessness in attack on the other that has entirely changed the character of Parliament.

Remarkably, at the same time, the structure of

society has remained unchanged. Varying degrees of poverty and riches classify our nation. For few in life is there any security. For the rich comes power, in spheres far removed from the origin of their wealth. And if so many of our people strive for wealth it is because, without it, they are denied any existence beyond that of slaves.

Is it possible, through the present parliamentary system, to develop our capitalist society into a complete democratic State ? That is our immediate aim, and Parliament still appears to be the most suitable instrument. Parliament will undoubtedly have to undergo radical change, but Parliament in its present form is only a symptom of our present attempt at democracy. It is not sacrosanct.

We have to show by action that the democratic State is dynamic through the individuals who compose it ; that in the economic and political spheres democracy offers opportunity for the natural vocation of men ; and that through free associations in the democratic State, men may safeguard and provide for their spiritual life, embracing the use of their talents and their natural faculties.

If we have made little progress so far towards these ends it is, I believe, because we have lacked just what the international events of the last few years may now have given us : a purpose.

The severest charge against those who have ruled our country since the last war is that they have omitted to care for the character of our people. Platitudes about democracy defined according to taste are not enough. Frequently action has run counter to words, as, in particular, in our foreign policy.

Has there been design in the nation's government ? One can hardly believe it, for it is impossible to

recognise any common standard by which such a design would be measured.

Anyone can make a list of ills ; what is disturbing is that no real attempt is being made to cure them. Inefficiency and apathy, democracy's greatest dangers, are present in high places.

Yet if Parliament has declined in public esteem, the various voluntary societies are probably today more virile than ever. Freedom as an ideal does not run counter to personal service ; and there can seldom have been an age when personal service was more encouraged and catered for. But there seems to be little faith behind it, and the circumstances of the age make it necessary for government to give expression to it.

People seem almost desperate for leadership. They would, given the opportunity, respond to any call for sacrifice. Any government in a democracy would be foolhardy indeed to ignore this.

It is belief in the ultimate destiny of man which must drive us forward. We must propound our programmes and strive for what we believe to be progress ; in the end it will be the Christian spirit which will uphold us and maybe give to our efforts in the cause of democracy the noble character of a crusade.

By *Member of Parliament*
SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS *for Bristol East*

IN the days before the last war I was almost entirely politically unconscious. Brought up in a traditionally Conservative middle-class family, seldom meeting anyone other than Conservatives, I accepted that environment quite naturally and from time to time participated in some election or other political activity in the same way that I engaged in any other sport or social event.

I was neither aware of democracy nor of politics in any real sense of the word. The course of events, so far as I was concerned, seemed to run smoothly, and there appeared to me no reason why I or any other young man of my acquaintance should trouble himself with political controversies or electoral disputes.

Educated as a chemist and with the prospect of a professional career at the Bar before me, I concentrated upon my studies, varying them with visits abroad whenever the opportunity and the money was available.

During the years 1914 to 1918, like most others, I was too much concentrated upon the particular task in hand to think of other matters. In 1916, however, I had a complete breakdown from overwork, and from that time till the end of the War I was largely an invalid, with much time for reading and for thinking.

In the result, by the time the War was over I had become aware—indeed, very aware—of the appalling and useless tragedy that the world had brought upon itself.

At this point my political consciousness was born.

I was still, however, living in a tradition of Conservatism, though the result of the War experiences upon my father had very greatly changed his political outlook. His sense of the interference with all liberty of

conscience, and of the injustices wrought upon the common people, had convinced him that some new outlook was necessary if civilisation were to be saved from destruction.

For some time I concentrated upon international work, especially through the medium of a world organisation of Christian Churches.

It soon became apparent to me, however, that no amount of good feeling or goodwill would ever alter the hard economic facts of the world and that direct, political intervention was essential, if an environment was to be created in which peace could be permanently established.

It was at this period that for the first time I turned my mind to the consideration of national policies as distinct from international.

I found little time to devote to this subject, as I was by then very busily engaged in building up my profession, but I soon realised that it was only the common people, those who had no vested interests opposed to change, who could bring about the alterations in our economic life that were essential for the establishment of peace.

I discovered, too, that in this country of ours the conditions of the workers were appallingly bad. I had long been familiar with the disease-ridden hovels which in many rural areas passed for houses, and the tragically low wage levels of the agricultural workers. But for the first time I began to appreciate what the urban slums really signified in terms of suffering, starvation, and ill-health.

My professional work in connection with the acquisition of land for housing schemes and for new municipal enterprises of all kinds, especially in and around London, took me into slum areas, of the meaning of

which I had before been completely unconscious though I had lived and worked in London all my life!

Experience gradually taught me that the conditions of the common people, whether domestically in our own country, imperially in our Empire, or internationally in foreign countries, were the result of the working of political systems which prevented the mass of the people from determining their own conditions. It was obvious that if the workers were conscious of their political power they would exercise it—if they could—to attain that degree of justice and freedom which was the right of all men and women, and the lack of which throughout the world had culminated in the disastrous results of 1914-18.

Our own democracy as a political machine was being manipulated most flagrantly by those who had in their hands the economic power of the country, the landed estates, the great businesses and financial institutions of all kinds.

The whole of our education system, too, was aimed at turning out a privileged ruling class through the public schools and universities, on the one hand, and a working class through the elementary schools, on the other, thus seeking to perpetuate the power of the small, economically strong upper class.

There could be no hope of peace, justice or freedom while such a maldistribution of wealth, knowledge and power lasted. Some change in the control of our democratic machinery was necessary.

In the post-War period we had all witnessed the start and the development of the amazing economic experiment on Socialist lines in Russia. In that country the chaotic conditions left upon the defeat of Tsarism, a sequel to centuries of the most cruel exploitation of the people, compelled the use of rigid dictatorial methods

for the purpose of initiating a new form of social and economic development, aimed at giving to the working class the predominant power which their numbers and their past suffering warranted.

It is one of the greatest marvels of the world that a small group of men should have been able to bring the order of a great industrialised country out of that chaos of feudalism.

It was not unnatural, as this experiment developed from one successful result to another, that many people should turn their minds to the question of whether this was the only way by which the peoples' power could be established, by force through revolution.

The experiences of the democracies had been, that although some degree of liberalism and social reform was possible without unduly antagonising those who controlled the economic power of the country, yet such progress always stopped short of giving any decisive economic power to the mass of the common people.

The ruling class in Europe were satisfied to allow the people the forms of democracy, provided they themselves retained the substantial and effective control of the machinery of government. This they accomplished by a wise use of their power of patronage combined with economic pressure, relying, as they were justified in doing, upon the political ignorance of the people. It was easy to delude an electorate by specious promises, which were seldom fulfilled, or by threats which frightened the masses into political obedience.

Political education and consciousness was, however, growing rapidly during the War years and after, as was well illustrated in our own country by the remarkable increase in the strength of the Labour Party in the difficult years following the War. In 1924 the first Labour Government came to office with the support of

liberals, to be destroyed by the ruling class at the appropriate moment through the scares of the Campbell Case and the Zinovieff letter.

In this period, after the 1924 Labour Government and before 1929, a great many of the younger generation were questioning themselves as to whether democracy could ever succeed in bringing about those economic changes that were necessary to stabilise our civilisation upon a just and peaceful basis. A number were making the answer, "No," and were, as a result, contemplating some imitation of the revolutionary methods that had been employed in Russia and other countries.

Fundamentally, however, the ordinary Englishman, Scotsman, or Welshman are not revolutionaries. There have been great events in our fight for liberty which demonstrate that our people have been prepared for almost any sacrifice in the cause of their own freedom.

The riots that preceded the passing of the Reform Bill in such cities as Bristol, which I am for this reason amongst many others proud to represent in Parliament, the Chartist movement, of which this year we celebrate the centenary, and a thousand other incidents in our history prove that we will fight to win their liberty, even though we may have only a rudimentary idea of the precise political demands that they are supporting.

But these struggles have almost always been within our democracy, for though revolutionary in their concept they were not revolutionary in their appeal.

There never developed any very considerable body of revolutionary thought in this country, certainly not sufficient to encourage anyone to believe in the effectiveness of revolution as a method of changing our social and economic system.

There have been, however, many leaders who have sought to stimulate the working class to more active

and indeed revolutionary demands as a means of creating amongst the workers that "will to power" which might show itself through the machinery of our democracy. It was this continual struggle through trade unions, co-operative and political organisations that eventually led to the formation of the Labour Party, as the political embodiment of the workers' will to power.

The most nearly revolutionary incident in our post-War history was the General Strike of 1926. That strike was undertaken for a political purpose, though it was expressed in industrial terms. The miners' problem of wages and hours was an industrial problem, but the Government had come to the aid of the mine-owners to assist them in the acute difficulties caused to our coal export trade by the return to the gold standard and the post-War economic condition of other countries who had been our customers.

It was because the demand made was implicitly for some fresh Governmental action to solve the problems confronting the mining industry, and the mine-workers in particular, that the General Strike took place, and necessarily constituted a challenge to the Government of the day. Undoubtedly those who organised and ordered that strike ought to have realised that they were adopting revolutionary tactics. Had it succeeded, it could only have been upon the basis that the workers had compelled the Government by direct, as distinguished from parliamentary, action to do as they wished.

It failed, not because the response of the workers as a whole weakened, but because those who were responsible for its leadership realised, too late, the full implications of their own actions. It was the fear of success and not of failure that caused the strike to be called off.

The sequel to this revolutionary attempt was the crushing of the miners and the deprivation of many trade union rights previously recognised. The necessary change in the law was brought about by the Trades Disputes Act, 1927, an open attempt of the ruling class to cripple the political power of the workers.

Direct industrial action for political ends is only possible of success if those who plan it are prepared to carry it through to its logical conclusion, the seizing of political power.

Unless that end is contemplated and prepared for, apart from a demonstration strike of a few hours or a day, the general strike cannot be used with success. It remains, however, a powerful weapon in the hands of the organised workers available in the final emergency, if ever it comes, when democracy has broken down and there is no other way by which that freedom which we possess can be preserved.

When other classes desert the methods of democracy or so misuse democracy as to threaten its destruction, then there can be no argument against retaliation by the common people in similar terms. For the working class, in such circumstances, to insist upon the literal application of constitutional methods is for them to invite defeat accompanied by a complete loss of their liberty and the suppression of all their industrial, co-operative and political organisations. It was such a course that contributed so largely to the final overthrow of the German working-class movement.

It is only in such a last resort, when the protective power of democracy is no longer available to the common people, that the general strike becomes of use as a political weapon within a democracy.

I have given this setting for my opinions and ac-

tions to emphasise the fact that those who examined political forces first in the years after the War found themselves in no normal political surroundings. Indeed, the pre-War abnormal had become the post-War normal so far as politics were concerned. At no time since the War have we experienced the normal two-party system in operation as it was before 1914. The old underlying assumptions that democracy was the inevitable form of government for progressive Western civilisation, and that by slow degrees it must develop a system of social and economic life which would bring a greater and greater degree of justice, comfort and peace to the common people, disappeared as realities in the welter of the World War.

There remained, however, many people, brought up in the atmosphere of pre-War political life, who continued to regard these assumptions as valid. The War generation had been largely wiped out, the keenest and best of our younger generation were victims of the great tragedy, with the result that the succeeding generation found itself separated by a great gulf ideologically from the older pre-War politicians.

After the War we had entered upon a new era of political development. Communism had emerged and triumphed in Russia and elsewhere, though it had already been overthrown in some countries, such as Hungary and Bavaria. Fascism had come to power in Italy, and there were signs of grave political disturbances in half a dozen other countries.

The struggle between Fascist and democratic ideals had begun.

Internationally, the League of Nations was regarded by many as a great semi-democratic experiment. In the earlier periods of the post-War epoch, the peoples were optimistic enough to believe that such an

organisation could become a great power for peace in the world.

What many overlooked was the fact that the effectiveness of the League was entirely dependent upon the representatives of the various nations being in reality representative of the thoughts and wishes of the mass of their people. Such an institution, based upon the idea of co-operation for the good of all peoples, could only function properly if founded upon true democratic government in the States represented. Otherwise, it would inevitably tend to become nothing but the cloak for power policies of rival groups of capitalist and Imperialist interests.

This was in fact the outcome. As democracy disappeared in country after country, and as democratic governments became less responsive to the true feelings of their people, the League developed into a more and more ineffectual instrument for peace. Its most virile period was while the Labour Party was in power in our own country, for then our Government responded most closely in its policies to the true desires of the people.

But in the end the League has been abandoned, not because the peoples of the world reject the ideals and hopes that lie behind this brave attempt to save civilisation, but because the unsuccessful attempt of the governments of the Western democracies to turn the League into an instrument of power politics has brought discredit and destruction upon the League itself.

It was shortly after the General Election of 1929 that I decided that I could not discharge my duties as a citizen by concentrating my energies upon nothing except my own profession. I felt compelled to offer my services to the party of the common people, the Labour

Party, and to enter directly into the political struggle. Not long after I found myself as a Labour Minister struggling with others against the difficulties inherent in a capitalist democracy with its clumsy and out-of-date machinery of government, which still remains substantially unaltered.

The whole of our Parliamentary procedure has been built up on the basis of hindering any change unless there is overwhelming power in Parliament behind that change. Every device for delay and prevention has been perfected over long years of trial and error. So serious did this become, even before the War, that the Liberal Governments of that time found themselves forced to amend the procedure of the House of Commons by introducing devices like the closure and the guillotine which would enable some modicum of progressive legislation to be passed. But even so the possible output is far less than the needs of the present day.

The fight over the Finance Bill of Mr. Lloyd George, when the House of Commons sat night after night into the small hours of the morning, was typical of the facility of opposition, and resulted in the passing of an Act intended to put some curb on the hitherto unlimited power of the House of Lords.

When the Labour Government found itself for the second time in office, nothing but the most courageous and determined leadership could have accomplished any real advance. This was lacking, in its place was found weak and wavering opportunism, aimed at retaining office at all cost.

The cost was the electoral debacle of 1931, following upon the desertion of the Labour leaders.

This desertion was, I believe, inspired by a quite genuine belief in those who deserted, that in times of

crisis a Labour Party is unfit for and unable to cope with the government of the country, since it will be almost inevitably opposed by those who wield the economic power. They therefore considered it better to join up with the ruling class in the hope that they might bring to bear some ameliorative influence upon the policies and legislation of the Conservative Party. Subsequent events proved how vain was that hope.

There are still some today within the Labour Party who hold such a view in regard to any deep international crisis, and we may yet witness on some future occasion a response to the cry for national unity by such persons, who will be prepared to join in behind a so-called "government of national concentration."

This fresh departure from the traditional form of our political democracy, which was built up and developed on the two-party system, increased the already existing confusion amongst the electors and caused a grave set-back to all the forces of progress.

The results of the 1931 election, even accounting for its panic nature, were so wholly unrepresentative that they gave a fresh impetus to anti-democratic propaganda.

For a time there seemed a real possibility of a Fascist movement arising in this country, though it soon became clear that no foreign form of Fascism was likely to be able to compete with the country gentleman Fascism of our ruling class, so invisibly and so adroitly administered in small doses, which are cumulative in their effect upon democracy.

The genuinely progressive forces who had been trapped by the cry of "National unity in the face of national danger" soon realised their position, but the facade of a "National" Government was maintained

by flaunting the empty masks of "National Liberal" and "National Labour" beside the substantial and active head and body of Conservatism.

Meanwhile, the world picture had been changing with kaleidoscopic speed.

Hitler coming to power in Germany, arising out of the ashes of a self-immolated social democracy, forms the focal point for attack on democracy and freedom throughout the world.

The anti-working-class drive which is the basis for the Fascist attack on democracy is most manifest in the activity of the dictators, but they earn the sympathy of those who, like themselves, fear, and so desire to suppress, the power of the common people.

It is this attitude of mind in so many of our leaders that has led them to sacrifice democracy after democracy to the most brutal force even at the cost of imperilling their own Imperial interests. Germany, Italy and Japan, the members of the Anti-comintern Pact, have been courted and treated as bulwarks against Bolshevism.

Even income-tax payers as a class will regret today that we allowed ourselves and that the French Right allowed themselves to become the silent partners in this pact, and that our fear of Bolshevism has prevented us for so long from co-operating with Russia. That is the reason why they have refused to enlist the aid of Russia against the menace of Fascism. There has been no greater deception practised on the middle class than that of the Bolshevist menace. It has been used to divorce them from the working class, thereby rendering both the more easy victims of Fascism. How ingeniously this propaganda has been worked can be seen by anyone who cares to read that greatest classic of post-war history, *Fallen Bastions*, by G. E. Gedye, which

describes the process as it was carried through in Central Europe.

Democracy is now everywhere on the retreat. In many of the countries where it flourished in its most virile state after the war, as in Austria and Czechoslovakia and Spain, the bright light of democracy has been totally eclipsed by the black and brown shadows of Fascism. In others, such as France, Great Britain and the U. S. A., it shows the most distressing signs of apathy and decay. It can no longer be said that it is the perpetual and invincible bulwark of the freedom of the people.

These bastions are indeed falling and the defence of the remaining fortifications of liberty becomes daily more difficult throughout the world.

Yet I am more than ever today a democrat, and the reasons are simple.

My desire is to win justice for the ordinary people of the world; to save the decencies of our civilisation so far as they still remain; to renew the faith and confidence of our own and other nations in their democratic power, and to see the world once more on the highway of peaceful and progressive development, turned back from its retreat into the jungle-like chaos of prehistoric times. That development I desire to see brought about by the people themselves. Autocracy, even in its most benevolent form, is no compensation for the loss of freedom and the right of the people to govern themselves, however foolish or unwise we may consider their actions.

I am convinced that a struggle is now being waged for the survival of democracy as the means of protecting the liberties of civilisation. I must therefore do whatever I am able to bring about the salvation of our own democratic institutions, even though they may

not be perfect. It is not at the moment a question of how far we can advance in the next five years through political democracy to economic freedom. I wish that it were.

The problem is how best we can rally the forces of democracy so as to stem the retreat, and thus be in a position to discuss once more the direction of our advance.

It is certain that if we can manage to preserve a free democracy, we shall inevitably go forward to those economic and social changes which Socialists like myself regard as essential if the national or international evils of our society are to be remedied.

That is for the future. Today the political struggle is between democracy and peace, on the one hand, and Fascism, brutality and war on the other, a struggle which has become intensified even in the last few days as I write these lines. I am on the side of democracy, because it alone can keep open the path for progress which Fascism will close for decades, or it may be for centuries. I am convinced that there is today no other possible way by which we can defend our freedom or accomplish the necessary changes of our economic system to bring justice to our people. Once Fascism is implanted in our country, there are no known means by which we can displace it. The old days when revolutionaries could overthrow autocrats with the help of a few pikes or rifles are for ever gone. The vastly complex machinery of force, that the ingenuity of man has developed, places such a power in the hands of those who control the armed forces that it is well-nigh impossible to overthrow them, once they have seized that power.

It will only be when some major cataclysm disintegrates the whole civilised structure of a nation that

an opportunity will be given to overthrow a totalitarian government founding its power on force.

It was for that reason that so many anti-Fascists in Germany were profoundly disappointed with the events at Munich. They had looked for the disintegration of the Fascist regime which would have followed upon a successful resistance by international morality against Nazi power politics, and which would have followed even more quickly in the unlikely event of Herr Hitler's resorting to war against the overwhelming forces which might at that time have been ranged against him.

There can be no more terrible condemnation of totalitarian government or of our civilisation than that such forms of government have been developed as make the people look to war as one of the means of winning freedom from the oppression and brutality of their own government.

It is one thing to be a democrat, to desire the continuance of democracy in our own country and in other countries, and quite another thing to succeed in attaining that desire.

Many of us have desired most earnestly the saving of Spanish democracy. Some of us have worked our very best to that end, and yet, in spite of all that has been done, we have failed. The reason for that failure is clear; we have no control over the actions of our Government.

We shall no more save British democracy than we did Spanish democracy unless we are now prepared to take some very much more effective action. Pressure of public opinion and protest have proved unavailing upon a government entrenched behind a large and obedient parliamentary majority, and the acute danger that presents itself today is that our democratic institutions may go by default, that our democracy will

perish of inantioin, and be followed by a form of totalitarian government that will gradually dragoon our people into the loss of all their hard-won liberties. I have already considered why, under this Government, we have done all that we should not have done in encouraging Fascism and left undone all that we should have done in bringing together the anti-Fascist forces for mutual protection, and tackling the real economic evils that are at the root of war.

This same attitude marks our Imperialist policy in India, in the West Indies, and our other colonial dominions. Free speech, free Press, free association, are all of them sacrificed to the cause of "preserving law and order." There are concentration camps in India, Northern Ireland and other parts of the colonial Empire just as there are in Germany or Italy.

In our own country the same tendencies are apparent. The Trades Disputes Act of 1927 was the first distinctly Fascist legislation since the War in this country, and it has been followed by such indicia of repression as the Sedition Act, the suppression of the right to demonstrate, the introduction of an "officer class" into the police, and the attempt to impose restraints upon the freedom of the younger unemployed, all of which lead directly away from the liberty of the people.

The legislation for the care of the unemployed, for the imposition of tariffs, and for the planning of industry and agriculture, whereby control is taken out of the hands of Parliament and is placed in the power of so-called non-political bodies or of the producers is typical of the corporative Fascist State.

Subtle influences are being brought to bear upon the Press by the threat to deprive them of legitimate sources of information, and a veiled censorship of newsreels and other forms of publicity is being exercised.

These are not open and avowed and are often unknown to the general public, but their power is nonetheless great.

These are the signs of pro-Fascism in the sphere of domestic government, but what renders the action of our present Government so dangerous is its complete failure to respond to the demands of the common people, its open neglect of the primary ideas of democracy.

Nothing has emphasised this feature so strongly as the failure of the National Register. Although the campaign in favour of the Register has secured the nominal support of all political parties, yet a host of democratic organisations, such as the Trades and Labour Councils, have passed resolutions refusing to participate.

This is not because such people are unmindful of their duties to themselves and their country or because they are afraid to serve ; it is due to their conviction that our present National Government is intent, not upon saving the democracy and freedom of the mass of the people, but upon preserving the rights and privileges of a favoured few.

It is in these circumstances we have a right to hold that the National Government is pro-Fascist and that the people dread the outcome of its continuance in power.

A grave prospect faces Great Britain unless the people are prepared to act and act quickly. The mere profession of democracy certainly will not serve us. We must use our democratic rights effectively if we are to save our freedom.

The history of post-War Europe contains many lessons, for those who are prepared to learn, of the power and the dangers of the new political forces that are at work.

In the face of the vigorous and disciplined onslaught of the mercenaries of Fascism, democracy is for the first time fighting a force which has proved as strong as or stronger than itself in many countries. A new technique has been developed whereby a small minority can use the people to accomplish their own loss of freedom. In that struggle many democracies have already perished, and those by no means the weakest. They have, however, each one of them displayed at critical moments a rigid and paralysing adherence to traditional doctrines and tactics, which have rendered them no match for Fascism. It has only been after defeat that they have realised the need to change their tactics. The words "too late" should be inscribed upon the tombstone of every lost democracy in Europe.

Added to this has been the ineffectiveness of democratic Governments, their failure to respond to the urgent needs of their people. This has first weakened and then destroyed the faith of their own supporters, thus leading to their overthrow, in which none have played a more important part than the disillusioned Youth.

The apparent vigour and enthusiasm of Fascism in its early stages is largely the reaction to an uninspiring and inefficient democracy.

In countries where democracy has shown itself challenging, vigorous Fascism has immediately been forced into retreat. This was most obvious directly after the formation of the Popular Front Government in France, when, for a time, there was a great revival of democratic sentiment and action in that country. This resulted in the temporary disappearance of the Fascist menace, which was so great at the moment that many thought that Fascism would achieve power

in France before the Popular Front Government could get into office.

It is true that modern methods of mass propaganda, such as broadcasting, have added enormously to the facility with which whole populations can be swung behind the false idealism of a Fascist creed. One of the striking instances of the adherence of democratic organisations to traditional methods has been in the field of propaganda, where they have allowed themselves to be outclassed by the vigorous and often unscrupulous methods of their opponents.

The reaction of the electors of Great Britain from the "party system" to the Fascist conception of a national totalitarian government was very obvious in 1931. It was this idea, coupled with its particular exemplification by the leaders of the Liberal and Labour Parties who espoused it, that ranged millions of electors behind the National Government. It was typical at the beginning of that Parliament, when the question of statements over the wireless upon the Budget were proposed, that the Government took up the attitude that there was no opposition! Totalitarianism accomplished!

Matters have improved since that time in some directions; in others worsened.

There is, I am convinced, still to be observed the remains of the confusion and disillusionment of 1931 amongst the electors. The distrust then borne in upon a deeply shocked and shaken working-class movement has not yet disappeared.

But there is another factor of great importance. The continuance in power, now for eight years, of a Government with a vast majority, coupled with the absence of any visible sign of its replacement and accompanied with the urgent fear of war, has brought with it the

apathy of hopelessness, the most deadening of all democratic diseases. People will not even trouble to cast their vote, let alone interest themselves in political parties or programmes.

The mind of the electors is centred, not upon the particularist details of this or that method of economic or social development, but upon the great fundamental issues—peace and war, democracy and Fascism. Every day the papers, every night the pictures, demonstrate to the people the various forms in which this struggle is proceeding throughout the world. The ordinary man and woman are driven to seek a safety which they cannot find in the tin shelters of the Government or the vast expenditure upon armaments.

There is only one sure bulwark by which democracy and freedom can today be defended, and that is democracy itself.

How, then, can we act? What must those of us do who feel, not only that we are today democrats, but that we are determined to remain democrats in the future.

We must do something to make our democracy effective here and now. We must raise a new hope of victory and progress in the common people; we must rally them from their retreat and apathy; we must inspire them to a new hope and to fresh efforts in their own cause.

To accomplish this two things are necessary. The political forces of the country must be aligned about the true political issues and not around some supposed or theoretical differences. On the one side already stand the combined reactionary forces of the country. Those who are not pro-Fascist or reactionary should not be behind that Government.

On the other must stand, not the divided and warring

elements of progress, but the united progressive and anti-Fascist forces.

With parliamentary groupings so oriented, the reality of the political struggle will be accurately represented to the electors. False values will be eliminated and the true basis of the political struggle will be apparent to all.

Second, the progressive forces must agree to carry through a programme which will serve to make democracy an effective instrument, responsive to the needs and desires of the common people. Democracy must be made to deliver some g ods, for it is only so that faith and hope in democracy can be recreated in the mass of the people.

If our machinery of democracy continues to fail in its functions, it will, like other out-of date machinery, be scrapped, and the newest type of totalitarian government will be tried in its place. Once tried, it may well prove impossible to make any further change short of some eventuality that overwhelms our civilisation.

No programme can satisfy everyone.

Compromise is one of the essential factors in democratic politics and government. It is only when a God-sent *Fiihrer* directs an autocracy that compromise becomes superfluous.

Set any half-dozen free people around a table to devise a programme and you will get six different programmes. But a very wide measure of agreement is possible if those who are concerned bear in mind the essential conditions, that the programme must be practicable to carry out, effective in its response to, at least, the most pressing needs of our own people, and at the same time such as will rally the widest range of anti-Fascist forces.

Foreign policy is of great importance today, but

domestic policy is more directly reflected in the homes of the people. They will judge largely of the effectiveness of democracy by what it can do for them in their immediate and intimate needs. A larger wage packet or better conditions for the unemployed or old age pensioners is a more easily appreciated response to the peoples' need than is any treaty or arrangement with a foreign Power.

It is upon this basis that the twelve points of policy were inserted in the memorandum which I submitted to the Labour Party as a basis for common action with other democratic forces in the country. They differ but little from the short-term programme of that Party, but they form, nevertheless, a realistic basis for common agreement amongst those who are determined at all cost to secure the continuance of democracy in this country.

What has surprised me over these proposals is the very wide measure of agreement that they have been accorded. As a policy, hardly anyone objected to them, and it would I am certain be possible on some such basis to combine every anti-Fascist element in the country. Such a policy is, moreover, capable of achievement within the life-time of a single Parliament, provided those in charge of the Government have the courage and determination to drive it through.

The qualification, as I see it, for the members of such an administration is not that they should have any particular party label, but that they should be men and women whom the people can trust to take every measure that becomes necessary to protect and make effective our democracy.

Vested interests of a privileged class will have to be challenged and defeated if they stand in the way of that supreme object.

Once those who are in control of the Government show that they will allow nothing to stand in the way of achieving the programme that they have been elected to carry through, they would, I am convinced, have the people enthusiastically behind them.

Within a democracy, it is ultimately the people rather than the Government who must provide the dynamic energy for the achievement of their wishes.

It is for this reason that the effectiveness, and so the life itself, of such a free form of Government must depend upon the vigour and enthusiasm with which the electors react to the performance of their pledges by those whom they elect to power.

There is one other factor which I regard of the greatest importance in modern democracy; that is the design of the machinery of government. I cannot here enter at length into this problem, of which I have written on many previous occasions.

As the central need is that we should make our democracy effective, so it becomes a cardinal necessity that we should revise our methods of Government so as to make the machine less cumbrous and more flexible and rapid in its action.

There are many ways in which parliamentary procedure can be reformed so as to eliminate waste of time and effort whilst retaining the essential factor of free discussion.

Some such reforms must be an essential part of any revival of our democracy, if only for the reason that the people have already waited too long to obtain a response to their demands and will be impatient of further unnecessary delays.

It is to such a reformed and revitalised democratic government in Great Britain that I look with hope to stem the retreat of democracy and to rally the peoples

of the world in their struggle against Fascism from within and from without their own countries.

I can myself see no chance or hope in the circumstances of today of such a government arising from any single party. However much we should desire such a thing, times are too serious to base the salvation of democracy upon mere wishful thinking.

The facts, however unpleasant, must be faced as the first step to victory.

In the light of these undoubted facts, there are but two alternatives before the people of Great Britain.

The progressive elements can continue in their attitude of dispersed isolation and so make certain that reaction and pro-Fascism continues in power, undermining and destroying our democracy and freedom, or else they can combine together to defeat those forces and form a true people's government for the salvation of our democracy and liberty.

We are today at one of those great moments in world history when our decisions will be decisive of the direction of our civilisation for decades to come. If we make the wrong choice we shall not be acting as democrats, but we shall be making ourselves the accessory before the fact to the triumph of Fascism throughout the world.

If we put aside our traditional pre-War conception of political tactics, and face the realities of the new power of Fascism in the world and the difficulties of its defeat, we shall make the right choice by combining all the progressive anti Fascist forces to form a people's government. If that is the decision to which we come our sons and our sons' sons will look back with gratitude and admiration to our action, and then they too will be able to write in books, "Why I am a democrat."

By BENJAMIN FARRINGTON
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WHEN a classical man declares himself a democrat he runs the risk of being supposed to be recommending some political invention of the ancient Greeks. But I am not proposing here to raise the cry "Back to Solon!" "Back to Cleisthenes!" or even "Back to Pericles!" The effective elements of power that the Athenian people at the height of their democracy succeeded in getting into their hands do not satisfy my standard of democracy any more than the degree of power now wielded by the people of England or of France. If the political constitution of present-day England could truly be described as democratic, there might be some point in estimating again here the Greek contribution to the theory of democracy. But if what we enjoy is the name rather than the thing, if that acute observer and able political theorist Walter Bagehot was right in describing England rather as a deferential nation than a democracy, then a different approach seeems called for. We shall do better to enquire what contribution ancient society has made towards a situation like the present, in which we possess the name of democracy without the reality. For the ancients were in the same plight, and contributed much to the illusions and prejudices which make it tolerable.

Between a deferential community and a democracy Bagehot drew a sharp distinction—in favour of the former. "A deferential community," he wrote, "even though its lowest classes are not intelligent, is far more suited to a cabinet government than any kind of democratic country, because it is more suited to

political excellence." What he meant by political excellence he made clear in the sequel. In a deferential community the "highest classes" can rule. This is to be desired because the highest classes have more political ability. Leisure, culture, and variety of experience exercise and improve the judgment as surely as toil, ignorance, and a monotonous occupation cripple it. The conclusion follows: "A country of respectful poor, though far less happy than where there are no poor to be respectful, is nevertheless far more fitted for the best government. You can use the best classes of the respectful country; you can only use the worst where every man thinks he is as good as every other."

Bagehot's analysis of a deferential community, in the course of which he was able to affirm that "England is the type of deferential countries," and that "the mass of the English people are politically contented as well as politically deferential," was made before the Reform Act of 1867. But his analysis still has much validity. At any rate, it is on the assumption that what we have in England today is properly to be described as a deferential community rather than a democracy that I venture to proclaim my faith as a democrat.

The very great difficulty of founding a deferential community was stressed by Bagehot. *Tantae molis erat summissam condere gentem.* One practical rule which the political wisdom of antiquity struck out for its guidance when faced with the same difficult task was that it is prudent to recognise a distinction between what may be said in the school and what may be proclaimed in the market-place. This rule has been much honoured also in modern times. In Queen Anne's reign, when Parliament was busy heaping taxes on pamphlets and newspapers which circulated in English among the

people, it was granting exemptions on all paper used by the universities of Oxford and Cambridge and on any books printed in Latin and in Greek. This discrimination was of long duration. In the early decades of the nineteenth century, the campaign was still in progress to prevent the dissemination of knowledge among the "worst classes." Those were the days when the *Examiner* newspaper bore the imprint: "Paper and print, 3 1/2*d.* Taxes on knowledge, 3 1/2*d.* Price 7*d.*"

The rule of the school and the market-place operates to prevent the dissemination of truth ; it does not prevent its publication within a restricted circle. What is dangerous at 3 1/2*d.* may safely be sold at a guinea. And in their more extended, and more expensive, tomes, the greatest wits, even in times of repression, have been able to discourse with the greatest freedom. In the eighteenth century, writing for a restricted public, Adam Smith and Gibbon did not hesitate to give plain expression to their hardiest judgments. Thus if anybody should be anxious to enquire into the necessity for this rule about the school and the market-place, and why (which is the same question) a deferential community is more to be desired than a democracy, he will find the answer in their pages.

It was the opinion of Adam Smith that, "It is but equity that those who feed, clothe, and lodge the whole body of the people should have such a share of the produce of their labour as to be themselves tolerably well fed, clothed, and lodged." He also knew that there was little hope of it. "All for ourselves and nothing for other people seems in every age of the world to have been the vile maxim of the masters of mankind." Reflection on these facts led him to avow his lack of respect for that "insidious and crafty animal, vulgarly called a statesman or politician." The judgment of

Gibbon on human society was similar. Less passionate and more urbane than Adam Smith, he penned this caustic comment on the political institutions and the political philosophy of classical antiquity at the height of its culture: "In the progress from primitive equity to final injustice, the steps are silent, the shades are almost imperceptible, and the absolute monopoly is guarded by positive laws and artificial reason." The function of the positive laws was put more bluntly by Adam Smith: "Civil government, so far as it is instituted for the security of property, is in reality instituted for the defence of the rich against the poor, or of those who have some property against those who have none at all."

In the light of these statements, Bagehot's "difficult problem" of securing a deferential nation is seen in a clearer light. It resolves itself into the problem of maintaining such a prevalence of ignorance and despair as shall suffice to prevent a wide appreciation of the nature of the monopoly on which society is based and of the steps that might be taken to end it. To the solution of this problem antiquity made a rich contribution. The political wisdom that was evolved in the effort constitutes our classical heritage of jurisprudence. That sincerity as well as hypocrisy presided over its evolution, that public spirit as well as selfishness sometimes actuated its promoters, that folly and baseness were sometimes tempered by intelligence and goodwill, does not alter the general character of the political wisdom we have inherited from antiquity. Its purpose was to secure stability in a society in which wealth was accumulated at one pole in the hands of the few, and in which the mass of the people were permanently dispossessed. The "artificial reason" of which Gibbon speaks was a theory of State (the *respublica* or *commonwealth*) so contrived as not to display too nakedly the

fact that what was called the commonwealth was in fact the private wealth of the few, and that the course of politics, internal and external, was dictated by the interests of the few.

The exigencies of the situation resulted, among other things, in the creation of a political vocabulary which was not without its effect in stabilising the conditions it disguised. The general tendency in ancient society was to dissociate the idea of active citizenship from manual toil, and to relegate the whole productive side of life to a disfranchised and depressed class. The same words that are used to designate the worker at a trade or on the land signify also vulgar, boorish, ignorant, uncouth. Manual labour, if not necessarily servile, was at least illiberal. But these terms, though they betray the rottenness of the society and indicate to us the direction in which democracy still needs to be reformed, corresponded in some degree to the facts. Less excusable was the current political phraseology in which an oligarchy is described as "a government of the wise" or "a sober constitution"; in which a democracy is described as "a government of the mob" or "a licentious constitution"; in which the rich—that is to say, generally the landed—are called "the good" and the poor or the peasants "the bad"; in which the maintenance of the monopoly is "justice" and the proposal for a redistribution of material goods "injustice." We have here the origin of Bagehot's vocabulary, his "best classes" and his "worst classes." And we understand by what august tradition he is supported when he gives it as his opinion that the "best government" can only co-exist with a poor, ignorant, unhappy, deferential people.

While the general political vocabulary of Greece and Rome betrays the extent to which society was cor-

rupted by monopoly (the word *respublica* is a supreme example: Tiberius Gracchus was assassinated by a senatorial mob for calling public attention to its inappropriateness), the name democracy itself, as employed in antiquity and inherited by ourselves, bears anything but its face value. In the first place, the ancients had no doctrine of the rights of man, but only of the rights of the citizen, and at the height of classical civilisation the great majority of those living under its beneficent sway were slaves. Their status was much that of the coloured "citizens" in our modern democratic Empire. But even if we leave this, which is the dominant factor of the whole system, out of account, the power of the citizen body, even in the most advanced democracy, was severely limited. Democracy, such as it was, in Athens arose out of a struggle between the landowners and the peasants, and represented not a victory for the latter, but a compromise between the people and their masters. The nature of the struggle may be illustrated by a story that has survived.

In his *Greek Questions* Plutarch undertakes to explain the meaning of the mysterious term Reversed Interest. "The Megarians," he tells us, "banished their tyrant Theageness and for a while *lived a sober political life* [i.e. the oligarchs were in undisturbed possession]. Then the demagogues, in Plato's phrase, 'poured out a copious and heady draft of freedom,' and the people began to behave licentiously towards the rich. In particular, poor men went into the houses of the rich and demanded to be given an expensive dinner. If they were refused they insolently helped themselves to what they wanted without waiting for a second refusal. In the end it came to this, that they made an ordinance and began to exact from their *creditors* repayment of the interest on their loans, giving this the

name of Reversed Interest."

Now it is not this important political discovery of reversed interest, whatever the innocent might suppose, that formed the basis of ancient democracy. It would be more true to say that democracy was a device discovered to abolish the danger of reversed interest. It was from the risk of this sort of thing that the founder of European democracy endeavoured to save Athens. Solon, as he himself tells us, could not subscribe to the current doctrine which identified goodness and wealth. But he had no intention of redistributing wealth or abolishing class distinctions. His constitution was *called* a democracy, because under it the *demos* was allowed a share of political power. But as various statesmen and philosophers, frightened at the name, apologetically explained—Pericles, Plato, and Isocrates among the number—it was really an aristocracy because in effect the rule of the people meant no more than their power to choose the "best people" to control the "commonwealth." Solonian democracy was in fact a timocracy, in which political power was distributed in proportion to wealth. "To the people," says Solon, "I gave such privilege as sufficeth, neither stripping them of honour nor giving them too much. The powerful and rich I saw to it should suffer no indignity. About both I set my strong shield, allowing neither an unjust victory." In a word, Solon's democracy was intended to guarantee to all citizens equality before the law, but the law itself was designed to perpetuate inequality of wealth. Henceforth the millionaire drawing a fortune from the silver mines at Laurium and the juryman earning a few obols by a day's attendance in the law-court were "equals." Henceforth endeavours to alter this state of affairs were not only licentious and unjust and

lawless, but undemocratic.

The inadequacy of this concept of democracy was already apparent to at least one of Solon's contemporaries. Anacharsis, we are told, laughed at the lawgiver for his simplicity in supposing that laws could bind the rapacity of men. "Your laws are like spiders' webs," he said; "they will bind the poor and weak, and be rent asunder by the rich and powerful." Anacharsis was right. Nevertheless, it must be allowed that Solon had given currency to a master conception destined to a great future. Henceforth it was possible to conceive of democracy in purely political terms and without economic content. To this day the concept of equality of the citizens before the law is the comely mask which enables economic oligarchy to parade itself as democracy. This conception of democracy we owe to Solon. Yet, as Diodorus Siculus wearily remarked five hundred years later, "only a fool would try to establish equality before the law without also establishing equality of wealth." It is time we lent ear to Anacharsis and Diodorus.

In the idea of *isonomia* or *equality before the law* we have isolated one of the concepts which have made democracy safe for the world. In this concept, as it emerged from the brain of Solon, is embodied much sincere goodwill and much political ingenuity, even if to the prescience of Anacharsis and the experience of Diodorus its inadequacy was long ago apparent. In the following examples of the political expedients by which in antiquity the absolute monopoly was guarded it is difficult not to feel that hypocrisy and selfishness predominate.

It was the declared opinion of the Roman High Priest, Scaevola, that *it is expedient that States should be deceived in the matter of religion.* This is alto-

gether one of the most illuminating political maxims that have come down from antiquity. It represents the slowly gathered experience of the governing class that the current opinion on the nature of the universe and of society cannot be a matter of indifference to it. Religion was the cement of ancient society, giving its divine sanction to the property relations which then existed and to the laws by which they were established. When speculation on the nature of the universe, and on the origin and history of civil society, had reached a point at which it undermined the religious foundation of the State, the question of the control of such speculation emerged as a practical necessity and a problem of administration. It was apparent to the best minds that the universe was not run by a community of gods organised on the model of a patriarchal household; that the inventions on which civilised life depends were not the gifts to mankind of sundry gods, but the products of man's own ingenuity; and that the conception of justice by which the monopoly was maintained was not an eternal idea that lay at the foundation of things, but a human arrangement subject to human alteration. These truths were apparent, but they were not expedient. Hence the distinction between what it was proper to say in the schools and what might be said in the market-place. Hence also the gradual emergence of the policy of deliberately organising religion as a deception of the people.[1]

[1] There has been much speculation as to the cause of the decline of science and the scientific spirit in classical antiquity. I suggest that there were two great causes. One was the divorce of all higher education from the productive arts of life, owing to the contempt for manual labour. The other was the policy of deceiving the people in the matter of religion, which meant in effect substituting a mythical account of the universe and society for an account which was true according to the best knowledge of the time.

The necessity for this deception of the people was recognised by Plato, who in his *Republic* and other dialogues devotes much attention to the elaboration of the most appropriate myth for the purpose. The problem was widely canvassed among the Greeks and occupied a prominent place in the minds of oligarchical statesmen. Nevertheless, when Polybius, one of the most intellectually distinguished of these statesmen, was taken as a hostage to Rome, he was astonished to find that the Roman Senate, without any help from Plato, was doing the job much more efficiently than it had ever been done in Greece. This goes far to justify the boast of Cicero, at least in the domain of politics, that the Romans were not dependent on Greek teachers, but either discovered things better for themselves in the first instance or improved on the Greek model if they saw fit to copy it.

The debauching of the public mind by superstition was combated in antiquity by the Epicureans, whose campaign received its supreme expression in the didactic poem of Lucretius, *On the Nature of Things*. This poem makes clear the intimate connection of the mythological account of the universe with the oligarchic standard of values. The poem is an indictment not only of a false ideology but of the society which created it, and reveals the interdependence of the two. But the Epicureans were alone in antiquity in believing that what civilisation needed for its cure was the elimination of the myth, and in urging that truth should be proclaimed in the market-place as well as in the schools. Their rivals the Stoics held the opposite view and enjoyed the ear of the governing class at Rome. Heaven was reconstructed, not now on the model of a patriarchal household, but of an oligarchical world-state. The stars were now held to

be divine, and to constitute in their hierarchy a model of a true human society. "Just as in great cities the population is classified according to rank and precedence, and the Senators hold the chief place, the Knights come next, the bulk of the citizens are inferior to the Knights, and the helpless, nameless mob are subject even to the citizen body, so is it in the great republic of the universe, the city which Nature has established in the sky." Thus does the Stoic poet Manilius end his counterblast to Lucretius. And he adds by way of final warning: "If Nature had given power to the masses in proportion to their numbers, heaven could not endure its own fires, Olympus would kindle, and the whole universe go up in flames."

The appalling consequences that must ensue on the wide extension of political power among the people was an accepted dogma of ancient society. It rested in its turn on the view that the mass of mankind is hopelessly corrupt. We have seen that it was the habit of ancient oligarchies to describe the few as the good and the many as the bad. This ugly prejudice received a formal justification and philosophical elaboration at the hands of the founder of the Academy.

According to the myth which Plato thought would form the best ideological foundation for society, Nature had made men of three metals, gold, silver, and iron. The men of the rarest metal were the natural governors; the silver men were suited to be police and soldiers; the men of baser metal were to be hewers of wood and drawers of water. This convenient belief, that the mass of mankind are by nature fitted for nothing better than the dull routine of mechanical tasks, is one of the doctrines of Platonism most in favour still today. But Plato went further than this. He imagined a tripartite division of the human soul adapted to the political

structure of society. Man's soul, he taught, is compounded of reason, spirit, and appetite. Reason is situated in the head, spirit in the breast, appetite in the belly and the loins. In the golden men reason reigns supreme, in the silver men spirit is dominant, in the iron men appetite. It has been a reflection on our society that we refer to working men as hands. But Plato went beyond that. To him a worker was belly and loins. It is one of the ugliest, and one of the most unfounded, theories in the long history of political philosophy. It is also one of the most honoured, although it takes a really expensive education to make it credible and it cannot survive association with the workers. But our modern Platos educate themselves on Hellenic cruises, and are not speaking with first-hand knowledge when they condescend to allude to the "unthinking lads from our factories and hedgerows." To the theory of his master, Plato, that some men are born masters and others slaves, the pupil Aristotle added the doctrine that some races are born to command, others to serve. If the servile races do not realise their condition, he added, it is justifiable to use force to bring the truth home to them.

We are now in a position to sum up the contribution of classical antiquity to the idea of the deferential community. It consists of the doctrine of the individual, and of the race, that is by nature servile; of contempt for manual labour; of the creation of a special vocabulary confounding morality with political status; of the invention of the idea of equality before the law without the addition of economic equality; of the substitution of reason by myth in the mind of the populace in just those matters where truth and honesty are most necessary; and of the final caution that such high matters of Church and State had better not be discussed in public.

Such, in sum, was the contribution of antiquity to the idea of the deferential community. I have not said, and I do not think, that this was the contribution of antiquity to civilisation. If, to borrow Shelley's phrase, it were my purpose "to produce a systematical history of what appear to me to be the genuine elements of human society," then the civilisation of the ancient world would provide a vast repertory of profound intuitions of what human society might be. But we have to consider what ancient society actually achieved, not what some individuals dreamed of. To the mass of its members it did not bring well-being. And the ideas I have attempted to analyse seem to me those that limit the achievement of antiquity and are actively operative now in frustrating the well-being of our own age.

Now, as then, monopoly being sacrosanct, all dissemination of knowledge that might endanger it exists only on sufferance and so long as men are prepared to fight for it. Government in antiquity became an instrument for the suppression of enlightenment and the dissemination of superstition. The governments of Italy, Germany, and Japan are now leagued together for that purpose, and our Government delivers bound into their hands any victim that dares to struggle to be free. In ancient society, the atheist magistrate regulating the public worship of the State became a typical figure, and had as his companion-piece the figure of the educated man caught in the superstitions which policy imposed upon the people. Such cynical hypocrites and such devotees of superstition now bestride Europe, and our English plutocracy sees in their triumph its own hope of survival. Its allies are those who burn books, persecute minorities, flout science, and glorify war. So supine and selfish are the majority of the well-to-do that it is accepted as a law of Nature that millions of their fellow

citizens, in the midst of plenty, must rot for want of work, food, clothes, shelter, books, and medical attention. Such is the democracy in which I do not believe.

Why, then, do I call myself a democrat, and in what sort of democracy do I believe? I call myself a democrat because in the progress that has so far been made to achieve democracy I see the only wholesome and hopeful movement in human history. The ideal of the deferential community, enjoying the best government on condition of the mass of the governed remaining sunk in apathetic misery, which but slightly caricatures the sort of democracy we now enjoy, is only the ideal of a corrupt cynicism, not a programme for humanity. I believe in a democracy in which the people will have conquered economic as well as political power. I believe in a democracy in which the organisation of the production and distribution of the material means of life will be the business of a democratically elected and democratically controlled administration. I believe in a democracy with the courage to write into its constitution the Christian precept that "If a man will not work neither shall he eat," and the political understanding to give it reality. I believe in a democracy in which it shall be the business of government to plan the adequate feeding, clothing, housing, education, and public health of the community. I believe in a democracy in which the uncouthness traditionally associated with manual work and the boorishness traditionally associated with agricultural labour will be recognised as products of social conditions and not as natural deficiencies conditioning human society, and will be eliminated by adequate leisure and education. I believe in a democracy in which the manners that go with shootin' and huntin' and fishin', and the mentality that is produced by an elaborate education divorced from

social responsibility, will be looked upon with the same compassion as the boorishness of the boor and eliminated as speedily. I believe in a democracy from which the man of colour will not be excluded like the slave in antiquity. And I believe that if we do not press on vigorously now to this democracy we shall find that the democratic liberties we still enjoy have been filched by Fascism. As a motto for the march let me suggest a classical quotation. It is from one of Virgil's shepherds, and has a marvellous aptness for our age :

Cantantes ut eamus, ego hoc te fasce levabo.

(So that we may go on our way singing, I shall lift this burden—*fascis*—from you.)

By J. C. LITTLE

President of the Amalgamated Engineering Union

DEMOCRACY is too often presented as a word, a phrase, a catchword formula. It is no such thing. In our modern society, democracy means, above all, certain specific *rights*. It means the right to representative government and free speech for *political parties*; it means free organisation and the other rights of *trade unions*; and it means the freedom of the *Press*. Add to these the freedom of other voluntary organisations—religious, scientific, and artistic—and the freedom of racial minorities, and the main elements of democracy are complete.

They were not won without a struggle, these rights of ours. And the trade unions can be proud of the part they played in that long and bitter struggle. First they had to fight above all for their own right to exist. Under the Combination Laws, trade unions were illegal during the first quarter of the last century, and vindictive sentences were passed on their members. The unions existed, nevertheless, and their efforts resulted in the repeal of the Combination Laws in 1825.

Yet less than ten years later, in 1834, the Tolpuddle Labourers were sent to Botany Bay for the crime of organising a trade union. This and other attacks made the unions realise that they needed, above all, political liberty. From this time on we find the trade unions prominent in every battle for democratic rights.

Just a hundred years ago the great Chartist Movement for political liberty was at its height. It was in 1839 that the Chartist Convention drafted its petition containing the famous words: "We perform the duties of free men; we must have the rights of free men." The

unions, especially the textile workers and miners, played a big part in the Chartist Movement. They realised that political liberty was a "bread-and-butter" question, as one of the leaders expressed it. And twenty years later when the Reform Movement took up some of the old Chartist demands, we find the unions prominent again. This was the campaign which finally won the vote for the town workers in 1867. It was the London trade unionists, marching with their bands and trade banners in giant demonstrations, who largely decided the issue. A London paper of the day wrote that the trade unions had been transformed into "A grand and irresistible machinery for the promotion of the reform cause."

It is important that we remember this tradition today, when those liberties for which our forefathers gave their lives are under fire. To lose our liberty would mean losing in a few short years the improvements in conditions which it has taken us a hundred years to win. And it would mean more. For today we see our ultimate goal more clearly than did the pioneers. For us in the Labour movement, the tremendous progress of Socialist Russia shows that we could do as much and more in a Socialist Britain. And in fighting for democracy, we are clearing the road to Socialism.

These, then, are some of the battles in that long campaign which established Britain's great tradition of freedom. And where Britain led, the world followed, so that history shows us the extension of democratic rights in one country after another. But when we come to recent times, and especially the last five years, suddenly the picture changes. First in Germany, then in parts of south-eastern Europe, then in Czechoslovakia, in Austria, in Franco Spain, freedom is eclipsed. And

today the terrible shadow of Hitler Fascism darkens the whole of Europe, including our own Britain. All over Europe the lights of freedom are going out.

The fate of Germany, and in particular the fate of German trade unions, has received all too little attention. The German trade union movement was an enormous and powerful organisation. In the German metal industry alone there were no less than one million workers organised at the beginning of 1933. But size did not save them. On his advent to power in the spring of 1933, one of Hitler's first act was the destruction of the German trade union movement in May.

There exists now in Hitler Germany an organisation known as the German Labour Front. But this has nothing in common with trade unionism as we know it. So much was admitted by its leader, Dr. Robert Ley, when he said: "The Labour Front has nothing to do with trade unionism as it existed in Germany until 1933." For one thing, membership of this organisation is in practice compulsory. The Labour Courts have ruled that refusal to join the Labour Front is sufficient reason for dismissal without notice, and Dr. Ley has stated: "We hope and believe that no one will find work in Germany who is not a member of the Labour Front." Since there are very few benefits obtainable from this organisation (sickness and death benefits and other insurance schemes have been abolished), it is in effect little more than a form of extra taxation.

As well as workers, membership of the Labour Front is open to the employers. And, in fact, not only are the employers members of the Labour Front, they are also its leaders; for either the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of every branch must be either an employer or a member of the Nazi Party.

The destruction of the trade unions, and the abolition of the right to strike, were only the beginning of the attack on labour conditions in Germany. Worse was to come. In the "Law to Regulate National Labour" (January 20th, 1934) it is stated that the employer alone has the right to take decisions in any concern. He is described as the *"Fuhrer"* and the workers as his "followers." And if a worker does not like his particular *"Fuhrer,"* it is made very difficult for him to change his job. For every worker must have a "Labour Passport," which the police have a right to inspect at any time; unsatisfactory entries in this book practically debar men from obtaining employment. The Nazis have, in fact, introduced serfdom in German industry. If a worker tries to leave his job, he is liable to a fine or term of imprisonment. In this way, an employer is given power to impose worse conditions on his "followers," without running the risk of them leaving for better employment.

Even despite these regulations, apparently a tendency appears in some parts for wages to rise. Hence in June, 1938, was enforced a *legal regulation of maximum wages*, something surely without parallel in modern history. This power is given to the "Labour Trustee" in each district, who is appointed by the Government and is naturally a strict Nazi. The procedure is described as follows in the official periodical, *Der Vierjahresplan*:

"They [the Labour Trustees] have received wide powers from those in authority, and are empowered to take all measures seeming proper to them, to ward off effectively any danger to important undertakings, coming from the rise of wages. To this end they can prevent any unhealthy improvement of wages and labour conditions by means of fixing maximum wages

for individual concerns, or whole branches of industry."

As I write this, I see that General Goring has just announced two new decrees. According to *The Times* (February 15th, 1939) :

"Both make further inroads into the German working man's and woman's freedom of movement and of choice of employment, which has been gradually disappearing."

And the aim of all this ? Simply to depress the standard of living of the German working class. And how well they have succeeded is shown very clearly even in the figures produced by the Nazis themselves. The available official statistics are cited and carefully analysed by Mr. T. Balogh in the *Economic Journal* (September, 1938).

Taking into account the various forced deductions from the German workers' wages, Mr. Balogh concludes that between 1933 and 1938 "The net increase in the money income of labour therefore amounts only to something between 3 and 5 millions.....i.e. between 25 and 40 per cent (whilst employment rose 47 per cent, and working hours 10 per cent)." Thus money earnings per hour *fell* in these years by between 14 per cent and 23 per cent. At the same time, cost of living rose by 8·9 per cent.

Even more revealing is a simple calculation made from the official figures in the journal *Labour Research* (October, 1938) :

"Between June, 1933, and March, 1938, production rose by 77 per cent, employment only by 41 per cent. Each employed worker was thus producing 26 per cent more in 1938 than in 1933—and was paid (in real wages) somewhere between 13 per cent and 22 per cent less than in 1933."

The effect on hours of work has been even more terrible. In this connection, it is worth citing the *Statist* (November 12th, 1938) :

"Though the present regime has certainly left no stone unturned in order to extract a maximum of work from German workers, a new drive for raising the productivity of labour seems to be in the offing, as the public was told recently by Dr. Ley, Leader of the Labour Front. On this occasion Dr. Ley claimed to have discovered a new 'vestige of Versailles,' namely the 'un-German' eight-hour day, which allegedly was imposed upon Germany by the United States in the Versailles Treaty. Dr. Ley was careful enough not to mention what he considers as a working day suitable for the Germans, but at a recent meeting of the building industry, 'two shifts of ten hours each' were mentioned as an ideal solution of the problem of working hours. The machinery industry is already working at a daily average of nine to nine and a half hours."

Since then the drive for longer hours appears to have progressed considerably, for on February 15th, 1939, *The Times* reported :

"The law stipulates an eight-hour working day, but permits exceptions on a generous scale, and *in practice ten hours or more are worked in most industries catering directly or indirectly, for rearmament and the Four-year Plan.*"

Thus a return to the labour conditions of fifty or a hundred years ago has followed the destruction of democracy and trade unionism in Hitler Germany.

We must not delude ourselves that Fascism cannot cross the North Sea. It can and does. But on arrival it is hard to recognise. Instead of war, it aims at "appeasing" Germany ; and instead of "National Socialism," it talks of compulsory national service.

We are far from Fascism yet, but the threat is here, and it comes, not from Mosley's blackshirts but from the people who regard themselves instinctively as born with the privileged right of governing their fellow men.

The development can be traced in the attitude to the trade unions. The first serious restriction of the right to organise was the Trades Disputes Act of 1927. By this Act many forms of sympathetic and political strikes were made illegal. Picketing was restricted, and it was made illegal to watch or beset a blackleg's house. The financial position of the Labour Party was weakened by the provision which enforced the "contracting-in," in place of the "contracting-out," system for affiliated unions. And Civil Servants, including postal workers, were forbidden to join any union not confined to employees of the Crown, or to pursue political objects within their own organisations; nor may their organisations associate with bodies such as the Labour Party or T. U. C.

It is worth noting that the "picketing" clauses of this Act were invoked against the Harworth miners who were imprisoned in 1936.

The second stage of the menace to trade unionism has developed since the beginning of the arms programme in 1935. The main brunt of the attack has been borne by the engineers. Both the Government and the engineering employers have come to us with demands for dilution of labour by the introduction of female and unskilled labour and the working of more overtime. Yet we can show that there is no general "shortage of skilled labour" such as is suggested. On the contrary, we can point to many towns and districts where skilled engineers are idle. We asked, too, why arms were being exported, even in some cases to Fascist countries; why, for example, were eighty-five machine

guns and twenty-three aero engines sent to Japan in 1937 ? This is only one example.

Above all, it is our memories of the World War which make us suspicious of these overtures for dilution. We have not forgotten the attack on trade unionism which developed step by step from 1914 to 1918. On the outbreak of war a voluntary industrial truce was called by the trade unions. In 1915 this was followed up by the Treasury conferences, where we gave up the right to strike and agreed to large-scale dilution and changes in working conditions. These voluntary concessions were then made compulsory under the Munitions Act of 1915. Under this Act and the Defence of the Realm Act (which is still on the Statute Book), the worker's freedom to change his job was curtailed; for the engineer in a key position, it became non-existent. For leaving their employment without good reason, munitions workers were arrested and charged under the Defence of the Realm Act after the strikes of May, 1917. Industrial conscription was complete.

In return for these big concessions of trade union rights, the Government promised us a restoration of pre-war practices when the War should end. During the War enormous changes were effected in workshop practice, and over 800,000 women were introduced into the engineering industry. At the War's termination, we asked the Government to fulfil their promises. It was then found difficult to restore pre-War practices, since new machines and methods had been introduced. Where it was possible, the restoration of pre-War practice was enforced by law—for one year, after which no more was heard of the Government "pledges."

We can detect the threat of a similar development very clearly today. Already freedom of movement has been considerably restricted. Already a Cabinet

Minister (the Secretary of State for Scotland) has stated that :

"If a war comes there will at once be compulsory service in one form or another." (*The Times*, November 18th, 1938.)

The danger, however, is much more serious than this. Quite apart from the question of war, the country is threatened with a form of conscription in peacetime. Circles very close to the Government are openly in favour of such compulsory service in peacetime. *The Times* newspaper, which has led this campaign, stated in its editorial of October 3rd, 1938, that :

"What is now required . . . is such an organisation of the man-power and woman-power of the nation as will enable us all to know in advance, and prepare for, the part that we shall play in emergency. *To undertake some service should be compulsory.*"

It is ominous that Sir Auckland Geddes has been given the important post of adviser to Sir John Anderson, for Sir Auckland Geddes, along with the conscriptionists, has declared himself in favour of a compulsory national register. In a letter to *The Times* (October 13th, 1938) he demanded :

"A simple questionnaire to be answered by each voter. . . . Refinement of knowledge would speedily follow. . . . Then if compulsion comes the machine will be ready."

In a further letter (November 16th, 1938), he asked for "immediate registration and allocation of each of us to his or her wartime job. I am also in favour of compulsory training for the young." Three weeks later was announced his appointment as adviser to Sir John Anderson.

As I write, the voluntary system is being given a "trial." But it seems only too likely that, by the time

this is published (perhaps after another "crisis") it will be declared that the voluntary system, while it has by no means failed, has "not proved entirely adequate." *The Times* has already said that:

"It must not be thought, just because responsible statesmen have decided to try out the voluntary system, that anything short of a practically universal response will suffice." (Leading article, January 24th.)

Probably a compulsory register will be introduced. And so, step by step, we may be led towards military and industrial conscription in peacetime.

Ostensibly, the aim of a national register is to protect the country from a certain foreign dictator. If this is indeed the sole motive, it is hard to explain why firm friends of the Nazi regime are so prominent among the advocates of compulsory service. Sir Arnold Wilson, for example, leading British exponent of authoritarianism, said recently: "Let us have compulsory military service for all men of military age from seventeen upwards." It seems, in fact, that members of the British "Fifth-Column" see in conscription a means to Fascism in Britain rather than a means to defend Britain from Fascism.

Since Hitler's bloodless victory at Munich in September, the campaign against democracy has developed rapidly. Munich was a danger-signal clear to all. What it meant was expressed vividly by Mr. Churchill when he told the House of Commons:

"What he found unendurable was the sense of our country falling into the power, into the orbit and influence, of Nazi Germany, and of our existence becoming dependent upon their goodwill or pleasure. . . . In a very few years, perhaps in a very few months, we should be confronted with demands which might affect the surrender of territory or the surrender of

liberty. The policy of submission would carry with it restrictions upon the freedom of speech and debate in Parliament, on public platforms and discussions in the Press. With every organ of public opinion doped and chloroformed into acquiescence, we should be conducted along further stages of our journey." (*The Times*, October 10th, 1938.)

So much for the threat which is facing ourselves and Europe today. It is time to ask how we can repulse Fascism, how we can clear the road to peace and freedom. Hitler's triumph in Germany did not go long unanswered. The first of the big battalions to swing into successful action was the French working class.

In those February days of 1934 things in France looked black indeed. The Fascist Croix de Feu mustered a force of 300,000 men, playing with clever demagogy on the people's misery during the slump. It seemed that France, too, would fall to Fascism. It is worth reflecting a moment on what would have followed in such a case. Hitler, unhindered by the Franco-Soviet Peace Pact, would have had Europe at his feet, Hitler would have swept through south-eastern Europe towards the world empire which is his aim. By now, in all probability, a second world war would have been unloosed.

To its eternal credit, the united French working class checked Fascism in 1934. It did more. It led the great movement which returned a People's Front Government to power in the spring of 1936. The return of this Government meant that in many respects France leapt far ahead of Britain in the working and living conditions of the people.

At the beginning of 1936, according to the I.L.O. figures, two-thirds of the French working class (66·3 per cent) worked forty-eight or more hours a week. The Government introduced the forty-hour week, and

by 1937 only one man in a thousand worked more than forty hours. Immediately after the election and the strike movement, the French employers conceded wage increases averaging 12 per cent. throughout industry.

Holidays with pay were another big gain, and (together with the forty-hour week) this new leisure produced a striking growth in the workers' sports associations and a new interest in French culture. At the same time the trade union movement in France grew in membership from under 1 million to 5 millions. The French Metalworkers' Federation alone grew from 40,000 at the beginning of 1936 to 750,000 at the end of the year.

Today, many of these gains are threatened or lost, but much remains, and the French Labour movement is stronger today than ever before. It is not for us to criticise, for France could have done much more for international democracy had they not been held back by Great Britain.

An ever greater struggle against Fascism has been waged in Spain. Very soon after the outbreak of the rebellion it became clear that the issue was not between Franco and the "reds," but between foreign Fascism and Spanish liberty. In fact, the issue has been broader still, for it is not Spain's freedom, but the world's which the Spanish armies have been defending. I am proud indeed that my Union has done what it has to help Spain, and that our men have fought alongside the Spanish armies, for in this struggle Spain held the fort for civilisation.

We have a lesson to learn from the people of Spain. It is that the defence of democracy from a Fascist invader can only be achieved by an extension of democracy at home. It is not the wealthy classes who have tried to save Spain. It was they who betrayed her.

The defence of Spain was achieved by giving full power to the people, to their Press, their political parties, their trade unions. It was only the traitors who had to be suppressed. That trade unionists were shot in Franco Spain was not only an atrocity ; it was a vivid tribute to the fact that trade unionists were the backbone of their country's defence. It would be the same in Britain, were we, too, faced with Fascist aggression. We shall not be able to defend Britain by restricting the rights of our trade unions, or by putting dictatorial powers into the hands of a Government which sympathises with our potential aggressor. To defend British democracy, there is one sure means, and one only : to strengthen and fortify the organisations of the people. For the people have everything to lose by the military and political domination of Britain by foreign Fascism.

To defend Britain, we must make her a fortress of freedom.

By
THE BISHOP OF LIVERPOOL

A CHARACTER in one of Moliere's plays discovers that he has been talking prose all his life without knowing it. Till lately most of us in this country have been in similar case. We have hardly been aware that we are democrats. We have taken the particular form of government under which we live for granted. We have allowed ourselves freely to grumble about it. But on the whole we are content, especially when we compare it with what we know (not always correctly) about systems preferred by other nations. And, being content, we have not thought out the reasons why we believe it to be, if not the best in the world, at any rate the best for us.

Now, however, we have discovered that under other forms of government, which are anything but democratic, certain successes have been achieved more completely and more speedily than has ever been possible in a nation democratically ordered. This experience has stimulated us to a better understanding of some of the alternatives to democracy. We can now make a juster comparison between these politics and our own, striking a balance between the merits and the admitted defects of each. And we may go further and enquire how far democracy as practised in this country contributes to the healthy development of the human spirit, or, in other words, accords with God's design for the growth of personality in the progressive evolution of man.

For the purposes of comparison, we look to the countries now governed by dictators. They rest upon an emotional enthusiasm, for a system or a leader,

strong enough for the present to ensure complete and logical subservience to the State. Though certain benefits are enjoyed or suffered through the tidy ordering of life and thought, they are purchased at the price of forbidding any man to think or speak or worship or enterprise for himself. For the time being, the freedom of the individual has been deliberately sacrificed to the strength and welfare of the State as a whole. And so far the fruits of the sacrifice have sufficed to maintain the national resolve.

We may doubt whether the experiments of dictators will find a permanent place in the development of practical politics. It must be remembered that they are made among peoples who have submitted to restrictions and privations as the only means of deliverance from regimes which had become intolerable.

But the time may come when the instinctive human demand for personal liberty will again assert itself, and the systems now operating in these countries must either be adjusted to that demand or be replaced by others. Was not Dr. Johnson right when he said of tyranny that "mankind will never bear it"? Meanwhile the new phenomenon of totalitarian government, whether it be a passing phase or not, may well serve to exhibit by contrast both the virtues and the weaknesses of democracy, and to supply us with materials for our own answers to the title of this book.

There are some practical differences between the two systems which have lately become obvious. The first is in the executive sphere. When the leaders of an authoritarian government have decided upon a line of policy, it can be carried into action speedily. They have no need to persuade, or argue, or wait for a mandate. As soon as their plan is ready on paper, its execution can begin. But with us decision comes slowly, and

action often more tardily still. A statesman has made up his mind upon a line of policy. He explains it, commends it, and answers its critics. But before he drafts his Bill, he must ask himself, and his colleagues, "How much of this will the people accept?" It takes him a long time to get the people to think about it at all, and longer still to be sure that where he leads they will follow. For this stately process we pay in peace-time a price which is not too high. For, if slow, it is sure and sound. When we make a move forward we seldom find it necessary to step back afterwards. But in time of war it is very expensive. If we have to fight again, it will be the first step that counts. The democracies must learn how to mobilise the whole nation quickly, and to that end must for the time being demand a big surrender of personal liberty. Nor will this do us any harm, for if the democracies win (if they do not, nothing matters) they will soon and quite inevitably return to their slow-moving freedoms.

I have just said that progress in a democracy is steady if slow, and that we do not often go back on what we have decided to do. But there are times when we find that we have made, or are about to make, a mistake. What happens then? We can reverse our policy, either by a change of government or by an explosion of public opinion so strong that the Cabinet gives way to it. Thus during the Abyssinian War the Hoare-Laval proposals were withdrawn because the country (not the Government) rejected them. They may or may not have been wise and right, but the Cabinet did not hesitate to retrace its steps, and found an easy way of doing so without serious loss of prestige. A dictator, on the other hand, can never step back. Once he begins a course of action, he is carried perforce to its logical end. In a letter to *The Times*, Dr. L. P.

Jacks, who has given me leave to quote it, put the contrast with admirable clarity:

"Totalitarianism is predominantly mechanical, automatic, rigid, artificial, everything tending to go by clockwork, 'from the gesture of the ruler to the step of his soldiers.' Democracy has the qualities of the living organism—adaptability, flexibility, and, above all, the power of self-recuperation, self-healing, self-repair. When the former receives a blow there is a break and a general stoppage, while repair is being effected from the outside. When the latter receives a blow there is a wound, and an instant rush of healing force from within to the point of injury, life going on meanwhile."

He goes on to cite a passage from an article by Henri Bergson in 1915 which is equally appropriate to the present conflict:

"On one side, force spread out on the surface; on the other, force in the depths. On one side, mechanism, the manufactured article which cannot repair its own injuries; on the other, life, the power of creation which makes and remakes itself at every instant. On one side, that which uses itself up; on the other, that which does not use itself up. A future philosopher will conclude—the machine did use itself up. For a long time it resisted, he will say, then it bent; then it broke."

But if a democracy is to function freely as a "living organism," its members must be provided with material for making up their minds. Most of this material will reach it through the Press.

I have been reading a book called *Germany Speaks.* It consists of a number of articles in which leading Government officials in that country explain to Englishmen what they have been trying to do and how they have been trying to do it. The book is most useful to those who, like most of us, sincerely desire to under-

stand the ideas now dominant in Germany, and want to be fair to the National Socialist Party. However strongly and rightly we criticise some of Hitler's methods, we cannot help admiring his achievement in lifting the German people out of misery and despair into self-respect and some approach to contentment, and this book shows us how it has been done. More than one of the writers ask us to remember that his policies were designed for Germans, and would probably not be successful in any other country. This is clearly true of the Nazi attitude explained in an article on "The Press and World Politics," by a Secretary of State with the title of "Chief of the Press." He admits that the German Press is not free. But he claims that there is no such thing as a free Press anywhere. In England, for instance, any journalist or contributor is apparently free to criticise the Government. But actually he must express only such opinions as commend themselves to his editor and the proprietor of the paper which employs him. In Germany the newspaper is equally under control, but of the Government, not of some private group. It "represents the community view against the individual, and becomes the warning voice of the nation. . . . The German Press also takes the liberty of criticising, but it criticises what harms the people, not what benefits them." This makes a government the sole judge of what people ought to think, a theory not likely to be accepted in any country which believes, as we do, that right policies grow out of free discussion, and is prepared for some risks in the process.

It must be confessed that some of our own newspapers often abuse their freedom. They want at all costs to excite us. And they will press a particular course of action by any means, fair or foul. So they

will dress up their daily news by giving it a twist against some person or policy they dislike. And they compose ingenious headlines, hinting at bad motives and intentions in "the other side," expecting that their readers will suppose that what is printed in very big letters must be important and true, which indeed most of them do, having neither the knowledge nor the time at the moment to correct it. But in the long run truth will emerge. I am a democrat partly because I am convinced that political truth is likely to grow more effectively out of the independent thinking of the many than out of the unchallenged dominance of a few. It is, of course, possible to conceive of a dictator, or a ruling group or party, wise enough to show their people the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, trusting them to make a right use of it. And it would be unfair to condemn autocracy as a theory because under it no such attempt has ever yet been made. Yet it is significant that in modern totalitarian experiments it is an essential part of the system that the people shall be told only such facts as the government deem it good for them to know, often in a form distorted to suit propaganda purposes. And when, as in Germany, the Press is used not only to conceal truth, but also to mobilise hatred, fear and distrust as instruments of policy, the experiment seems to me to be self-condemned.

I remember a conversation with an Austrian who despaired of his country and came to live in England. He told me what a relief it was to find himself among people, none of whom seemed to be afraid of anyone else. Then he said: "I am trying to understand your English way of thinking. It is different from ours. We of the Continent, Teutons and Latins alike, think on logical lines. When we have to make a decision

we select a principle to serve as our major premise. We then deduce by syllogism the logical conclusion, and we act upon it. And in three cases out of five we are wrong. The sinking of the *Lusitania* and the execution of Nurse Cavell were logically justifiable. But they lost Germany the War. You Englishmen, on the other hand, assemble your materials for a decision on the same level. You count the pros and the cons, you strike a balance, and act accordingly. And in three cases out of five you are right. But then," he said, "you have to explain why you took that step. In doing so you sometimes try to put yourselves right by selecting some high and noble principle under which you declare that you have acted. And we outside, if we want to be friendly, laugh at you. If not, we call you hypocrites. Anyhow, we cannot understand your lack of logic. But," he added, "I am not sure that you are so illogical as you seem. Our logic is Aristotelian, a logic of words. It is possible that the world has outgrown it. Yours may be a new logic—of fact, of action. Develop it !"

Does this mark a fundamental difference between authoritarian and democratic countries as such ? It may be urged that strict logic is an accident rather than an essential of autocracy, and that common sense, controlled by principle, but not deduced from it, is a characteristic of the English rather than of the democratic mind. Yet it cannot be denied that a totalitarian regime is compelled to be logical in the German sense. For instance, the German Government has set up a very doubtful principle of racial purity. It has exalted that principle into an article of faith. This justifies in their own eyes the elimination by any means of those who come short of the required racial standard. The policy is condemned by common sense and decency

alike. But it is easily intelligible, and it is logical, and it stands.

Logic is carrying them further still. They are moving towards this simple syllogism. A totalitarian State must control the whole of individual life. Religion is a part of that life. Therefore no man may hold any faith which is not approved by the government. This is a step further back than the Middle Ages. Does it mean a reversion to paganism? It points that way, but only for a time. For two things must be remembered. First, that persecution has never succeeded in stamping out religious faith. Indeed, it has often produced the contrary effect. Violent and ruthless attacks upon belief have often been followed by a visible growth and strengthening of devotion. The ultimate result of persecution has often been to test, to purify, and to consolidate true conviction, but never to suppress it. It must also be remembered that, as history plainly teaches us, a dictatorship marks a transition stage in political development. Being personal, it carries within itself the seeds of its own decay. A prominent German statesman of the Weimar period, now in exile, was asked what in his opinion was likely to be the permanent effect of Nazidom upon the German people when its day is over. He said that the most lasting mark it would leave would be a great strengthening of the Protestant Church, both in itself and in its relations with its sister Churches in Europe. He is not himself a Protestant, which makes his verdict all the more significant.

It is my firm belief that democracy is an instrument which God is using, and will use, for the education of mankind and the progressive revelation of Himself. In very early days men thought of God as the Supreme Ruler, ordering human affairs by virtue of a power

which, when He chose to exercise it, nothing could resist. To this conception they were led by their experience of earthly rule. They were governed for the most part autocratically by sultans, absolute kings, emperors, and other kinds of potentate. All authority was concentrated in their hands, and none might question it. On this political analogy they formed their idea of God. To them he was autocrat, first of the tribe, then of the nation or empire, and finally, if their imagination could carry them so far, of all the earth, King of Kings and Lord of Lords. So mankind was helped to learn its first lesson about God. It was the knowledge of His power, exercised as their own rulers exercised power, from outside, *from above*. Then followed a stage of political development in which earthly power came to be shared. Around kings and emperors there had always been circles of advisers and administrators. Out of these were gradually formed councils of nobles and finally parliaments of the people, claiming, and after much struggle assuming, shares of authority and responsibility. This change helped men to see God as He desires to be seen, ruling no longer only from above, but also *from among* his people, and to understand His purpose in "coming down" in the person of His Son, into His world to share its life and to guide its destiny. But there was yet a third lesson to be learned if men were to attain full knowledge of their God. They must see Him at work not only above and among, but also and at the same time *within* mankind. "I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh." As other political systems have both reflected and explained earlier and imperfect conceptions of God, so in my belief will democracy serve to illustrate and finally help to fulfil this prophecy.

It cannot be claimed that any existing form of popular government demonstrates it yet. But I hold to my

conviction that all of them, each upon its own lines, is preparing the way for a Christian democracy one day to come, free from the present weaknesses of democratic government and of Christian practice. Our Lord's second law, that we shall love our neighbour as ourselves and study his welfare as our own, is establishing itself in the social services of our own and many other countries. It may be said to be making its way into our Statute Book. In so far we have adopted a Christian attitude to our neighbours at home. But in international relationships the law has hardly begun to operate. May not the democracies lead the way towards a more Christian approach of nation to nation? Hitherto each has too often thought of its neighbours, What do they want and how can we prevent them from getting it? The time will come when each will say, What do you need and how can we help you to attain it? It is the task of the Christian Churches, freely at work in and through democracies, to hasten that time. So far, however, it cannot be said that the Churches themselves have laid emphasis enough upon this side of Christian duty. Except in the mission field, they have not taught us to love our neighbours overseas. Nor is democracy as practised in England fully ready for its function as a channel of religious faith. We have not yet realised that we must pay a price for individual liberty, and that there are times when the cost will suddenly rise. We must learn either to make a voluntary sacrifice of self-indulgence, and so attain what has been called a "spontaneous collectivism," or else to submit to a degree of compulsion in the public interest.

But the writers of this book were not invited to suggest developments of the democratic system to bring it nearer to their ideal. The question they have put to themselves is, Why am I a democrat *now*? Here is my

answer. I am a democrat because I believe in personal liberty, and can find no other form of government under which I can be as free as I am now to do my own thinking and to shape and control my own life; because I trust the people and hold that in the end they will decide the best, and come to their best, in an atmosphere of freedom; because I prefer a political system which has evolved itself by natural growth to any which have been specially devised to meet a special need; because the working and the fruits of alternative systems do not on the whole commend themselves to me; because of a firm faith that popular government is in line with God's purpose for the progress of mankind.

Democracy is still in the making. So also is Christianity. I believe that the destinies of both are closely bound together.

By
HARRY POLLITT

General Secretary of the Communist Party of Great Britain

WHY am I a democrat ? I am not a democrat of the Whig tradition—that is to say, because my father had £500 a year in Consols and because the lad who went to school with me and his like owned the right to draw tribute from half the world and because I want freedom to go on doing it. These democrats played *their* part against feudal privilege.

The transitional period of the Gladstonian democracy in Britain was based on the exploitation of the workers : it was no democracy for us. Our democracy belongs to something that is much more permanent in our race. It goes back to the time when the townsfolk of St. Albans chased the Lord of the Manor out of the town, and when the peasantry of Norfolk said that they would leave as many gentlemen in that county as there were white bulls. In fact, it goes back to the origins and root of the English people.

The essential element of the democracy that we knew was based on struggle, but it was based on struggle for quite particular and essential ends, and for those of us born into the working class, whose lives have been spent in factories and mills and whose energies have been devoted to bettering the conditions of our fellow workers, it is the aspect of struggle that most deeply affects us. Remembering the cruel hours worked by our parents and the self-denial and courage shown by them in order that we might be clothed and fed, we realise that such improvements as we have witnessed are due in large measure to the exercise of our democratic right to organise and, if needs be, to fight in our trade unions.

To us the dark squalor of the slums, the savagery of the Means Test, the manifold evils of malnutrition and the warping influence of imperfect schooling are not simply subjects to be studied in Blue Books and official statistics. We know them at first-hand, as the reality experienced day in day out by millions of our fellow countrymen. But we know also that we have the right to protest and to back up our protests by action. Though public halls are often denied to us on political grounds, we can still hold meetings at the factory gate and the street corner. The National Association of Wholesale Newsagents may seriously restrict the circulation of the *Daily Worker* by refusing the facilities it extends to every other daily, but there is no legal bar to the appearance of our paper. In England the workers can at least have some say in their working conditions, can still organise their leisure to a certain extent, can enjoy their own outings, their own classes and films; they can read what books they like; they have the right to strike and to vote by secret ballot without gunmen standing behind them.

Very often, to our middle-class friends, trade unionism appears as some unwarranted and unreasonable interference with a straight piece of work, but we have only got to ask them to look at their own experience' how their own work has been interfered with by the interests of ignorant money-grabbers, for them to realise that the demand we make to do the job in a free way in a hierarchy of skill is the only way in which the job can be done, and the only way in which people can call th emselves free.

In the present age of machinery and interdependence of society it is absolute nonsense to talk about democracy or liberalism in terms of the eighteenth century, and not only the Marxists but also the greatest bour-

geois thinkers have recognised this fact. It was Maitland, the last man to think freely about democracy in Liberal England, who argued that trade unions belong to the essential nature of English freedom.

Clerkenwell Green, the Bull-ring at Birmingham, the Square in Bristol, the backyards of Glasgow, have all seen trade unionists sacrificed in order to win the right to vote, the right to work where they wanted and all those other rights which liberal-minded people today recognise as democratic. These rights are absolutely and superlatively important for the workers and we stand for them in every respect. We have seen the progressive and cultural forces of one nation after another smashed down because they were denied and given away by the people who ought to have defended them. The first things that the "Fifth Column" attacks are the right of free speech and the right of free opinion. And without them barbarism advances.

The working class has made too many sacrifices in the interests of these things (which, until Hitler, the British middle classes comfortably accepted), to see them go without a most bitter struggle. But, all the same, we know, as well as the people of the Federation of British Industries who are intriguing against trade unionism at this moment with the German Nazis, that the essential guarantee of their existence is a strong and democratic trade union movement. It is true that certain leaders of the trade union movement, who have been corrupted by middle age and the possibilities of a comfortable life, have betrayed those objects. We know that some of the so-called leaders of the trade union movement, who go down to country houses and find the people that they meet over a glass of brandy, are much more "intelligent" than the workers who still meet in the pub. But the working-class movement

and the trade union movement is very much older than its traitors and can outlive them; and the essence of the principle of democracy is instilled in us when we are young.

The occasion of my initiation into my trade union will always be fixed in my memory. The youngster, feeling rather awed and overcome, being taken in and introduced by one of the older skilled men, who had "fathered" him in the factory, and hearing the official welcome of the trade union branch read out to him by the Chairman, and feeling that he was now one with all the men who were strong and skilled, and that in future he would stand side by side with them in their life at the bench. This is a guarantee that becomes part of the traditions of our country.

Nobody can say that we do not welcome and encourage the new machinery that is going to make our life jointly more tolerable. In our Party Press the trade unionist who is responsible for the management on the technical side has embodied in the new machinery that has been put in dozens of new technical devices, which makes it as efficient as any on Fleet Street. We have fought and voted in a dozen elections that the workers should be free to do this in every single department of industry, and yet we still find the big combines preventing and destroying the possibilities of development and research in every direction.

With such a background, and such an outlook, the sort of democracy in which I believe becomes apparent. It is literally a democracy in which people will be able to rule themselves by the rules they have agreed to abide by, and will be judged by the people whom they decide shall judge them.

From the working-class movement and the rule of the working class among themselves in the factories will

arise the future ruling class of this country, and with it will be allied all those who really believe in freedom and democracy. But there will be no place for those who, like many of our rulers today, use democratic phrases and tricks merely in order to maintain their own vast privileges against the workers and middle class.

A whole new array of democratic machinery has grown up with the mass Press and the radio. This new machinery in many ways makes it easier for the rich and their Fascist demagogies to mislead and betray the people. The new machinery which enables girls and boys to do the work which skilled craftsmen did years ago helps to demoralise the independent feeling of the workers. But even in an unskilled workshop, even in one gigantic heterogeneous constituency, it is still possible to organise the people who are brought together over a dispute for wages, or a dispute for rents, so that they can stand together against the tiny minority who are desperately trying to rule the country in the false name of democracy.

The essence of the democracy that I have in mind can be seen in the Soviet Union, where the workers not only have freed themselves by a great struggle from the petty tyranny of the foreman, but where they are actually able to guide and direct their own lives. But this is no reason to under-estimate either the degree of democracy possible under monopoly capitalism, or the necessity for a stern struggle to defend the stages of democracy already achieved. To do so would be to belittle the sacrifices and struggles of the past which have won the democratic rights and liberties we now enjoy. Indeed, the defence of democracy even though it rests on the basis of capitalist economy has become one of the most important issues facing the people today.

Lenin, who described the democracy in capitalistic society as "Democracy that is curtailed, poor, false; a democracy only for the rich, for the minority," recalled, to a generation that had forgotten Marxism, that democracy was always class democracy. But he goes on to explain that "democracy is of great importance for the working class in its struggle for freedom against the capitalists. . . . It gives the best conditions for the development of the workers' fight for emancipation."

People have said that since both Britain and Germany are capitalist countries, there is not a ha'porth to choose between Fascism and *bourgeois* democracy, that so long as the principle of exploitation of man by man is the basis of the social system, it is immaterial what form of government we have. In other cases it is even argued that to defend democracy is to bolster up capitalism. But we, though we recognise that the British machinery of government is anything but perfect (offering as it does any amount of opportunity for a small group of the very rich to put their will across as the will of the people), realise also that it gives the common people opportunities to protect their own interests, and that therefore we must defend it and make the most of these opportunities. Democracy does not mean the abandonment of the class struggle, but freedom to carry the struggle forward. Therefore, in the struggle between Fascism and democracy, we cannot be neutral, we cannot pretend that we have nothing to lose.

Let me quote from Dimitrov's speech at the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International :

"We are not anarchists, and it is not at all a matter of indifference to us what kind of political regime exists

in any given country: whether a *bourgeois* dictatorship in the form of *bourgeois* democracy, even with democratic rights and liberties greatly curtailed, or a *bourgeois* dictatorship in its open, Fascist form. While upholders of Soviet democracy, *we shall defend every inch of the democratic gains which the working class has wrested in the course of years of stubborn struggle, and shall resolutely fight to extend these gains.*"

Democracy in Britain has always been a bread-and-butter question. This year we are celebrating the centenary of the Chartist movement. The Chartists' demands for universal manhood suffrage, vote by ballot, payment of M. P.s, abolition of property qualifications for M. P.s, equal electoral constituencies, annual Parliament, may seem unrevolutionary today. But the People's Charter was looked upon as, and did actually become, the democratic prelude to decisive advances on the road to working-class power. The Chartist leader, Stephens, described the Charter as a "knife-and-fork question." The workers who rallied behind the Charter wanted the vote, because they wanted to end their economic slavery, their twelve-hour day, child labour in the cotton mills and women's labour in the mines.

The vote was won in 1867 and later the workers forced through laws giving better conditions to miners, to factory workers, to seamen; in 1876 they won the right to picket. And after they had gained a firm legal position for the Union in 1905, British workers won big strikes for wage increases and shorter hours in the year before the War.

Democracy is not an abstraction. Without the right to organise, to strike, to vote, without the right to free speech, the British people would be no better off today than they were a hundred years ago. These rights did

not drop from heaven. Men died to win them. Only fifty years ago, a worker named Alfred Linnel was killed in a fight for free speech and the right to hold meetings in Trafalgar Square. Many fell in the fight for free trade unions. The Tolpuddle Martyrs were sent to Botany Bay in 1834; the London Gas stokers went to prison in 1872; William Gallacher and other Clyde leaders in 1916; Michael Kane and the Harworth miners in 1937.

The democratic rights once wrung from reluctant governments are not safe for ever, any more than Britain is safe from Fascism because it is "alien to our character." At any time that our democratic institutions threaten the capitalists, unless we defend them by every means in our power, they may disappear as they have done in other parts of Europe. Already we have seen the Trades Disputes Act of 1927, the Incitement to Disaffection Act of 1934, the Political Uniforms Act of 1936, the Means Test, the cutting down of the right to picket, the abolition of the Boards of Guardians. The right of the unemployed to be maintained has had to be defended in a series of bitter fights against the threat of compulsory labour camps and today that threat is once more voiced by the Prime Minister. Indeed, since the National Government came into existence in Britain in 1931, there have been more arrests, fines, sentences of imprisonment of workers defending freedom of speech and of the Press and the right of demonstration than in the last 100 years put together.

In other parts of the Empire, the colonial people are today making history in a tremendous resistance against the methods of British imperialism. They too are striving for democratic rights. Whatever differences of viewpoint may exist on the question of colonial independence, it should be possible for the Labour and

democratic organisations to reach agreement on an immediate charter of rights for colonial peoples. This would include adult universal suffrage, compulsory free education, freedom of speech, Press and organisation, full rights for trade unions and peasant organisations and a minimum level of labour and social legislation, as well as repeal by ordinance of existing extraordinary measures.

While Hitler and Mussolini threaten to go to war if they cannot get more colonies, it is well to remember that every advance of the colonial peoples towards their freedom strengthens the front of the people all over the world and weakens imperialism, the cause of war.

Those who tell us there is nothing to choose between Fascism, which has been described as the last phase in the decline of capitalism, and *bourgeois* democracy should take the trouble to find out what the workers suffer in Fascist countries. Apart from the horrors of the concentration camp and the brutality against the Jews, facts leak out even in the official figures. In 1936 the Italian people ate one-third less sugar, one-fifth less cereals, one-fifth less fruit and vegetables than in 1926-30. In Germany, 3½ million workers earned less in wages in 1936 than the unemployment benefit of 1932. On Government building schemes, the Nazi factory inspectors report that a twelve-hour shift is often worked, and sometimes even fifteen or sixteen hours a day. In the metal industry they report the working day now as ten hours. That is what happens when working-class organisations are smashed—a return in two or three years to the labour conditions that existed 100 years ago.

But though the spear-head of Fascism is directed at the working class, it is not only the workers who suffer

under the brutal tyranny of Hitler and Mussolini. The very people who in their thousands voted for Hitler, the small shop-keepers, the petty businessmen, the peasant proprietors, are beginning to realise too late that his promises of help were demagogic lies. They are beginning to see him now as the instrument of big business, the tool of the finance racketeers and the giant trusts, and these middle-class people who, through lack of political understanding, trusted him, find themselves being forced down in the economic struggle, their democratic rights withdrawn and their hopes destroyed. Nor is it only on the economic plane that Fascism has proved itself to be destructive and regressive. There is no single profession, no science, no intellectual movement, which has not been hampered and weakened by the expulsion or imprisonment of its leading exponents. In the place of Einstein and Freud, of Thomas Mann and Emil Ludwig, German culture, which was once the admiration of the world, is represented by Goebbels and Streicher. The official burning of the books was not merely a symbolic gesture. It was the expression of the hatred, and still more of the fear, that the present rulers of Germany feel for every activity of the mind that is humane and civilised.

In capitalist Britain, though it is more correct to talk of democratic rights than of democracy, lovers of liberty would, as Dimitroo says, be unworthy of the sacrifice of our forefathers, treacherous to the heroes of Spain and China, adding to our shame in the eyes of our comrades in Germany, Italy, Austria, and Czecho-Slovakia, if they refused to value their privileges or defend them.

But it is no use proclaiming our goal without some explanation of the steps necessary to reach it. Our chief enemy is Fascism, with its ghastly accompaniments of

cruelty, repression and war. For British democrats the chief obstacle between us and the destruction of Fascism is Chamberlain and the National Government. Fascism has not yet swept our shores, but it is idle to deny that Chamberlain is preparing to open the way. His domestic and foreign policy clearly show that he is the representative of the dominant section of monopoly capitalists who have everything to lose and nothing to gain from the growth of democracy. It is no longer necessary to trace Chamberlain's methods, both open and more subtle, of bolstering up Fascist aggression. They are obvious to every intelligent person. It is no longer possible to regard him as a weak blunderer, but with the cause of freedom and peace really at heart. He is perfectly clear-sighted; willing to make friends with Fascist dictators, willing to sacrifice Britain's prestige and honour, and strategical defence positions, willing to risk war as an alternative to the development of popular movements out of which the advance towards socialism becomes more decisive. Manchukuo, Abyssinia, China, Spain, Austria, Czecho-Slovakia—the record of the National Government's "appeasement" policy is fatal, and its consequences for the people of Britain become clearer each day.

The domestic policy of this Government is the natural accompaniment to their actions abroad in pursuit of their aims—the suppression of the workers, until they sink to the same impotent position as the German and Italian workers. Legislation takes on a more and more restrictive character; after the anti-democratic acts, already enumerated, we have attempts to militarise the population through A. R. P. regulations, the National Register, "no drill, no dole" threats, and the appointment of the Twelve Dictators. All the time vast millions are being spent on armaments, while social

services sink to a minimum, unemployment figures remain at a colossal figure, and the standard of living of a large proportion of the population drops to a mere subsistence level and in some cases to actual starvation.

The path of the defenders of democracy is clear—the overthrow of the National Government. Their tactics also are clear enough to any observer of recent events. It would be quite impossible for Chamberlain to withstand the united attack of all the opposition political parties backed by the force of labour in the factories, trade unions and co-operatives, along with all other democratic sections of the population.

Such a mass movement of the people and organisations who believe in democracy could sweep the Chamberlain Government away, could elect a truly popular democratic government, a government that could tackle the problems arising from poverty and unemployment at once; extend all forms of social service; grant democrratic ights to the colonial people of the Empire, and form a peace *bloc* consisting of France, Britain, the U. S. S. R. and the U. S. A. and other democratic countries which would stem the tide of Fascism. The basis of this *bloc* would rest upon collective security, so that there would be no further need for each nation to pile up separate arms.

A policy such as I have outlined would then exert a tremendous influence on the people of Germany and Italy, who would no longer feel cut off and isolated and who would be in a stronger position to go ahead with the overthrow from within of Fascist dictatorship and the establishment of democratic forms of government.

It sounds simple enough. What stands in our way? The fault lies chiefly with those who pay lip service to democracy, but do not listen to the voice of the multi-

tude nor trust the working masses. There is no need to shirk the responsibility of power, there is no reason to mistrust the strength of the people.

"Unless it has wide connections with the masses, unless it constantly strengthens these connections, unless it knows how to hearken to the voice of the people and understand their urgent needs, unless it is prepared not only to teach the masses, but to learn from them, a party of the working class cannot be a real mass party capable of leading the working class millions and all the labouring people" (*History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*).

We British communists, who believe in democracy, guard with jealous anxiety every democratic right we possess, and to that end we pledge ourselves to devote our full energies to the building up of a united front against Chamberlain, against Fascism, against war. For we are convinced that there can be no real and effective national unity or national service so long as this present government remains in power, just as we are convinced that, for a government they trust and which pursues neither imperialist nor Fascist aims, there is nothing the British people will not do gladly and voluntarily.

We owe it to the heroes who have fallen in the workers' struggles in the past, we owe it to our comrades who have died in Spain, we owe it to ourselves.

The more we appreciate the advantages of democracy, the stronger will become our determination to resist Fascism. That does not mean as I have already pointed out that the communists ever forget the ultimate goal, real democracy; and to encourage us we have constantly before our eyes the example of the Soviet Union, where democracy is something definite and

concrete. The State, its whole organisation, is directed by the will of the people; the products of its industries, the land, the cultural benefits, are the property of the people. There is equality of opportunity in every branch of life—health, housing, education, choice of work and use of leisure. Foreign and home policy is guided by the desire of the masses.

People who glibly say that "one dictatorship is like another," who claim that democratic rule depends upon the two-party system of British parliamentarism, forget that dictatorship of the proletariat is so far the most complete democracy. The Soviet State has no need for official opposition; the Government is the kind the people want. Alternative opinions concerning policy naturally exist, but there is ample scope for criticism and discussion in all the various organisations that make up the Soviet State. Mass anti-government demonstrations do not take place, because the masses do not want them. Nor do they want the business of the government hampered by the intrigues of disruptive individuals, often activated by personal grievances. The election system gives ample opportunity for the choice of candidates on the basis of individual merit. There is no desire for parties. The masses in the U. S. S. R. fully recognise that their country's business must be carried through without hindrance. It is vital to their own safety, vital to the peace of the world.

It is for all these reasons that I am a democrat.

We communists never forget that it is impossible to go forward in the daily struggle against capitalism without the active support of the masses, and that democracy, whatever its limitations may be, does afford the opportunities for agitation, ducation, and organisation. We know that as its limitations are understood, as it is attacked, as attempts to limit democratic

rights and liberties, that had previously been felt to be secure for all time, are intensified, then more and more people begin to question the soundness of the whole basis of capitalist society.

This leads to a growth of class consciousness and to the political understanding of the need for a new social order, which can only be accomplished by the overthrow of capitalism. The abolition of the system of exploitation of man by man and the development of socialist construction will lead to a new classless society in which mankind will realise complete democracy—a democracy which can give limitless opportunities for economic, political, and cultural development, and in this way realise in practice the aims and aspirations of the old pioneers who, in their heroic struggles to win democratic rights under capitalism, had precisely this object in mind.

By *Leader of the*
SIR ARCHIBALD SINCLAIR, M. P. *Liberal Party*

I AM a democrat, first because of the intrinsic merit of democracy, and secondly because of the nature of the contemporary challenge which is thrown out against it.

I am a democrat because democracy is founded upon a recognition of the value of each individual, while the rival systems of dictators depend upon his subservience to the State. L. T. Hobhouse, in his devastating essay *The Metaphysical Theory of the State*, says of the Hegelian concept on which the dictator philosophy is built up that it was designed "to turn the edge of the principle of freedom by identifying it with the law; of equality by substituting discipline; of personality by merging the individual in the State; and of humanity by erecting the State as the supreme and final form of human association."

And yet the Hegelian is unwilling to rely on the self-evident truth of his own case. "If the collectivist doctrine conformed to the data of experience and the needs of men," says Walter Lippmann in his *The Good Society*, "it would not be necessary to administer collectivism by drilling the people, sterilising them against subversive ideas, terrorising, bribing, enchanting and distracting them."

Democracy will no doubt make its mistakes, but it contains within itself the power of remedying its own mistakes, and even in its mistakes it still allows for the development of the mind of the individual.

Moreover, in the end, democracy must triumph over dictatorship. The supremacy of the individual cannot be bartered away by Teutonic texts or guns. "Against

this mighty energy," says Lippmann, "the heresies of an epoch will not prevail, for the will to be free is perpetually renewed in every individual who uses his faculties and affirms his manhood."

But if men would live under democracy, they must realise that democracy carries with it, for each one of them, and particularly for those who would take their place in the leadership of progressive political thought, certain very definite limitations which they will ignore at their peril. It must be recognised that there must exist in a democracy all manner of different opinions held by all manner of different people and ranging from those of the completely feudal reactionary to those of the wholly revolutionary anarchist. The practical reformer must recognise that the reactionary and the anarchist are as much entitled to their opinions as he is to his own. But he must recognise something more important than that. He must recognise that, the vast complexity of individual opinions being what it is, and making up what we call public opinion as it does, the practical reformer will not be able to achieve, in any period of, say, five years, more progress than he can persuade at least half the people to desire. A community is a living and growing, not a static organism. It will therefore be true that the majority of people in a democracy, if properly approached and led, will desire some change, some progress. Those who cast longing eyes back to the past, those who resist change for the mere sake of preserving the *status quo*, are stultifying rather than serving democracy.

But because a democracy is a living growth, it cannot be suddenly or sharply switched over from one form into another, and for this reason those who wish to plan perfection and impose it on a democracy will fail, however certain they may be in their own minds that

their plan is a wise one. They will fail through not observing one of the rules of democracy ; the rule that you cannot force upon the people greater developments than a majority can be persuaded to desire. If greater changes are proposed than the people are willing to accept, or if changes are suggested in a direction the people are not willing to travel, the majority will inevitably transfer their support to those who propose some other change or who propose no change at all or even to those who propose reaction.

A dictator can plan the way of life of a whole State, and no matter how different his plan may be from the existing state of his country, he can impose his plan upon his people. The democrat, in the privacy of his study, may enjoy the luxury of planning the ideal form of State for the future. But it is not for him to impose it in one sweeping law upon the people. The democrat, if he would make progress at all, must address himself, at any given moment, in any given year or decade, to the next most immediate problems in the march of progress, and must devise solutions which, by his efforts, he can persuade a majority of the people to accept.

The contribution which Liberals and Liberalism have made to the development of democracy and the contribution which they are prepared to make in the future must be appreciated in relation to their acceptance of this democratic rule.

At each stage in history, Liberals have addressed themselves, as they address themselves now, to the most urgent immediate problems and to the solutions which they believe can be made acceptable to the people.

At the end of the eighteenth and in the early years of the nineteenth centuries, Liberals (though the name had not yet been formally attached to their political party) found that the main obstacle to the development

of democracy lay in the actual form of government. The authors of *In Defence of Democracy*[1] record that "in a word, freedom was not only restricted in practice, it was also formally and deliberately restricted." This was the first problem Liberals had to face. Until it had been solved, no other progress was possible. Nor was it until towards the close of the last century that Liberals succeeded in establishing, through their Reform Bills, their secret ballot, their abolition of religious disqualifications, and their abolition of formally established property privileges, the mere form of a universal democracy. Indeed, the Liberal concentration of effort on these problems has led many to assume that with the establishment of political democracy the work of Liberalism was concluded. There could be no greater misconception. The establishment of formal political equality was not, for Liberals, an end in itself, but only an essential first step towards the development of a just order of society in which all would enjoy equality of opportunity, and from which poverty and its attendant evils would be abolished.

It has become fashionable, and it is perhaps an essential part of certain contemporary propaganda, to forget with what vigour the Liberal Governments of Campbell-Bannerman and of Asquith addressed themselves to the task of filling a social and economic content into the political outline drawn up by their predecessors. It is as well to recall now that in those pre-War years Liberals laid the foundations for our Health Insurance, Old Age Pension, and Unemployment Insurance services; in the process they were compelled to reorganise completely the structure of the Civil Service; they established the Port of London Authority,

[1] J. S. Fulton and C. R. Morris, "IN DEFENCE OF DEMOCRACY." Methuen 1935.

a new departure in public administration of a commercial undertaking; they established the rights of the trade unions to participate financially in politics; they established the principle of paying for the social services by steeply graduated taxation on the incomes of the well-to-do; and all these things they accomplished against the steady opposition of the House of Lords, whose powers they also curtailed. The structure of a new England was built in those years—the foundations of a complex economic system were laid.

No Liberal supposed, when their work was interrupted by the War, that it was concluded. Liberals today are prepared to take up their work where the War forced them to leave off. For Liberals notice—and are entitled to call attention to this—that no progress in any way comparable to their work in the pre-War years has been since achieved by the Labour Party, which came into being with unbounded self-confidence that it could make progress at a much greater rate. On the contrary, very largely because the Labour Party put before the people a rate and a direction of advance which they were not willing to accept, millions of people whose support might have been retained for a programme of practical and steady reform have been persuaded to transfer their allegiance to the side of reaction or at least to the side of retaining the *status quo*, with the most serious results upon the development of our democracy both at home and abroad.

Abroad at the end of the War, the Covenant of the League of Nations was drafted by Liberals, who looked upon it as the charter of a new era, and as an instrument allowing for growth and ordered development in international relations. It has been used first and foremost in order to establish the *status quo* by statesmen who have proceeded, on the grounds that it is only capable of

preserving the *status quo*, to throw it overboard. For them the Covenant took on its Biblical meaning and became identified with letters of stone. Peaceful change was relegated to the background, while political initiative waited on the legal formula.

As in home affairs, so in foreign affairs, it is not possible in any decade to make more progress than a majority can be persuaded to accept. It is probably true that at no time between 1918 and the present day could any leadership, however inspired, have persuaded nations completely to abolish all traces of national sovereignty; but under leadership which had more fully appreciated the meaning of world democracy, and inspired by faith in the principles of the Covenant, we might have upheld the rule of law against arbitrary force. Moreover, the seed-bed of dictatorship has been the poverty, the unemployment of peoples, and the insolvency of governments resulting from the destruction of overseas trade, and the impediments placed by governments in the way of the free exchange between peaceful communities of the world's abundance. The reduction of barriers to trade would have strengthened the foundations both of peace and of democracy. This was work which the League, under wise, vigorous, and democratic leadership, was well adapted to perform.

But we did neither of these things. We did not rally the countries of the world against aggression; and, far from promoting the reduction of tariffs, not only did we raise tariffs of our own—a breeding-ground for political corruption and profiteering—but at Ottawa we adopted a policy which enabled Mr. Bennett to say in triumph, "Henceforth no one will trade with the British Empire except on payment of tribute."

We have travelled a long way since Ottawa, via the breakdown of the World Economic Conference,

Abyssinia, and Munich. Now we must try once more to establish peace on the foundation of justice and international good faith, with constitutional machinery for peaceful change. This must be accompanied by disarmament both military and economic and the development of the resources of colonial empires for the common benefit of mankind and of their native inhabitants.

At home, though the failures of democracy have been less spectacular and less immediately dangerous, the retreat from the course of progress has been none the less definite.

Far more serious than the open challenge of the British Union of Fascists have been the insidious but deliberate actions of the Government. Marketing Boards and Unemployment Assistance Boards have been removed from the control of Parliament, so that whether the free men of England are tilling the soil or queuing up for the Labour Exchange, they find themselves subject to a jurisdiction unknown to the common law of the land. Our electoral laws have allowed a quite modest majority, or at some elections even a minority, of votes in the country to establish overwhelming majorities in the House of Commons, while at the same time in large parts of the country, tens and even hundreds of thousands of votes may be cast without securing a single representative in Parliament. In the House itself debate is more and more divorced from decision, while complex regulations can be made under ministerial decree without more than the most casual reference to the representatives of the people, and that, on terms which make any amendment impossible.

Moreover, there has grown up a sinister hush-hush policy towards matters of State. If democracy is to

flourish, it can only be upon a basis of sufficient accurate information being made available to the public to enable an instructed judgment to be given. All too often news makes its first appearance in the form of rumours in the Press, as to which the Government denies all official knowledge; and only after months have elapsed is it discovered by accident that the Government were quite fully informed of the facts of the case at the relevant time. In addition, journalists complain of the difficulty of obtaining official information; the Official Secrets Act is used to hinder both journalists and Members of Parliament in the use of information they have actually obtained. In addition, there is reason to fear that, either directly or indirectly, the Government has attempted to influence what may appear in the Press and on the screen.

But we are not merely content to defend freedom; we must extend it. Democracy must find useful work for its citizens to do; yet nearly two million of our people are unemployed. In a democracy a citizen has a right to life; yet a third of our people live below the bare minimum of nutritive safety. Democracy entails the recognition that property ennobles a man and gives him the status of freedom, for the destruction of which no amount of State protection and discipline can fully compensate him.

In a democracy, the Liberal believes that the ownership of property is an essential factor in the establishment of real independence, both economically and as it affects the character of men. Yet 40 per cent of the national property is in the hands of 1 per cent of the people.

These circumstances throw down a clear challenge to all democrats. Scandinavian countries, with a wise policy of public works, have shown that democracy

need not accept unemployment as a permanent burden. In the meantime, we ought not to impose upon those who are unemployed the injustices of the Household Means Test. The resources of our countryside, now largely lying derelict, must be developed, and the interests of the producers and consumers of food must be reconciled in a real national nutrition policy with special reference to young children. By educational and fiscal reform, by, on the one hand, controlling the powers of private monopoly, and, on the other, protecting the individual from State bureaucracy, we can begin to give meaning to equality of opportunity.

These are some of the tasks which lie immediately in front of us. These are the problems to which we must address ourselves if we are to resume the march of political and social progress. Because we do not face these problems now, sanctimonious references by our national leaders to the "liberties of England" must seem a cruel joke to the two million unemployed and the vast army of the undernourished.

Behind the immediate issues nothing less is at stake than the freedom of the human mind and the achievements handed down to us from at least 2,500 years of slow and steady if intermittent development. It is not sufficient that the democrat should rest content with satisfying himself of the truth of his position. If the ideals of democracy involve, as I believe they do, release for Europe, enlightenment for the world, let Britain proclaim her message with all the fervour of a crusade. It is for Britain, united under a far more compelling leadership than we have known in these last momentous years, to supply the power and determination to guide the peoples back into the paths of freedom and progress.

THE END