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DICTATORSHIP AND POLITICAL POLICE

The Technique of Control by Fear

by

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FOREWORD

As its aims are set out in the Introduction, it is perhaps sufficient to mention here that this book was begun in the summer of 1942 and finished in August 1944. A few notes here and there in the text and the Appendices were added at the beginning of 1945 to bring the material up to date so far as it was possible under the difficult circumstances of war-time.

The chapter on the Italian Political Police was largely written on the basis of material compiled by Miss R. Loewenstein, who lived in Italy until 1939. Mrs. T. K. C. Cordes has revised the style of several chapters and Miss Joan Osborne has assisted in reading the proofs. Mr. Herbert Read was good enough to discuss problems of editing with me. To all these persons I wish to convey my sincere thanks. The responsibility for the views expressed in this book are, however, entirely mine. These pages could never have reached the press without the continued help given by my wife. My particular thanks are also due to her for the many hours spent in typing the draft.

I further acknowledge the courtesy of the Polish Ministry of the Interior in London for allowing me in 1942 to make use of one of its reports on the persecution of the Polish Jews by the Nazis. The full sources of material used will be found in the Notes at the back of the book, but I wish particularly to record here my debt to the works of F. A. Simpson ; J. Galtier-Boissière ; G. Salvemini ; H. Rauschning ; M. Dodd and P. Wallner.

E. K. B.

LONDON,
February 1945.

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However much violence may be deplored, it is evident that, in order to make our ideals understood, we must beat refractory skulls with resounding blows . . . but this necessary violence must have a character and style of its own, definitely aristocratic.

Benito Mussolini (1921).

I declared then, before thousands of my fellow-countrymen, that every bullet fired from the barrel of a police pistol was my bullet. If one calls that murder, then I am a murderer.

Hermann Göring (1933).

INTRODUCTION : THREE PERTINENT QUESTIONS

Let us start by an imaginary flashback from some fifty or a hundred years ahead, to our own time. What will the historian writing in the next century probably regard as the main features of our age, marked as it is by two major wars ? I venture to predict that he will above all underline two decisive characteristics : one is the amazing pace of technical development, overcoming the barriers of space and time by means of the aeroplane, the radio, the amphibian vehicle—the other is the all-embracing attempt of comparatively small groups to terrorize large populations with the help of a well-calculated and organized control system. Both features are closely allied ; for only the modern scientific technical apparatus has enabled the Political Police to plan systematically and to strike swiftly. Undoubtedly, in its turn, the very existence of dictatorial groups in power, with an iron will to dominate and repress, has given strong incentive to further developments of new devices for control and destruction. From the domination of their own country, they marched forth to the conquest and subjugation of other lands, where an effort to withstand the enveloping tide could only be effective by exploiting to the full the potentialities of technical inventions and contrivances.

Perhaps a future critic will argue that such a retrospect takes too rationalistic a view, neglecting to emphasize the orgies of mass-emotion and hysteria without which a totalitarian régime and its propaganda could never have succeeded. But it is just the paradox of the twentieth-century dictatorship, as embodied by Hitler's Germany and, to a smaller degree, by Mussolini's Italy, that it engineered and manipulated mass-emotions with the help of elaborate Party organizations and a rationally planned Secret Police. It was one of the biggest mistakes made by many in the Western democracies before the war, that they thought of the Fascist systems only in terms of irrational impulses, of mass-enthusiasm and mass-hypnosis, which it was hoped and expected would in due course give way to a saner and more rational attitude. Such prophets of an automatic collapse were, so to speak, Hegelians turned topsy-turvy, claiming that what is not reasonable cannot be real for long. These ardent believers in

Reason and Progress remained unaware that the dictatorships, too, were given to a form of "rationalism", however different from their own brand. After all, there exist varied types of rational attitudes, and no sensible man in the days before the war of 1914–18 would have been inclined to identify the ethical rationalism of Kant with the technical calculations of Machiavelli, or the evolutionary reasoning of Herbert Spencer with the dynamic power-cult of Friedrich Nietzsche.

Let us for a moment compare the play of the rational factor in both democracy and dictatorship. Both are systems of political control, both have elaborated a technique of ruling and of administration, and to act according to a technique is to follow a rational pattern. In the parliamentary democracy the rational attitude expresses itself through both discussion and vote on questions of legislation. What is good for the public weal is found by debate through a process of critical discussion which aims at throwing light on the various aspects of a debated matter or measure. Parliament is supposed to present the substance of political reason and if the electors find that this reason has faded away they can replenish it by means of a new election. This may seem a rather idealized version of parliamentarianism as it actually operates, but there can be no doubt that it is the basic idea behind it. The *volonté générale* as embodied in parliament is intended to be also the *raison générale*, the essence of national reason. Another basis is provided by the existence of a largely independent judiciary. Parliament on the one hand, the judiciary on the other, are safety-valves preventing and checking unlawful, i.e. irrational, behaviour of individuals and groups.

In a dictatorship on the other hand, the executive is no longer subject to control by the legislature, nor is the judiciary independent. Legislature and executive are totally in the hands of a dictator and of the bodies appointed by him. The dictator may found his power on an army and/or on a party which then holds a privileged position, and develops a bureaucracy of its own. In any case the official ideology tends to stress that the dictator and his organization uniquely personify the substance of national reason. It is true that the structure of a dictatorship also contains rational elements, but they are of a purely technical or instrumental nature. Dictatorship, as a form of control exercised by the few over the many, does not encourage "substantial rationality", but favours "functional rationality". Dr. K. Mannheim has defined "functional rationality" as "the

organization of the activity of the members of society with reference to objective ends" (1). In a dictatorship rationality in this sense is a means of gaining and preserving power, the end being complete control over one or several nations. This end necessitates specific means, means of thinking and acting, means of directing and controlling people. It demands rational instruments of power such as a well-organized, ruthless police and a modern, highly effective army. The concept of "substantial rationality" has been formulated by Dr. Mannheim as "the capacity to act intelligently in a given situation on the basis of one's own insight into the interrelation of events". Whilst this capacity may or may not be characteristic of a given democracy, it is obvious that a dictatorship cannot promote it. On the whole it cannot allow the individual to use his "capacity to act intelligently in a given situation" on the basis of his own insight, but solely on that of the orders and directives received from the dictator or his representatives. The individual can only act as a tool of a privileged body, such as Party or Army, but seldom according to his own lights.*

Though the ideology propagated by the ruling stratum may be largely emotional and illogical, nevertheless it is a life-and-death matter for the dictatorship to apply rational means of power and organization. It must develop a specific technique in the controlling and directing of the masses. The less political scope the masses are allowed, the more feverish will be the activities of the ruling clique. Observation of the people, propaganda, terror applied against real and imaginary enemies, they have been the subject of cunning efforts in a political system where people are ruled, perhaps not always against, but in any case without their consent. If, in a dictatorship, a man invents a new military weapon, it is at once taken up by the authorities and the inventor may receive money and a medal for it. If, however, the same man makes some searching suggestions for changes in the state machinery, he may easily be declared "an enemy of the State" and lose his life and property. Thus, although

* It is significant and ironic that in time of national emergency even the dictators have to appeal to that individual initiative they did their best to suppress. Goebbels wrote in a German Army paper on the day before D-day: "More initiative. This must be the slogan. Do not wait for orders and for the threat of penalties to do what is reasonable and sensible. Make your own free decisions in keeping with common sense, and if you hesitate to act on the needs of the moment do not excuse yourself by saying that there was nobody to see to it that the necessary steps were taken. A man who enjoys responsibility acts on his personal initiative in such situations. If in doing so he makes the right decision in a hundred cases he may easily be forgiven one wrong decision" (2).

rationality has some play in a dictatorship, its range is strictly limited ; it is purely instrumental and used for the benefit of the State, but not as an end in itself.

The last twenty-five years have clearly shown that Terror can become a decisive, rational instrument for the establishing and maintenance of a dictatorship. It is only logical that an entire institution should have been built up for the handling of this deadly instrument in the shape of the Secret Police. Anyone who has either himself experienced, or heard from others about, the ruthless deeds of the Secret Police will be inclined to ask three pertinent questions, and this book is an attempt, however modest and incomplete, to answer them. The first question runs as follows : Is the existence of a systematic Secret Police a novelty or has it been known before ? Indeed it has, and in particular two well-organized dictatorships of the nineteenth century, the régimes of Napoleon I and Napoleon III in France, were both equipped with a political police. By means of their analysis in Part I, the historical background is gained against which the contemporary scene can be set out with clearer perspective. Though the two test-cases from the past can produce many interesting points of view, it is the present age with which both the man in the street and the social analyst are mainly concerned. So the complex second question is formulated : How does the Secret Police work to-day ? What is the structure of its set-up ? What are its functions in the system of a dictatorship ? Not hasty general assumptions, but a careful empirical description can give the right answer. A full historical survey of Political Police is not complete without a discussion of the U.S.S.R., but for various reasons it has not been feasible to embark upon it here. The main emphasis in Part II which deals with the secret control as developed by Fascism and National Socialism is laid on the Third Reich, not only because there is more material available, but also because this régime has done its utmost to bring the system of Political Police to " perfection " and has tried to run it on the basis of one hundred per cent. efficiency. As the specific character of the Gestapo is largely determined by its connection with the Praetorian Guards of the SS, from which it draws its personnel, these two affiliated bodies are examined in two consecutive chapters.

Important as organizations, aims, ideologies, are, " success " or " failure " of control through Political Police, nevertheless, depends chiefly on the skill of its methods, on the adequacy

of its techniques. The answer to the third question is perhaps the most vital of all and certainly the most difficult to give: How did they do it? How could they do it? It is not known to what extent Secret Police chiefs have ever issued text-books explaining how to imbue people with fear, how to watch them, how to hunt them down, and, last but not least, how to destroy them, but there can be little doubt that their activities are a systematic modern *homo homini lupus* approach on an almost scientific basis. The operations of a Secret Police in a dictatorship can be viewed from a double angle, that of the controller and the controlled, the hunter and the hunted, the destroyer and the destroyed. In Part III, therefore, not only the methods of the Political Police, their co-ordination with propaganda, their relationship to the law are dealt with, but also the impact of this instrument of Terror on the people. It is the attack which conditions the methods of defence and those of counter-attack.

A book which concentrates on certain pathological aspects of social life cannot afford to be academic, for against the background of its diagnosis there constantly looms the problem of cure. Now, when Allied armies of liberation are fighting in the heart of Europe, it becomes increasingly evident how devastating and all-embracing the work of the Nazi Gestapo and its various Quisling helpers was and in some areas still is. The deadly grip of the Secret Police on millions of people must leave behind an ominous legacy, and a stock-taking of the position is imperative. Though these pages are mainly concerned with description and analysis, it is hoped that to some slight degree they may help the planners of the future to build up a new and better synthesis.

Whilst preparing this book the author has keenly felt a double limitation. One is set by the material available. It is in the nature of a Secret Police that it wants to keep the true facts concerning its set-up and methods out of the limelight. Thus after the end of this war, when many hidden archives will probably be accessible, it might well be possible to obtain more detailed information, and, with the awareness of new facts, some fresh perspectives also. There are bound to be gaps and completeness can hardly be achieved at this stage. The fact that the Fifth Column as a channel of planned disintegration is not discussed marks a second limitation. Although its world-wide activities were a logical offshoot of Political Police procedure,

they were, in the case of Germany, also the outcome of certain branches of the Party, of the Foreign Office and of the Army. Their analysis could easily fill another volume and the present writer has therefore not embarked on this subject. As the hour for final, exhaustive research has not yet come, this book presents an interim report, aiming at an adequate demarcation and discussion of the main problems which arise from the phenomenon of Political Police in the frame of modern dictatorship. When a house is set on fire, the first task is to fight the flames and only later can an enquiry be held on how it came to burn and why arson was committed. Perhaps it remains true that the rough and tumble of war is a bad time for the historian and the sociologist to analyse current phenomena calmly and detachedly ; yet there is a fascinating advantage in trying to write contemporary history on a sociological basis in the very thick of events. As Nietzsche once remarked, one must have left a town to see its towers ; but on the other hand one has to be in the midst of its crowds, in the jostling and bargaining of its market place and in the quiet of its eventide, to know it fully. In fifty years' time the historian may be able to draw clearer lines through the composite map on which the landscape of our age is marked, but will he be able to know and to feel what it meant to live under the shadow of organized terror, to be slowly destroyed by it, or to hit back with the courage of despair ? We hope he will not.

The study of social phenomena requires experience as much as detachment. To try to be objective does not mean to be indifferent, to endeavour to describe and analyse cannot allow us to become academic, but it can receive direction and significance only if the misery and the greatness of this age of transition are fully realized and kept in mind.

PART I

TWO TEST CASES FROM HISTORY

CHAPTER I

THE POLITICAL POLICE UNDER NAPOLEON I

1. The Cry for Security as a Motive for Napoleon's Dictatorship

Napoleon's policy between 1800 and 1815 aimed at stabilization of his régime at home, and at dynamic conquest abroad. After Bonaparte had "arrived" by the success of great military campaigns, he proceeded gradually to establish a personal dictatorship by skilfully exploiting the weaknesses of the Directorate and the desire of the masses for order with glory rather than for revolution with disgrace. The bankruptcy of the Jacobins as well as the fear of the return of the reactionary Bourbons who would have dispossessed the present owners of *émigré* property played into the hand of a military dictatorship. Napoleon could maintain it by advancing coldly and cautiously. The *coup d'état* of 1799, decided through the presence of mind of his brother Lucien rather than through the courage of Bonaparte, did not at once lead to an autocracy but to a Government of three Consuls, of whom Napoleon was to be No. 1. Nobody cared about names, everybody wanted to see the end of the chaos in the administration which had marked the last years of the Directorate. Whilst the executive and legislative had quarrelled with each other, the army had become the decisive factor. It is true, Napoleon had seized power without the consent of the people, but he was anxious not to rule expressly against them. At least during the first years of his régime he held—to use a formula of the Abbé Siéyès—that confidence must come from below, authority from above. It was he who introduced the modern technique of plebiscitarian dictatorship, with its ear to the ground, through open and secret channels. Napoleon suggested to the people that they should trust and install him and they responded by electing him First Consul in 1802 and Emperor in 1804. As in every dictatorship, the people were allowed to agree with him but forbidden to voice their disagreement. Why did the masses prove so docile? Because they cared less for

liberty than for security. They were tired of the eternal struggle between *émigrés*, Girondins and Jacobins, and resented not so much the familiar interference in their private lives as the endless war of all against all and the permanent insecurity of life. Napoleon closed the process of the revolution by acting more as its executor than as its destroyer. His dictatorship was founded on the primacy of the army and on the balance maintained between the various social and political groups. Members of all of them were allowed to serve him and to be controlled by him. He based his régime less on one faction than on the levelling down of all. It was a dictatorship which used equality as a means, not as an end. Everybody who opposed it was destroyed, but—what was of greater significance—everyone willing to serve loyally was given his chance to rise. *Émigrés* served in Napoleon's household, in the Senate, in the Army, and former Girondins and Jacobins became members of the State Council and of the Councils of the provinces. As H. A. L. Fisher has shown, Napoleon succeeded after years of insecurity in making " life safe and easy for the ordinary householder " (1).

This system of dictatorship based on security was only possible (*a*) by control of the masses and (*b*) by profitable conquest abroad. Control of the masses meant not only checking them and if necessary keeping down any opposition from them, it meant also a painstaking system of information about their thoughts, feelings and reactions. It meant mass-observation on a large scale. Joseph Fouché was the man to provide both—control and information. The ex-Oratorian and former Revolutionary Commissary for Lyons crowned his astonishing career as Minister for Police by becoming Duc d'Otrante and the richest landowner in France. Like his intimate opponent and co-opportunist Talleyrand, he formed part of the new élite of Bonapartism, which was in fact a form of military feudalism. Fouché never suffered from a shortage of rivals and enemies, and twice he contracted the dangerous disfavour of Napoleon. How did this man manage to survive and to prosper—even after the fall of Bonaparte? The answer can only be a sociological one : Fouché was the prototype of the versatile cynic in politics. He became what he was because the constellation of powers and public trends favoured the reign of his type.

2. Fouché : the Career of a Political Cynic

(*a*) *Cynic versus Demagogue*

Cynicism in politics can have various forms and causes. It is more likely to come forward in a society subject to violent convulsions than in a fairly stabilized society where conflicts are settled by traditional methods and personalities socially acknowledged by a vast majority. Cynicism is not so much the attitude of the socially weak or submissive groups—for them resentment or resignation are much more characteristic—but that of people who realize the quick change of the holders of power, who see the cleavage between the ideology and real behaviour of the ruling élite ; men who know that political slogans and programmes are soon dated by the ruthless pressure of changing events and constellations. The cynic discovers that in the political gamble the " how " often matters much more than the " what ", the means more than the ends, and the basic intention—often unknown to the man of action—more than the means. A time which, in less than a generation, saw at least six different systems and sets of government, as France did between 1789 and 1815, breeds doctrinaires as well as opportunists, and in the long run very likely more of the latter than of the former. A doctrinaire must believe and act according to his rigid convictions. If he is thwarted in both, he will pay the bill, if necessary with his life. A cynic must think and act according to the ever-changing circumstances to which he adapts himself. His is the art of the turn-coat—to swim on the crest of the wave ; even, if needs be, in opposite directions. Doctrinaires want to exercise power openly, under a fixed banner—cynics aim at holding power, behind the scene, under any flag. Doctrinaires surrender everything to unity of purpose (" vivat justitia, pereat mundus ! "), cynics sacrifice everything on the altar of success. A doctrinaire, cold and imbued with the iron spirit of revolutionary puritanism : this was Robespierre. A cynic, cold and mindful ever to keep his footing on the slippery vehicle from which he wielded power over others : this was Fouché. The age of the French Revolution, of necessity, produced both types : the doctrinaire to make the break with the past definite and irrevocable, to concentrate the will of the new régime up to boiling-point so that France could resist the reactionary governments abroad that had joined hands with the former reactionaries at home : the cynic to assist in the maintenance of the new and better balanced order after

the crater of the revolution had been closed. The provincial ex-lawyer Robespierre, who preached revolution with the fervour of a religious sect, stood and fell with the Jacobin Club, the brain and heart of the Revolution. All his opponents of various political shade, Dantonists as well as Hébertists, had gradually lost close contact with the Club—the "Incorruptible" alone remained faithful to it to the last. Fouché only turned Jacobin when any other attitude would have endangered his political career, if not his life. The "butcher of Lyons" helped to bring about the fall of Robespierre when the latter was about to destroy him as an unreliable suspect.

Robespierre proclaimed virtue as the austere goddess of the nation; Fouché, if we can believe Mme de Staël, often spoke of virtue "as of an old wives' tale". If, nevertheless, he sometimes followed a line of decent behaviour, he did so because it seemed to him the most rational thing to do; "so that his wits brought him to where other people arrive under the promptings of conscience". Fouché never committed himself entirely or irrevocably to any cause or person; he was always on the look-out for new tendencies and movements. With this zest for change an almost weird inscrutability was combined. During his earlier years, as an unassuming teacher with the order of Oratorians, he had acquired an iron self-control, which made it so difficult for his subordinates or enemies to read the thoughts of this rather monosyllabic man. It has been said of him that he was without nerves and without passion, with one exception, the love of intrigue and power. In the National Assembly he never took the floor, his weak voice preventing him from competing with the great orators. His weapons were not the political harangue and the appeal to the masses, but the whispering campaign, the stab in the back. Like Himmler in the Third Reich, he wanted the substance of power, not its pomp and mantle. His effrontery, when changing sides, was truly remarkable; he obviously found a sadistic pleasure in betraying his former friends or partners.

(*b*) *The Road to Success*

Fouché's political life-history was largely moulded by the revolutionary events between the decapitation of Louis XVI in January 1793 and the death of Robespierre in the same manner in July 1794. During this time, like many other radicalized politicians, he was zealously acting for the total revolution, "la revolution intégrale". As commissioner in the provinces he

aimed at the complete nationalization of property, the annihilation of the Church and the disappearance of the propertied classes. With Collot d'Herbois he carried out a savage punitive expedition against Lyons and experienced the power and also the limits of Terror. His methods remind us of Nazi practices in Poland and Russia to-day. Hundreds of well-to-do citizens were systematically eliminated; in one case, 64 "culprits", fastened together in couples, had to face two huge trench-graves before they were summarily shot by a big gun.

Slyly he put the onus for this cruel slaughter on others. It must, however, be admitted that sometimes, at the last moment, he had saved lives from the guillotine or given a private warning to persons in danger of arrest. He could occasionally be human, when he could afford it or, to put it better, when it would seem to pay, if only in the distant future. By this attitude he made friends in all camps without alienating himself from the party in power. After the fall of the Jacobins, Fouché avoided deportation and slipped back into the comparative obscurity of a discredited politician. One adventurer often finds another to help him along for a time. Fouché found Vicomte Barras, now a member of the Directory, and through him two minor appointments in the provinces. Returning to Paris in 1797, he discovered a safe road to prosperity by establishing a company for the delivery of provisions to the troops. As an army-purveyor he quickly gave up the Communist insignia and instead built up profitable connections with the *nouveaux riches*. In July 1799 the Directors sent an urgent message to Fouché, then ambassador at the Hague—he had been appointed Minister of Police. Nevertheless, his power, like that of the weak Directory, was on shifty ground so long as the possibility of a restoration of the monarchy existed. The returning Bourbons would have disposed of the man who once voted for the death of Louis XVI. Thus it was in Fouché's own interest to help a general into power who would prevent the restoration of the old monarchy. General Bonaparte seemed to be the man. It would hardly have done for the First Consul to discharge Fouché from his office at a time when the Minister of Police had regained popularity with the Republican-minded strata. To keep him was to take out an insurance policy guaranteeing the Jacobin Party's good behaviour. Moreover, Fouché s attitude towards the Jacobins was now detached. He had seen through their "human corruptibility and forgetfulness, passions and sensuality" (2).

During all the ups and downs of his co-operation with Bonaparte, Fouché never once relinquished the attitude of a man " with a heart of diamond, a stomach of iron and a tearless eye ", ys Talleyrand aptly formulated it. He was twice Minister of Police—from July 1799 to September 1802, and from July 1804 to June 1810. This is not the place to go into details about the reasons for his dismissal in 1802. When in 1804 " the air in Paris proved to be full of daggers ", Monarchist and Republican alike, there was no one with Fouché's master-hand to unravel the plots against the Emperor's life. The Ministry of Police, abolished two years before, was restored and Fouché again took the reins of office, in power and splendour. Soon he had to police not only France, but practically the whole of Europe. Napoleon could as little do without him, as he could a decade afterwards, during the Hundred Days, when for the last time the Corsican tried to defy the great powers, who eventually brought his meteor-like career to an end. However much the Dictator disliked, sometimes even hated, his ambitious Lieutenant, he realized that an efficient State Police was indispensable to him.

3. The System of Fouché's Political Police

The maintenance of a dictatorship, as will be seen in the course of this book, largely depends on rational methods, on ruthless and economic calculation of means and instruments. It is primarily a question of efficient organization from above. A subtle, invisible and widespread net is needed running parallel with the general policy of the State, challenging and unmasking the " Enemies of the State ", both at home and abroad. Fouché's organization, founded on the remnants of the French Revolution, grew and grew to ever wider ramifications with Bonaparte's rise from First Consul via Consul for Life to Emperor, and Dictator of Europe. Napoleon's principle, like that of the Fascist dictators of our age, was " Divide and Rule "—he resented any of his lieutenants assuming more than a specified power and he watched them all. Fouché, in his turn, learnt much from his master's methods. He applied the principle of divided and strictly limited functions to the whole structure of the Ministry of Police. The thin-lipped, inscrutable minister knew how to employ people and how to keep them at bay. He was always suspicious and he must have felt more than the ordinary pleasure in wielding power from the knowledge that many were dependent

on his arbitrary decision. But above all, he was a superior organizer, using others as specialists only, and reserving for himself alone the survey over and the final control of all branches of police-work. In the great reorganization of the Ministry in 1804 the main branches were built up according to the double principle of regions and of subject-matter. France was divided into four large areas and a State Councillor was put in charge of each of them. The first included the North, West and the bulk of the East of France, with such strongholds of opposition and intrigues against the régime as Normandy, Brittany and Vendée ; the second comprised the South, the third Paris, the fourth Italy, so far as it had been incorporated. Amongst the four State Councillors, Réal, in charge of the first division, and Dubois, in charge of Paris, were the most prominent ; the latter owing to the central rôle of the capital in the French state system, the former, an ex-terrorist from the days of the Revolution, because he functioned as a kind of Vice-Minister of Police during the whole of the Empire (even after Fouché's fall in 1810). In addition, there existed six departments, divided according to spheres of interest. The first, under a Secretary-General, concentrated on all highly confidential matters, which were to be dealt with only by the Minister himself.

The second department included the Sécurité Générale, the prison police as well as the secret police, and was directed by the able Desmarest. In a report this ex-priest defined the duties of his department as follows :

> This division is specially concerned with matters of State, that is to say with the investigation of all plots and schemes against the Constitution, the Government, and persons in authority as well as the arrest of the instigators . . . of these operations. It watches over publishers, false coining and all forgeries of importance to the government, over clandestine meetings and leading men of all parties and opinions, and foreigners. It inspects and directs the secret and exclusive agents attached to the Minister, and suggests to the Minister the arrest of persons concerned in conspiracies (3).

The third division bore the characteristic label " individual liberty and liberty of the press ". In co-operation with a committee of the Senate, it handled the censorship of papers and books. The supervision of the thousands of *émigrés* was the concern of the fourth department ; it had to consider the numerous applications of returned persons to be struck off the

special registers of *émigrés*. The fifth and sixth departments were given to the finances of the police and to its archives respectively.

The Personnel and its Functions—Officials and Informers

Unlike to-day, the personnel of the Secret Police of Napoleon was not chosen from the élite of a ruling party. It was a kind of medley, recruited from various social strata which had survived the earthquake of the last decade : ruined nobles, unfrocked priests, unemployed clerks, ex-members of revolutionary committees, adventurers of all kinds and of very different social origin belonged to it. Fouché endeavoured to remould these uneven elements and to shape them into a regular profession. Following Napoleon's model he aimed at the amalgamation of the former revolutionary and conservative factors and endeavoured to strike a balance between them. To make the General Police a respectable administration was his rather ambitious promise to the Consuls when he took office in 1799. As it was his policy to have a foot in each camp and an ear to each social group, he would welcome collaborators from all walks of society. Fouché's system of control provided a marked distinction between the officials of the police, recognizable to the public as such, and the innumerable informers and agents who, from the nature of their confidential or social position, had to remain anonymous.

Amongst the former were the most powerful *commissaires-généraux*. Residing in important harbour towns and in other places on the frontier, they checked the travellers arriving and departing. Toulon, Marseilles, Bordeaux, Lyons, Genoa, Turin, Antwerp, Le Havre, St. Malo and Strasbourg formed the most important of their observation posts. In addition, *commissaires-spéciaux* were installed at ports on the Channel, such as Boulogne and Ostend, in order to keep an eye on traffic to and from England, even with the help of armed police boats. These powerful pro-consuls had a firm grip on a suspected or agitated region. By their orders men of the Secret Police would quickly search town and country : they claimed precedence in power over various regional functionaries and they were so strongly backed by the Minister that complaints about them hardly ever proved successful.

As to the informers, Fouché states in his Memoirs that they were paid, according to their importance and services rendered, 1,000–2,000 francs per month. It can be assumed that the difference in payment corresponded partly to the social position

of the informer. Their official designation was "*observateurs exacts*" but the public liked to nickname them "*mouchards*" There were three main groups :

(*a*) Workers, servants, innkeepers.
(*b*) Persons in the pay of highway commissioners ; they were not regularly paid, but instead received a special reward for each piece of information, for instance 100 francs for the denunciation of an *émigré*.
(*c*) Society spies—" impoverished aristocrats of both sexes, perjured royalists, ex-terrorists, courtesans like Ida de Saint-Elme, who had been successively the mistress of many high officers from Moreau to Ney. Even Josephine herself for some time came under this category in so far as she transmitted information to Fouché of what was going on in the intimate circles of the Bonaparte family.

Further, the Emperor had given Fouché permission to build up a cadre of secret agents abroad. Spider-like they sat in all the prominent places, in Hamburg, Berlin, Vienna, London, even New York. Like a secret shade they followed Napoleon's armies abroad and watched the various embassies inside and outside France. Their main task was to check counter-revolutionary plots, originating either from England or from the *émigrés*. These plots were hatched in a strange underworld, in which a silent struggle between masked opponents raged incessantly. Take Hamburg, for instance, a centre of the secret service, where Bourrienne, later the private secretary of the Emperor, held sway in 1806. Together with the adjoining Altona, then a Danish town, it formed " a meeting place of all the thieves, the bankrupts, the embittered *émigrés* and also of the active agents of George III and the Comte de Lille "—a hotbed of intrigue and plotting. Bourrienne had his spies everywhere, in the port, with the big trading houses. International agents kept him informed of what was going on in Stockholm, St. Petersburg, Berlin, Frankfurt and London—and many threads converged in his skilful hands. In the Rhineland special agents mixed with the large colony of *émigrés*, in Rome spies tried to unravel the secrets of the Vatican and of the Catholic International. Fouché's agents in London frequently encountered their opposite numbers, the agents of the Comte d'Artois. Both sides endeavoured to spot the enemy, to deceive him and finally to destroy him. The demarcation line between the two camps however was fluid.

Sometimes agents changed their employer and followed alluring offers from the other side. Well versed in the subtle art of double-crossing, these adventurers sold themselves to-day to the Imperial Police, to-morrow to Anglo-Royalist agencies. One agent named Bayard passed from the English service to that of Fouché, only to return later to the English side. Pressure and probably torture played their part in these "conversions". Fouché was also authorized to enlist the support of the French diplomats abroad. He would ask the French Minister in Florence to shadow certain agents of the King of Sardinia, or the ambassador in Madrid to interrogate a banker or the minister in Naples to have some arrests made (4). It should be noted that Fouché, like the modern originators of the Fifth Column technique, worked through both channels, the official diplomats accredited abroad and the special agents sent out on specified missions; he kept them apart from each other.

The work of the many agents at home and abroad was primarily to observe and to detect. If, in France, a punitive expedition was needed, the minister could rely on the services of the *gendarmerie*. Whilst this body had chiefs of its own, it often acted according to Fouché's instructions. It specialized in organized suppression, carried out executions and was helpful in many other ways. Its most drastic appearance was made under the name of *camp volant*, or "flying camp". This meant the systematic combing out of a specified area in which rebels were hunted. A brigade of gendarmes, or sometimes of troops, would occupy an unruly district, would proclaim a state of siege and billet themselves on the population. Arrests were made, banks examined and passes checked. Such a drastic step was, however, only rarely taken: in 1806–7 when discipline was restored in the Vendée; and in 1809 when a "flying camp" was imposed on Normandy.

4. Fouché's Bulletins and Napoleon's Orders

If one wants to get a graphic impression of how Napoleon and Fouché, in an often doubtful co-operation, controlled and watched France, then no document could be more instructive than the "Daily Bulletins" which were sent every day, between 1804 and 1814, to the Emperor, first by Fouché and afterwards by his successor Savary (5). Each bulletin is a unit in itself and the variety of subjects touched upon is astonishing. It ranges

from items of ordinary police interest, such as thefts and arson, to the check on foreign diplomats in Paris and to confidential reports on events in the enemy camp. Many observers and reporters contributed to it, but it was Fouché's pen which remoulded and wrote up the raw material, even sometimes adding strictly confidential postscripts. These bulletins were fed from at least five main sources :

1. The correspondence of the Ministry, extracts or précis from letters or reports on the situation in the different parts of the Empire, the state of conscription, the behaviour of returned *émigrés*, the attitude of the priests and their abusive acts, the various societies and assemblies, finally news coming from agents covering the whole of Europe from London to Naples and from Hamburg to Lisbon.

2. The bulletins from the Councillors of State dealing with various events in the provinces.

3. The bulletins covering the Paris and Seine districts, full of interesting remarks on all aspects of daily life in the capital, from public meetings and private gatherings to the behaviour of suspected persons and the fluctuations of the Stock Exchange, the latter frequently being regarded as a barometer of the public's reactions to current events and rumours.

4. The bulletins on foreign affairs, based on extracts from letters by agents and police officers abroad, and mainly concerned with the supervision of foreign courts and cabinets, of the Bourbon princes of Anglo-Royalist agents, etc.

5. A survey of the offences committed during the preceding month.

These bulletins reveal two significant aspects of the political control exercised by this régime. The daily *Ordres du Ministre* and his observations on political suspects both show the close grip of the police on the country. The *Ordres du Ministre* had to provide evidence for the Emperor that Fouché was active and fully alive to all the danger signals. It was his job to carry out the detention and release of various types of political suspects. In all cases the Minister decided, without any interference from the ordinary jurisdiction, either on the basis of special instructions from the watchful Emperor or on his own initiative. The following categories were current to express the decisions made : released—released but under supervision—released but within the limit of *x* miles from his house—under supervision 40 miles outside Paris and the Court—one year of detention—detention

maintained—expelled from France—deported to his home country—authorized to stay at X for 3 months—to go to Y—to return to Paris.

Behind these laconic words individual tragedies were often concealed, resulting from the expressive orders given by Napoleon to the Minister of Police. Here are some selected examples of these orders which may illustrate the dictator's interference in the lives of hundreds of individuals (6) : the arrest and enforced residence of a priest is ordered ; he must stay in a small community 60 leagues from Paris under supervision of the *gendarmerie*. In August 1809, Napoleon finds " a bad spirit " amongst the Belgians. Thus preventive measures against them are to be taken by a purge of the authorities, the arrest of " bad subjects " and the deportation of 5,000–6,000 of them to Burgundy or Champagne. A certain Monsieur D'O. is ordered to Paris with the proviso to stay there until he shall learn the Emperor's further intentions. A similar order concerns a Monsieur Van der Leyen in Krefeld (department of the Ruhr). He, too, has to take up his residence in Paris and all his property will be confiscated unless his two daughters, at present in Germany, return to France and are placed in one of the high schools during the next six months. At the same time similar orders were issued against seven other men and one woman.

Napoleon's instructions to the Minister even touch on the most minute details of how to carry them out. The victims of the Emperor's wrath are to be sent to their places of exile two only at a time ; an interval of fifteen to twenty days must elapse before the next victims follow, " in order that this measure does not give the appearance of being forced and extraordinary but looks like a routine measure of the administration ". There is an order to trace and to arrest the writer of an intercepted letter, a priest who wrote from Parma to one of his parishioners in Rome—another order suggesting the interception of all letters written by the Pope and those addressed to him—" in this connection, is the controller of the post in Savoy reliable ? If not he is to be replaced." All letters arriving from England by licensed ships have to be carefully examined as nearly always they contain important matter. Not all the instructions, however, are negative ; sometimes it pays to show generosity. In February 1811 Napoleon issued an order to reinstate 1,500 priests in Rome, who two years earlier had refused to take the oath prescribed by the Code Napoléon ; they are to be told that they should ask

for the Emperor's grace in a special address to him. They will take the oath and then return to their former positions.

These few examples can only give an inadequate impression of the variety of orders which Napoleon needed for enforcing his control. In the Bulletins Fouché had an important instrument with which both to influence the Emperor and to justify his own policy so often attacked by jealous rivals, out to undermine his position. Napoleon more often than not employed a haughty and ill-tempered tone towards the man whom he could ill afford to lose. Perhaps this is inevitable in a dictatorship where the " divine " All Highest has to keep his distance, not only from the masses whom he despises, but also from his lieutenants whom he fears. The same irritability and deep-rooted suspiciousness is reflected in Napoleon's harsh orders to Fouché as is shown in Hitler's dealings with his leading henchmen of which Rauschning has rendered a convincing account.

Napoleon often criticized the Bulletins and complained that they gave him pictures instead of facts. This reproach was hardly justified. The Bulletins are crammed full of facts and observations. They reflect the ubiquitous eyes of the Secret Police and the wide range of their activities. Fouché's men continuously checked the moods and attitudes of the masses in the different parts of France, carefully studying their reactions to current events or measures taken by the government. From the reports of a single month (July 1806) a few significant samples may be given : in the Department Moselle the prefect is satisfied. All conscripts are with their regiments ; only three men deserted ; the taxes are being paid without difficulty ; rarely has the payment to be enforced ; the number of sick persons in the hospitals and prisons, though high during the preceding winter, has now considerably decreased. Department Deux-Nèthes : the situation has improved ; the inhabitants are submissive to the Government ; as certain monks intrigued, they were watched and denounced to the Archbishop. In Lyons the occupation of Rome by French troops has caused some sensation. The priests secretly suggested to the people that this step was a violation of religion. Whilst the priests are under supervision, the Vicar-General of the diocese had to deny the rumours about the suspension of the Vatican State by reading an authentic letter from the Pope himself. He had to do so by order of the Commissioner-General of the Police. Department Sambre-et-Meuse : owing to the new taxes on drinks, a noticeable change in the mood of the people

has taken place, apparently not for the better. However, as Fouché puts it with his dry cynicism, " the people are quiet and submissive ". More satisfactory is the report of the Prefect in Ariège, who labels the public spirit as " good ". Unlike elsewhere the ministers of the two religions live there in harmony ; they preach submission to the laws and set an example in it (*sic !*) ; the amnestied *émigrés* have not given cause for any complaints ; the number of beggars has decreased, the price of corn is low but that of wine has gone up. Altogether a very agreeable situation from the point of view of the dictatorial controller. Sometimes reports are less haphazard and distinguish between the potential enemies of the régime. For instance in the city of Aix three different social groups are marked : (*a*) the masses, who "are very good " ; (*b*) the aristocrats, who are vain, arrogant and keep apart ; (*c*) the Jacobins, who turn out to be mere talkers of no importance. In order to improve the situation in this town, it is suggested that the Emperor should appoint a strong impartial man as Prefect. The last Prefect, though intelligent and devoted, unfortunately lacked " the talent of influencing and directing the minds of the people ", obviously an indispensable gift in any authoritarian régime. If incessant vigilance is considered necessary in France, how much more vital is it in the rest of humiliated Europe. Germany and Italy are particularly watched. In the spa of Pyrmont in Western Germany a number of members of the high German aristocracy were staying in July 1806, amongst them the Duke of Mecklenburg, the father of the Queen of Prussia, and their son, the heir-apparent. This exalted circle gathered every day in the afternoon and Fouché's informant had full knowledge of the topic of their conversation—the events in Rome, lately occupied by French troops. But the circle was apparently aware of being spied upon for " they are very reserved in their discourse ; but thinly disguised jealousy can be observed, kept in check by fear ".

The supervision of kings and princes is, however, not confined to foreign dynasties, it even includes the Bonapartes themselves. Fouché must have realized that the secret watch on Napoleon's brothers meant dancing on a thin rope and needed very careful balancing. Every criticism implied had to be couched in cautious terms. Take, for instance, a report on Joseph Bonaparte, King of Naples, in July 1806. The financial position of the kingdom is pictured as deplorable ; no wages have been paid during the last three months. Why this weak state of affairs ? Partly

owing to the King's excessive generosity. The King has now to realize " that one can only govern this country by great firmness ". On his arrival he had been well received, for the prestige of the name Bonaparte was immense. Then public organizations offered him a gift of one million francs. The King gave them an answer which did credit to his character : he refused to accept. Meanwhile, however, his needs became pressing, he had to demand half the amount originally offered to him. Now the representatives of Naples " don't show any hurry to answer his appeal ". And the moral of the story ? In this country, says Fouché's report, one cannot achieve anything through generosity. " Kindness here as elsewhere means justice—otherwise it is weakness."

Needless to say, the Bulletins paid particular attention to England and the English. During the selected period, in July 1806, when peace negotiations took place between France and Britain, the Secret Police kept a careful check on Lord Yarmouth, the special British envoy in Paris. His daily movements and meetings are most painstakingly reported and above all his co-operation with the Russian minister, M. d'Oubril. With apparent uneasiness Fouché checks the frequent visits the two foreigners pay each other. The Russian envoy is found to be strikingly well informed about the situation in Middle Germany and Fouché must assure his master that " he has taken steps to find out from whom M. d'Oubril obtains his information ". Lord Yarmouth's couriers going to and from England are regarded by the Parisians as messengers of a forthcoming peace. By the end of July 1806 " people talk of nothing but peace in Paris ". Fouché seems to favour it, for he repeatedly reports that " the opinions and hopes of the public are for peace ".

At the same time his Intelligence Service watches the Channel coast and the ships sailing to and fro for news from England. A Portuguese brig arrived in Cherbourg after having been detained by an English warship in Plymouth for some time. The captain and a passenger could give valuable information about transports under preparation in Plymouth to take 9,000 men to Sicily, and about a galleon flying the Prussian flag which frequently sailed from England to France with the express approval of the British Admiralty. " The Prefect in Cherbourg is of the opinion that the consent was only given to facilitate espionage."

With deliberate ambiguity Fouché would act as an intermediary between Emperor and public. He presented petitions

or forwarded complaints. And he saw to it that he could always point to the Emperor as a scapegoat for refusal or a harsh decree. It was not always in Fouché's interest to act as ruthlessly as Napoleon had prescribed. When the Emperor discovered the slackness of his minister, he censured him in an arrogant, schoolmasterly and even threatening manner.

> Permit me to tell you [Napoleon wrote to Fouché in August 1805], that I cannot understand your behaviour at all. Either you are very ignorant of people or you try to occupy me with matters which should be no concern of mine. Lecourpe is in Paris; he should not be there; no one is falser and more thoroughly criminal-minded. In twelve hours' time he must be outside Paris and must never return to it. If one had even the most elementary idea of government, one should feel that Lecourpe should never stay at a place except a hundred miles from Paris (7).

Four years later Napoleon accused the ambitious Fouché of indulgence towards grumblers and rumour-mongers in Paris.

> Occupy yourself with police matters and not with foreign affairs at your Ministry. A minister of Police ought to be responsible for rumours which are circulated in order to mislead the population. Had you devoted yourself a little more to that part of public administration, you would have found the threads of the intrigue laid by agents who incite Paris by this system of malignity. Inform me in a special report about the parts of the town in which the most stupid gossip is circulating and take steps to suppress it. You should keep me informed about everything which is said and done in Paris and I only learn it from others (8).

To make this criticism even more drastic, the Emperor adds a P.S.:

> The surroundings of the Town Hall swarm with people who spread such rumours. Why have you not agents there who deny them and make their absurdity evident? This step should go hand in hand with the arresting of the rumour-mongers.

With his never-ending lust for power, Fouché, however, continued to poke his acute nose into foreign affairs and gradually came to regard them as part of his universal policing. In the summer of 1810, he sent his own envoy to London, in the person of the banker Ouvrard, to enter into surreptitious peace negotiations with the English Cabinet against the will of the Emperor. When Napoleon learned of this dangerous move, he expressed his indignation in a furious outburst and Fouché's fall was sealed. He eventually received this cutting note from the Emperor: "Duc d'Otrante, your services can no longer be agreeable to me. It is time for you to depart during the next twenty-four hours

and to remain at your Senatorial seat. As this letter has no other purpose, I pray God that He will take you in His holy and worthy keeping". (9) This time the date-line was fixed for him and he kept it in deadly fear for his life. Fouché knew only too well that to be subject to Napoleon's wrath was no laughing matter. The reaction of the public to the fall of Fouché was significant. Talleyrand had recommended as his successor —" M. Fouché himself". But this time Napoleon made another choice ; he appointed the chief of his personal counter-police and former leader of the *gendarmerie*, the simple and brusque general Savary. The rather naïve Savary was as much amazed by this appointment as the public was stunned. " The next day", he remarks in his memoirs, " when this appointment appeared in the *Moniteur*, no one would believe it . . . I inspired terror in everyone, everyone packed his bag, there was talk only of exile and imprisonment, and in fact I believe that the news of an outbreak of the plague would not have had a more terrifying effect than my appointment to the Ministry of Police. . . ." (10). Fouché's reign, with all its sinister aspects, had meant a certain stability to the Parisians—his removal seemed to open the way to brutal chaos.

5. The Treatment of Political Prisoners

The activities of the political police against the " enemies of the State " can be compared with a drama, the three acts of which are performed perpetually.

Act I. Spotting the enemies, unearthing their plots and their organizations.

Act II. Chasing and catching them.

Act III. Punishment and repression.

Fouché had elaborate methods for spotting and tracing the enemies, particularly the Royalists in the Vendée, the so-called *Chouans*. His peculiar instruments of discovery will be discussed in a later chapter *—here Fouché's smart tricks for breaking and punishing the opponents may be described. These tricks could not have been as doubtful and arbitrary as they were had the Minister of Police not been independent of any " normal " jurisdictional body. The Political Police was not an instrument to maintain the normal law, but a means to keep its victims away from it. In order to break gangs of political opponents threats were applied as well as promises : menaces to all who refused to

* See Part III, Ch. I, pp. 140-1.

give information about wanted persons : to relatives, friends, landlords and landladies of the hunted ; but even more promises, intended to corrupt people and thus to obtain a grip on them. Safety and money were promised to those who gave the victims away, to the man who betrayed his partners, to all collaborating in the catch. It is perhaps the strongest proof of Fouché's rationalizing behaviour that he usually kept his promises. Apparently he regarded a certain amount of reliability as a prerequisite for the success of his transactions. It is true Fouché's thirst for information made him choose less cruel and abhorrent methods when cross-examining an arrested person than his chief subordinates. Desmarest, the ex-minister, used the subtle means of deception, confusion, of misleading and cunning questions. Réal terrorized the examinees by his cold harshness and did not mind applying the thumbscrew to extort confessions. Fouché, as Madelin has remarked, achieved much by sheer seduction. He made the prisoner talk, confess and give information. His aim was not so much the annihilation of the caught bird, but the catching of others. He did not believe so much in violent punishment, but in enforced enlightenment. The prisoner could improve his own position by enlightening the eager police—all the worse for him if he failed to realize his own interest. Soon after the 18th Brumaire Fouché issued an order that every prisoner must write a statement on his case. He believed in reason, not like Voltaire as a principle of the universe, but as a basis of a sly and dry bargain which he was prepared to strike with anybody so long as it was advantageous. His Machiavellianism was as versatile as it was rational. The ex-Jacobin loved system and order, even if the order was sometimes that of the churchyard.

What happened to the political prisoner, whom the police judged guilty or dangerous? Neither Napoleon nor Fouché was in favour of sensational big trials, for there rebellion might prove infectious ; the less said and heard about a case in public, the better for the safety of the realm. After the sensational trial against the Royalist Cadoudal and his followers in spring 1804, undesirables were silently exterminated with Napoleon's express approval. Two other ways of disposing of an affair were " the administrative enquiry " and the military tribunal. The " administrative enquiry " meant that the case in question was declared outside the normal jurisdiction. The Secret Police would deal with it at their discretion by taking the law into their

own slippery hands. The Minister of Police could do with the victim what he liked ; he could play with him as a cat with a mouse, throttling it or mishandling it or shutting it up or letting it go eventually. The military tribunal carefully distinguished between the main wirepullers and the smaller fry ; only the former were sentenced to death by way of shooting or by the guillotine. The others were either " put at the disposal of His Excellency the Minister of Police " or " to be confined at the Minister's pleasure until the conclusion of peace ". The Minister would send them to one of the State prisons or he might release them to remain under police supervision. They were given a place of compulsory residence and banished from Paris. This step was deliberately taken in order to prevent the formation of circles of " plotters and rumour-mongers ".

It marks one of the fundamental differences between a dictatorial and a " lawful " régime that in the latter all persons arrested must be brought to trial and that no acquitted person can be detained. In a dictatorship neither trial nor acquittal is legally and in practice safeguarded. As the fear of the police is not subordinate to, but superimposed on, that of the normal jurisdiction, the Secret Police can detain in spite of an acquittal. A man may be detained even when neither sentenced nor found guilty, from fear that he might be acquitted by a normal jury owing to lack of evidence. Not his deeds, but his mental attitude make him primarily " guilty ", in the eyes of the French police of 1800 as to-day in the Third Reich. The constitution of 1799 had still emphasized " the sacred right of freedom ", but, although there existed the institution of the petty jury, it did not " protect a man from illegal imprisonment or secure a speedy trial for him " (11). The *lettres de cachet*, the end of which had been proclaimed by the Constituent Assembly with zest, were now revived to all intents and purposes. Once more one part of a family in disagreement with another could call in the police to have the odious relative detained in the Bastille ; such wretched individuals were cynically declared to be " detained owing to scandals ", which the more powerful members of the family often wished to hush up.

Even when a man was acquitted by a court and not retained by the suspicious Secret Police, the fear of Fouché still dominated him. All persons formerly imprisoned for conspiracy and assistance to the Royalists remained under police supervision ; so did all *émigrés* whose return to France had been authorized, priests

suspected of clerical plots, reformed officers but also, to redress the balance, many ex-members of Jacobin clubs whose deportations had not been carried out; finally even sometimes people who had been denounced by personal enemies, but whose innocence had subsequently been established. All these types needed a special travelling permit and were often banished from Paris and its surroundings for good.

Fouché Finances the Ministry and Himself

How was Fouché's extensive police system financed? The annual official budget of the general police, which ran into 1 to 2 million francs, did not contain or cover the secret expenses. In his Memoirs, Fouché claims that the Secret Police needed several millions to keep going. "These sums were raised secretly by the taxes on gambling, prostitution and passports." The ex-minister conveniently forgets, however, a fourth source of these secret revenues: the confiscated property of arrested conspirators, which was very instrumental in rewarding successful informers and executioners. Fouché defended gambling as an "unavoidable evil" and its taxation as "a bitter necessity in the present situation of our society" (12). Not morals but order was this cynic's main concern. "As it was an unavoidable evil it had at least to be led into firm channels in order to prevent disorder." From the exploitation of this useful vice others were profiting too. "Under the Empire, the establishing of which cost about 400 millions as thirty families had to be equipped as Majesties and Royal Highnesses, the games had to be organized on a large scale, for now their proceeds no longer served only for paying my mobile columns of informers." After the coronation of the Emperor, Perrain was appointed lessee of the gambling houses in France and had to pay to the State 40 million francs yearly and to the Minister of Police 3,000 francs daily. The bargain between the vested interest of organized gambling and the police was advantageous for both sides. To the gambling houses it meant in any case a reliable guarantee of security, as the police themselves were interested to see gambling prosper and would protect the gambling houses against robbers and rowdies. Fouché, whose official salary after 1806 had been 140,000 francs, died as the biggest estate owner in France—his inside information having given him an immense advantage in his speculations on the Bourse. The people of Paris came to regard the Duc d'Otrante's purchases on the market as an indication of Napoleon's

latest victory, of which his smart police lieutenant always obtained priority knowledge.

6. Policing the Press

Napoleon hated the press and the *idéologues* alike (13). He never really learned to strike a happy medium between brutal suppression and that unbridled licence which had existed before 1800. During France's dangerous struggle with three great powers the press had been indiscreet enough to reveal some vital military operations. Papers had attacked foreign nations and governments with a lack of prudence which might imperil Napoleon's policy of reconciliation between the Republic and Europe. This state of affairs, however, hardly justified the famous edict of January 1800, which allowed only thirteen out of seventy-three papers to survive. Soon afterwards the First Consul coldly invited Fouché to reassure himself that the morale and the patriotism of the editors of the papers were immune against any corruption. A press bureau was established in the Ministry of Police for the supervision of journals and books to achieve this lofty ideal. The Minister in his turn warned the prefects of police not to allow anything to be stuck on the walls of Paris which had not been expressly authorized by him. Pressure was brought to bear on newsvendors and booksellers to sell only books, papers and pamphlets which were " not contrary to good manners ", i.e. to the government. The *Bureau de la Presse* had the double function of censorship and propaganda. Napoleon hated the *idéologues* and scribblers so much that he wanted to be continuously informed about their " machinations ". His librarian had to furnish him with a careful analysis of important press items on topics of religion, philosophy and politics. His daily report extended also to booklets, books, plays, posters, placards and even advertisements. As to the control over the press Fouché had to share his powers with the Senate, who appointed a special committee concerned, strangely enough, with the " liberty of the press ".

Dictators suffer from fits of contempt. Napoleon's contempt for journals and journalists was boundless. To publish an incorrect piece of news meant to him " an act of malignancy ", or " a means of spreading alarm ". Journalists are people without any sense, they " only say stupid things ", their ignorance is " extreme ". His letters to Fouché are crammed full of outbursts of indignation and disdain against individual papers and

journalists. Only the official *Moniteur* formed an exception. For instance, he complains that *La Gazette de France* " seems to proceed on improper lines ". Fouché is told to warn the editor that he must be more sensible in future. This was in July 1805. In April 1808 the Emperor laments the " bad behaviour " of the *Journal de l'Empire*, in a manner almost as a school-teacher blames the disappointing pupil. The articles from its correspondent in Rome are written without common sense and are steeped in " a bad spirit ". Fouché is ordered to send for the poor editor and to reprimand him severely. He will have to promise in future to follow suit when the *Moniteur* remains silent on an issue. The young man is influenced by the old rogues who formerly used to make this journal " a large apple of discord in the state ". " If there is anything to say, the *Moniteur* will say it." Monopoly and monotony, not variety and equality, determined Napoleon's policy towards the press. In October 1810 the Corsican is again enraged over the *Gazette de France*. This time the cause of his displeasure is an article on Spanish conspirators in U.S.A. " Who has authorized the *Gazette de France* to publish such a bad article? Tell the editor of the *Gazette de France* that the very next time he prints such articles the paper will be suppressed." One can imagine the feelings of the helpless editor when he was ordered to see Fouché. It was all the more awkward as every issue had to be submitted to his scrutiny the evening before publication. In addition a weekly conference took place between the editors and the Minister. Thus it might happen that Fouché had at first approved of an article which later provoked the Emperor's severe displeasure. It is worthy of notice that although Fouché united the functions of Minister of Police with those of Controller of the Press—they are separated in the Fascist states to-day—he was more subject to the Dictator's interference than Himmler and Goebbels seem to be at present. There existed more centralization of power and less specialization than to-day.

In August 1810 the local press was reduced to one journal per Deparment. Every issue was allowed one page of advertisements only, the selection of which took place under the keen eyes of the prefect. Cultural life was rationed in its various branches. Only one page of advertisements ; only sixty printers admitted in Paris, who were appointed as a kind of officials and took the oath ; only eight theatres allowed in Paris, and the theatrical profession becoming more or less a state industry. Originating from Fouché's press bureau, propaganda in the press was carried

out by a variety of means. The articles inserted by order ranged from the grave official warnings and appeals of the majestic *Moniteur* to deliberately false information, placed in the smaller provincial papers. In 1811 the anti-press campaign increased in volume and only four papers survived in Paris. By a well-organized system of robbery the papers were expropriated (as in like manner the Jewish-owned press was taken over by the Nazis in and after 1933). *Le Journal de l'Empire* for instance passed into the hands of a group of shareholders, the shares being divided between Fouché and his staff (one-third) and a number of officials and courtiers due for rewards (two-thirds).

The official directives for the papers extended even to the cultural field. During 1812 two out of the four Paris papers passionately discussed the respective merits of French and Italian music—a subject obviously chosen to divert the mind of the reader from the disastrous campaign in Russia. Other papers were ordered to fill their columns with the pros and cons of philosophical principles, a special malice, it seems, when coming from a dictator who hated " *les idéologues* ".

Above all, the press was an instrument for inciting the reader against the real or suspected enemies of Napoleon, for denouncing and exposing anybody hated by him. A bitter opponent of Napoleon has eloquently described Napoleon's abilities in this field and the devastating range of his abuse : " He possesses the art of defaming individuals and nations in the highest degree " said Mme de Staël in her memoirs. Napoleon's propaganda concentrated on those " whose entire intelligence only consists in the repeating of the phrases which the government has published for their benefit ". Any person attacked in the dictatorial press is powerless and has no means to reply or to justify himself. This applied to the *Moniteur* in 1810, as it applied to *Das Schwarze Korps* in 1943. " If the *Moniteur* ", stated Mme de Staël, " should accuse someone of having stolen on the highroad, no paper in France, or in Germany, or in Italy could dare to publish his justification " (14). Even a more deadly weapon than slander is ridicule, when used by an authoritarian press. There was, for instance, the Princess D . . ., a friend of the Queen of Naples and of Mme de Staël. By order of his outraged chief, Fouché had to obtain information about her and to expose her to ridicule. He was to exploit some " dirty " facts from her private life, including the story of her diamonds, " about which she makes so much to-do " and which are " the outcome of her shame ".

Long articles had to be concocted on her scandalous life, all this at the express suggestions of the Emperor from Milan in May 1805 (15).

7. The Intelligentsia under the Régime. The Trials of Mme de Staël

Napoleon, as we have seen, hated the ideologists, for their abstract minds were as alien to him as their idealism. Politics meant to him the application of common sense to big issues, for the *idéologues* it was the application of ethics. He was given to politics as "the compromise between various interests", a calculation of combinations and chances—for them it was an attempt to enforce justice and the rights of man connected with it. The foremost champion of the philosophers was Mme de Staël. Napoleon had once flirted with the sentimental melancholy of Goethe's *Werther* and yet he did not take to the similar line in *Corinne*, the brilliant novel of Necker's daughter. The Emperor more than once acknowledged that Mme de Staël was a woman "with a very great talent and much spirit" and yet he persecuted the same woman for years and made her life bitter. There are a number of psychological reasons for it which need not be discussed here; the main reason is a sociological one, to be found in the exclusive character of a military dictatorship which cannot allow the expression of opinions different from those of the dictator. At the root of this intolerance is fear and the knowledge that a dictatorial régime is never completely safe. Napoleon may have disliked the impetuous and indiscreet ways of one who, as he once put it, suffered from "an untempered thirst to be celebrated" and was too much of "a machine in movement". What made him act against her were her definite liberal views, and above all her books. Both needed supervision badly. During the last years of the eighteenth century she had shone in Paris with her political *salon* and with her friend, Benjamin Constant. She had intrigued with Barras and Talleyrand and had sought favours from Bonaparte. The First Consul, however, was not amused, he resented her liberalism as much as her "unwomanly" behaviour. His punitive measures against her began after the publication of her novel *Delphine* in 1802. Official criticism docile to its master's voice condemned the book as "asocial, immoral, anti-catholic and Anglophile". The *salon* in Paris was not to be reopened and in April 1803 Mme de Staël was banished over the usual 40 leagues from Paris: a bitter

blow for a woman who used to quote Montaigne's telling words, " I am French through Paris " (16). She tried to seek compensation for the restrictions imposed on her by exploring other countries, first Germany then Italy. In Italy she wrote her most successful novel *Corinne.* When it appeared in 1807, it drew the renewed attention of the Imperial Police to her. In this novel the heroine is an Italian and the hero a melancholy Scottish lord. In the background of their romantic meeting, the only Frenchman in the novel, an aristocrat, cuts rather a sorry figure. He is frivolous and careless and measures everything according to narrow French standards. The *Moniteur* took this figure as a welcome target for a violent attack, charging the author with lack of patriotism and complaining bitterly that the main interest in the book is concentrated on an Englishman. The review was inspired, if not written, by Napoleon himself (17).

It is interesting to compare the different attitudes taken by Fouché and the Emperor towards this harassed woman. Fouché was fairly indulgent, partly because he thought it wise not to make her his personal enemy, partly because he was not afraid of her. Of course he saw to it that the letters she wrote and received were duly intercepted, that his spies warmed their feet in her *salon* in Coppet, near Geneva, and elsewhere. But at least he allowed her early in 1807 to take up residence in a castle only twelve leagues from Paris. Yet if Fouché controlled Madame de Staël not too severely, Napoleon in his turn kept a sharp watch on Fouché. He knew that his Minister of Police wished to have one foot in each camp and he distrusted his granting favours to Madame. Even in the midst of his battle he reminded Fouché that he must not allow " that rogue Mme de Staël to approach Paris " (18). He was aware that she lived not very far from it and he collected evidence of his own on her intrigues. " Every day ", he stated in 1807, " I acquire new proof that no one could be worse than this woman who is an enemy of the government and even of that France which she cannot give up " (19).

Fouché tried hard to deceive the Emperor by telling him that Mme de Staël had left the surroundings of Paris. Napoleon knew better. " Mme de Staël ", he informed Fouché, " has been lately in Paris and is probably still there." After the Emperor had received a letter from " that fool, Mme de Staël, which contained much pretentiousness and little common sense ", he reprimanded Fouché for his lack of precise information. " I repeat to you once more that it means an unfair tormenting of

this woman if one leaves her this hope" (that she might return to Paris). "If I were to give you details of everything she has done whilst staying in the country for two months, you would be surprised. For although I am 500 leagues away from France, I know better what happens there than the Minister of Police" (20). The Emperor realized that whilst he was far away, his enemies grew bolder in their plots.

The main conflict between the Emperor and Mme de Staël only occurred in September 1810 after Fouché had been replaced by Savary. It led to the drastic confiscation of her book on Germany and to her banishment from France for good. It is true that she has asked for trouble by compromising the local Prefect, who was well disposed towards her, and by scoffing at the authorities. Moreover, she was given to illusions about the possible clemency of Napoleon, for only in the spring of that year he had declared it his principle "to move all persons from Paris whose presence there is absolutely incompatible with public tranquillity, maintaining the firm determination not to let them ever return there" (21). Fouché had mitigated the execution of these orders, but Savary carried them out with full vigour. His first victim was Mme de Staël. The censorship had already passed the first two out of the three volumes of *De l'Allemagne* and ten thousand copies of it had been printed. Suddenly Napoleon interfered. Savary informed the author that she must leave her present residence near Blois within twenty-four hours and must quit France altogether. At the same time the local prefect received orders to confiscate both the MS. and the proofs of her book. Though heartbroken about this rude end to all her hopes, Madame managed to deceive the authorities by handing over a faulty copy of the book to the Prefect; the real MS. remained safe. It was Napoleon himself who had read the book and had issued the fateful order. The reason given for its destruction was that it was "not French" in tone and character, as Savary "explained" in a letter to her. Although *De l'Allemagne* is an entirely non-political book, it pictures, in a very favourable light, a nation that had been humiliated by the Corsican and was shortly to take up arms against him. After the fall of Napoleon in 1814 Goethe commented on Napoleon's verdict in these words: "The clever French police, sufficiently intelligent to realize that a work like this would increase the self-confidence of the Germans, had it pulped. When it was published (in London in 1813), the book produced an astonishing effect. Had it existed earlier, one

would have attributed to it an influence on the great events which were about to take place" (22). Even after Mme de Staël's return to Coppet, her life as well as that of her friends were poisoned by the systematic chicaneries imposed on them by the Secret Police. Some of her friends were exiled for the crime of seeing her, and A. W. Schlegel, the eminent German philologist, was banished from Coppet under the thin pretext that he had influenced Madame in an anti-French way. Threats and promises, always mingled in the technique of dictatorships, were applied in this case too. A new prefect in Geneva tried hard to persuade the famous woman that she could improve her position by writing a eulogy of the Emperor—a subject, he assured her, worthy of the kind of enthusiasm she had displayed in such masterly fashion in *Corinne*. A small sheet of four pages, devoted to the Emperor or celebrating the birth of his son, the King of Rome, would be sufficient to terminate all the sufferings she was enduring (23). Mme de Staël did not succumb to this shallow voice of seduction. By no means naturally bold or a born adventuress, she realized that in the bitter struggle against Napoleon's dictatorship she had a mission abroad. In May 1812 she furtively fled from Coppet and managed to enter Austria, but only on Russian territory did she feel safe from the powerful grip of Napoleon's Secret Police. It was a long and uneasy journey; slowly she moved from Cracow via Kiev to St. Petersburg. There she was fêted as the champion in the international struggle for freedom by the Russians as well as by the refugees from many European countries. She had long political conversations with Tsar Alexander and fascinated the exiled Prussian Minister Baron von Stein. Finally she reached Sweden via Finland and persuaded Bernadotte to throw in Sweden's lot with Russia against Napoleon. In spring 1813 Madame came to England and was lionized as "the first woman of the world" by the ruling class and by the intelligentsia. In summer 1814 she returned to Paris after the Bourbons had been restored. During the Emperor's Hundred Days she had to flee to Coppet once more, but Napoleon's time was over and the persistent author had won her tug-of-war with despotism. Napoleon had early recognized her as a dangerous foe and as a leader amongst the discontented, but he had not realized that this celebrated woman would do more harm to his régime outside France than she could ever have done in Paris. After all in Paris she was only one of the main plotters and could be fairly easily checked. Abroad, in Germany, Russia, Sweden and England

she would become *the* voice of Free France. Humiliated by her sufferings but elevated by her international rôle she would preach an ardent crusade against the man and the system which had replaced the dignity of free thought and the stimulus of free debate by the jack-boot of the *gendarmerie.* She had always predicted that Napoleon's police régime would finally be overcome by the moral forces and by the idealism which he despised. Eventually the ruthless empiricist lost the battle. Very likely Bonaparte was too clever not to discover that it is impossible to sit on bayonets and to rule on the basis of check and counter-check. Too much system must one day end in chaos, too much stifling control in an explosive anarchy. At a critical moment in 1808, Napoleon had made a characteristic remark on the limits of physical power. " Do you know," he had asked Fontanes, " what I admire most in the world ? The inability of force to organize anything. There are only two powers in this world, the sword and the spirit . . . in the long run, the sword is always beaten by the spirit " (24).

CHAPTER II

THE POLITICAL POLICE UNDER NAPOLEON III

1. Louis Bonaparte as a Dictator

Louis Bonaparte was a pocket edition of his uncle, the memories of whom were still alive in the eighteen-forties amongst the French masses and were eagerly brushed up and romanticized by the ambitious nephew. Yet uncle and nephew differed greatly ; Napoleon I had been a demagogue who arrived on the wave of a revolutionary age and was driven on by a genius for both warfare and diplomacy. Napoleon III was an epigone who profited by the imponderable atmosphere around a great name which had become a myth. It is true that Louis Bonaparte had plotted in exile and had joined a secret mafia, but in spite of this, he had been just one more exiled member of European royalty. Victoria, the Queen of middle-class England, had treated him as an equal and had hoped that one day he would pacify his country and lead it back to order and prosperity. Despite his sensational *coup d'état* of 1851, there remained something semi-legitimate about this offshoot of a great usurper. Napoleon I had established himself by means of his military leadership, Napoleon III through his ancestry and the cunning exploitation of an unripe democracy which he lulled into agreement by carefully varied promises to its different sections. The plebiscitarian democracy was gagged by the application of its methods to the advantage of his own autocratic régime. He persuaded, threatened and suppressed the masses into submission as Hitler was to do eighty years later, but he did not possess the latter's demonic drive ; instead he had epicurean leanings which made him prefer spectacles to bread and sometimes, though by no means always, to guns as a bait to the masses.

Napoleon III, Jekyll and Hyde, had within himself two men, as his contemporary de Tocqueville observed. The one ran true to the type our own age has experienced : it was Louis Bonaparte as " the ex-conspirator, the fatalist dreamer, who believed himself to be called to be master of France and through her to dominate Europe ". But there was in him another trend, not less marked, apt to cross and confuse his ambitious plans as Emperor of Europe, " the Epicurean, languidly enjoying an unwonted comfort, and the facile pleasures that his present position afforded

him, and unwilling to risk their loss by attempting to climb higher" (1). Napoleon III, far from being a coldly strong man, in some respects became a dictator *malgré lui*, and thus was even more dependent on a well-functioning bureaucracy and a fast-acting police than his more forceful and stoic ancestor.

Bonaparte's system of repression and control was neither so systematic nor quite so ruthless as that of Fouché. Nevertheless, it used a good many of the methods and instruments which Fouché had developed and which afterwards, under the régimes of the Bourbons, the Orléans and the Second Republic, had never altogether disappeared. If it was more haphazard and capricious and often less effective then Fouché's despotism, it remained for many years unchecked and without large-scale interference. How was this possible? How could a mediocre statesman absorb so much power?

The Coup d'État

In the *coup d'état* of December 2, 1851, Bonaparte succeeded in the sudden muzzling of parliament and public opinion because he had secured in time the co-operation of the army and the police. Months ahead he had persuaded the Prefect of the Paris police, Maupas, and the commander of the Paris troops, General Magnan, to assist him in overthrowing the Republic. Both men had a grudge against the democratic powers of the time. Their vested interests, so to speak, lay in the opposite direction. Maupas, once an official under Louis Philippe and his minister Guizot, had found his career suddenly cut short by the advent of the Republic, and now thirsted for action which would give him a chance for revenge and to feather his own nest once more. Magnan, in his turn, was a professional soldier, a characteristic type in any modern state, brave, determined, admiring strong action and capable of taking it, "despising parliamentary methods and knowing nought of parties" (2). Such efficient soldiers are always intrigued by the idea of a dictatorship in which the army can play an infinitely stronger part than in a republic. In this case the dazzling name of Bonaparte was an additional magnet. De Morny, a half-brother of Louis Bonaparte, and a well-known figure on the Stock Exchange, was also in the plot. Moreover, the President approached his co-conspirators with by no means empty hands. On the day before the coup he distributed various packets amongst them. De Morny received 500,000 francs together with his appointment as Minister of the Interior. Ample funds were

ready for the generals, officers and men who were about to put an end to the Republic. Maupas, the Prefect of Police and soon to become Minister of Police, received not only 500,000 francs but also a most important dossier containing the names of all incorruptible generals, deputies and political leaders whom he was to arrest. It spoke for itself that he was given a further 100,000 francs to be paid to clerks, servants and other kinds of useful informers. Napoleon III was in a position to secure a large sum of money as an instrument for his coup by a discreet barter with the directors of the Bank of France, a barter which was to prove agreeably advantageous to both sides. On December 2 the surprised Parisians found themselves faced with large posters on the walls of their city containing a kind invitation from the President " to delegate him the powers necessary to create a constitution " by means of a plebiscite. The population quickly discovered that Napoleon had called out an entire army to help them to vote in the right manner. Two regiments of the line had occupied the Palace in which the Assembly met. In a way, the *coup d'état* was little more than an intensified police action, made possible by the army. At dawn forty-eight police superintendents, helped by gendarmes and soldiers, had carried out the arrest of 78 deputies and party leaders, Republicans as well as Royalists. They offered little resistance and some of them, like Thiers, felt even relieved to be unable to make a stand. Journalists and freemasons were also arrested because their resistance might " compromise the police ". The whole coup was then presented to the intimidated public as a preventive police measure, whilst the action of the army was suavely justified in the name of discipline and honour and with the assurance that they had " the memories of the glory of Napoleon in their hearts ".

It is characteristic of modern dictatorship to legalize the illegal act and to obtain the agreement of the people to it. It was Louis Bonaparte who inaugurated that system of plebiscites which was to become a convenient cover for the rule of an autocrat, thriving on the acquiescence of the frightened and stunned masses. Repression, control and persuasion have always been powerful instruments in hands that need not be afraid of any serious competitor. On December 21, 1851, the French by 7,500,000 votes against 640,000 (with 1,500,000 abstentions) delegated to Bonaparte the right to frame a " constitution " in accordance with the policy he had pursued in that fateful month. Undoubtedly the public's longing for security contributed to some

extent to his success. Napoleon could exploit the Bonaparte myth to the full and could even generously admit that " he had transgressed legality " by the *coup d'état*, claiming that " by the plebiscite he had returned to the path of right ". Many were tired of futile parliamentary struggles and of impotent party strife, as he well knew.

Whilst this public acquiescence was the one motive explaining how Napoleon could establish his dictatorship, the other was his grip on the bureaucratic machinery as a concrete backing to his abstract political conceptions. Louis Bonaparte's dictatorship cannot be understood without realizing the fact of its close correlation with an elaborate bureaucracy. First organized by Napoleon I, then developed under various governments, it was, owing to its character, ever ready for employment as an instrument, usefully serving the ends of a centralized administration (3). Karl Marx, in his brilliant contemporary tract on " The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte ", was the first to recognize the massive power of the bureaucracy which, against a bourgeois society, had strongly fortified its position (4).

2. Measures of Repression and of Control

Of this bureaucratic machinery the police formed part and parcel. It too had only to be adapted slightly to the new requirements. Little change was needed for it to carry out both the repression and the supervision of the people. It is true that compared with the dictatorship of the twentieth century, the repressive measures of Louis Bonaparte were not so dire, nevertheless they were drastic enough. A few days after the coup Bonaparte issued a decree in which he claimed for himself the right to deport a member of any secret society to Algiers or Cayenne. A month later eighty-eight members of the old Assembly were either banished or " momentarily removed " from France. Soon a subtle distinction between ordinary legal methods and others was drawn by means of special circulars to the prefects ; they were asked to submit to the government lists of democrats or revolutionaries, imprisoned immediately after the putsch, " against whom it was not proposed to proceed by ordinary legal methods ". All over the country prefects, subprefects, judges and constables endeavoured to prove their worth to the government by hunting for suspects with the help of an extensive intelligence service. It was Georges Sand who then observed with bitterness that " one half of France was informing

against the other half". Those rounded up would appear before mixed commissions, formed by representatives of the civil and military authorities, usually a general together with a lawyer and a higher official. Though this procedure afforded a minimum of legality and objectivity, the commissions pronounced their sentences summarily without bothering much about evidence, procedure and appeal. There were no direct death sentences, but death entered through a back door, so to speak, by means of the *guillotine séche*, the bloodless axe, i.e., by transportation to Guiana or Lambessa where a deadly climate and rigorous treatment achieved the desired result. Under the recorded decisions of the Mixed Commissions 239 men were deported to Guiana. By the middle of March 1852 " over 26,000 persons had been arrested, of whom 6,500 were acquitted and rather more than 5,000 sentenced only to police surveillance ; of the 15,000 actually punished nearly two-thirds were sentenced to deportation to Algeria ; while the rest were either handed over to other tribunals for offences against common law (915), or expelled from France (1515), or bidden to reside in some particular fortress or city of it (2804) " (5).

The sentences of these courts were indeed political sentences, their goal being protection of the new régime rather than justice. This dictatorship, like any other, wanted to get rid of its opponents, real and potential, as effectively as possible. De Morny claimed that there was no other way to reach the foes of Bonapartism and to put an end to civil war. The character of the accused was not decisive, nor even his deeds, but only his attitude towards the régime. Thus workmen, craftsmen, mayors of villages, though they had done very little, were sent for five or ten years into the wilderness of Cayenne or Lambessa. As always, it was a golden time for informers, but the figure for denunciations by far outnumbered that for actual detentions ; for instance in the Department of Hérault out of 60,000 persons denounced only 2,000 were detained. Very different treatment was meted out to well-known politicians and statesmen on the one hand and to common political prisoners on the other. Statesmen were deported with permission to return if they conformed, political propagandists, like Victor Hugo, were exiled from France, but these men were few compared with the masses of undistinguished political prisoners.

Attempts have been made to extenuate the harsh sentences promulgated under this dictatorship by drawing attention to the

equally sharp sentences of shooting and deportation imposed on their Socialist enemies by both the Republic preceding the Second Empire and the Republic following it. It is true that the Third Republic began by " dispatching to New Caledonia more than thirty times as many prisoners as the Second Empire had sent to Cayenne." In general " its early exiles were not only numerous but were banished to far greater distances for far longer periods of time " (6). This is rather an academic question, but in passing it can be said that the measures of both republics were the result of a civil war against opponents who had themselves taken arms and challenged the authorities. Measured by the small resistance which Napoleon III had encountered he had less excuse for the severe findings of his tribunals. Moreover, it is important to realize that in spite of many differences the three régimes of the Second Republic, the Second Empire and the early Third Republic had one point in common, i.e. their anti-Socialism originating from a deep-rooted fear. It was indeed " the same fear of the same *Spectre Rouge* which led France to acquiesce in all the three barbarities ". This very fear had an effect similar to that of the anti-Bolshevist bogy in our time, appealing alike to slow minds and to tenacious property owners.

Censorship and Control of Public Opinion

With all its repellent aspects, the régime of Napoleon III had its farcical features, signs of comedy, which to the majority of Frenchmen made it perhaps less unpleasant than the bloody encounters of June 1848 and of the Paris Commune. There was persecution and sudden arrest, but they did not end in cold-blooded murder on the cynical pretext that the prisoner had tried to escape. Farce became particularly evident in the handling of the censorship of the press. Napoleon's measures of repression were severe when he suspended a number of radical and socialist papers, such as the *Opinion Publique*, the *Presse*, the *République* and others. For the rest he allowed the editors two indiscretions. Twice they could voice opinions which the new régime might regard as dangerous. Only after a paper had received two warnings would it be suppressed at the third *faux pas*. On the whole this censorship had a devastating effect, but the chance of having " two free bites " led, with some ingenious editors, to the development of a technique of skilful ambiguity and subtle sarcasm. There were all possible kinds of camouflage and the path dividing the spheres of the sublime and the ridiculous was

small indeed. It was for the editor to decide " under exactly how thin a disguise of apparent innocence or admiration he might convey to the government his disapproval, ridicule or contempt ". To quote Professor Simpson's able account of this thrilling gamble:

> It was a game played eventually with known rules as well as with established penalties : the least clumsiness in attack drew upon the offender a sharp rap over the knuckles in the shape of an official *avertissement* ; an *avertissement,* however, which a period of good behaviour on the part of the particular journal, or some public occasion of rejoicing on the part of the government, might suffice to render *nul* and *non avenu.*

In the player this game created . . . " the joy of the mouse to play with the cat " (7). Apart from this concession the supervision of the Press was complete. The papers were obliged to insert all official communications. Editors and their staffs were subjected to the jurisdiction of the Courts of Common Law composed of removable judges. Punishments ranged from a simple warning with reasons attached, to a temporary suspension for two months, or even to total suppression. As under any other dictatorship, the function of the Press was only that of influencing the people, not of being influenced by them ; it was either dull and officious, or hypocritical and on the verge of suppression. Articles were either " suggested " to the editors or sent to them ready-made and thus superimposed, no matter whether the editor liked them or not. Repression and propaganda were as usual closely interlinked ; special editors were sent to the provincial papers which had backed the Government in 1852, picked by the Ministry of the Interior and paid partly out of secret funds. The great Havas news agency, which possessed a practical monopoly of news services, became one of the most powerful tools of the Government for the direction of the public mind. Soon after Napoleon's *coup d'état* an understanding was reached between Havas and de Morny, as Minister of the Interior, according to which this agency became the channel for all direct communication of the Government to all the 307 papers which were subscribers to this agency. The Cahot news agency, which served twenty-seven papers, had also reached agreement with the Government by which it was arranged that it would " take instructions from the Ministry every day during the period of the elections, and has promised to incorporate in its despatches to the papers everything that is compatible with their own politics, without revealing its relations with the Government " (8).

A main point in the control of the Press was the bribing of editors and journalists who, through an oppositional policy, might become dangerous to the Government. For instance, the Emperor's secretary, Conti, received this suggestion from a police superintendent regarding Rochfort, a versatile writer of pamphlets: "The success of the *Lanterne* is reaching terrifying proportions. It is essential to buy the author. Not for 150,000 nor 200,000 francs like so many others, but for 1,500,000 or 2,000,000 at least. Besides, since he became a militant politician, watching him has already cost more than that" (9). This passage reveals admirably the dualism of methods employed; the writers were put under close surveillance and at the same time approached with the view to bribery. The technique of censorship had more similarity to the obscure methods applied in Prince Metternich's Austria than to the ruthless but clear grip of Fouché. Quite silly objections were raised against harmless passages in plays, all allusions to regicide, socialism and the Republic being severely suppressed, even if they appeared in entirely fictitious plays or operettas with imaginary characters.

Again, a well-developed system of furtive letter-control was instigated. The so-called *Cabinet Noir* or "The Service of Unsealing Letters" played an important part in the police effort to obtain secret information on various people. To do justice to Napoleon III it should be said that the institution of the *Cabinet Noir* had already existed under the Orleans monarchy, its director, Saintomer, having been connected with it from 1843 to 1870. This man commissioned postmen and *concierges* to bring him letters coming from or addressed to certain persons in whom the police were interested. The letters were, of course, copied before being delivered in the ordinary way.

3. Organization and Tasks of the Political Police

The Political Police was still centralized in the "Political Division" of the *Sûreté Générale*. Its expenses were paid out of secret funds and their exact amount is therefore unknown. A higher police official of that time, Claude, in his memoirs estimates them at 14,000,000 francs every year, serving mainly these four purposes: (*a*) Preparing ovations on their Majesties' routes. (*b*) Paying the Corsican brigades charged with watching Mazzini's emissaries, ready to avenge the 150,000 transported Republicans. (*c*) Inspiring the zeal of provocateurs. (*d*) Increasing the number of ears listening to all that was being said.

The leading man behind the political police during the Second Empire, Superintendent Lagrange, had the *métier* in his blood, for his father, an ex-soldier, had been a rural policeman. The son had joined the Secret Police under Louis Philippe at the age of twenty. In 1848 the Republicans discovered that he was an *agent provocateur*, a fact which, however, did not interfere with his career and his rise to the position of chief inspector ; as such he took part in the *coup d'état* three years later. His rich experience as well as his gift for ruse and camouflage were acknowledged by the dictator and he was secretly put in charge of a special " Political Division ". Though information on him is scarce, it seems that as head of the Secret Police his field extended not only all over France, but over the whole of Europe. By 1869 his fixed salary amounted to 10,000 francs plus 1,500 francs for expenses. Large sums of money went through his hands to various secret agents ; the last detailed account signed by him, dated August 1870, totalled 17,156 francs, a sum divided between 63 secret agents who operated in London, Turin and Germany ; those in the French capital working in various factories and railway stations. Lagrange's cautious principle was apparently " divide and rule ", for he saw to it that the agents remained unknown to each other and he received them only singly at one of his private addresses. Their dossiers, kept in his office, were filed under pseudonyms such as " Martin, Perruquier, Guillaume, Saint-Charles, Typographe, Ellados, Satan and Lac ", the last being nicknamed " La-canaille ". Other files bore only initials such as B, G, M, Q, etc. Little is known of the personality of his secret agents except that some of them had already been informers under Louis Philippe. Napoleon III was particularly frightened of the plots of secret societies, perhaps because he had himself once belonged to one of them, the Carbonari. During the first years of his régime, he appointed the Prefect Pietri, another ex-member of the Carbonari, to organize the watch on the various secret societies existing in France and abroad. Pietri's accounts for February 1858, which have been preserved, give a sum of 27,000 francs for " political services " distributed between " Royalist, Orleanist, Revolutionary and foreign agents " ; it also specifies 5,300 francs for agents in London (10).

The first task of the Political Police was, of course, the unmasking of plots against the Emperor and his ministers. Secret agents, posing as friends of the people, joined various political

societies, and even sometimes provided them with arms. Through clever sabotage, they paralysed oppositional circles and at the same time kept the regular police informed of all plans and intentions. Owing to this subterfuge several of the political plots directed against Napoleon III were frustrated. At one time two spies wormed their way into the confidence of the main conspirators and saw to it that they were rendered harmless. Later when the plotters had to appear before a court, one informer kept up his rôle as revolutionary, but was acquitted by the understanding judges. The same two agents worked as ordinary labourers in certain factories under false names and started political conversations with their unsuspecting work-mates. They took due notice of all they heard and every Sunday night, under cover of darkness, crept into the Prefect's office in order to report and to receive new orders.

Agents Provocateurs

A special group of secret agents known in police slang as " The Lighters " had the double task of rousing the enthusiasm of the people for the Emperor and of provoking their revolutionary temper as exhibited in secret meetings and manifestations. These *agents provocateurs* were more popish than the Pope and more infuriated against Napoleon than the leaders of the opposition. " To exaggerate the hatred of the enemies of society, to push it to its uttermost limit, to force the ruling classes to yield to the all-powerful sword," that, according to Claude, was the rôle played by " The Lighters " in the secret societies. After the fall of the Second Empire an archivist, who had studied the files of the Secret Police, went so far as to argue that on the whole " all the seditious cases of the last ten years had been provoked by the police, and that without their interference these affairs would either not have occurred or would not have produced any trouble " (11).

One of the functions of the false riots, organized by the Political Police, was to frighten the electors of Paris who had voted the " wrong way ". By order of the Government in June 1869, a number of tramps, interspersed with agents, took control of the boulevards. Singing the *Marseillaise*, they ransacked two brothels and several restaurants, and overturned some newspaper kiosks and buses. " When only sightseers were left, contemplating with cheerful amazement this beginning of a ' barricade ', the police and the Paris Guard made a baton charge

on them, stunning some and arresting others. The scene was repeated without variation three days running." Although the Government had threatened that it would take very severe action against the leaders of the riots, it later made a point of dropping the matter with the help of the amnesty of 1869. In the light of current history, it is interesting to note that this dubious affair became known as " The Riot of the White Shirt ", the shirt already then symbolizing collective authoritarian force.

How unscrupulous, albeit subtle,were the methods of Lagrange can be seen from the following odd example which, like so many other facts, came to light after the fall of the Napoleonic régime. Secret Agent number 8516, whose nickname was " Belgique ", denounced a certain workman named Guerin to the chief of staff of the Prefect Pietri for secretly distributing Rochefort's revolutionary paper *La Lanterne*. Revolutionaries had assembled in his house and had even manufactured bombs for other oppositional workmen, to be used against the Emperor. Although all these facts had been reported to Lagrange by " Belgique ", the former had not taken steps on the strength of this information. And why? Because he was fully aware that " Belgique " the informer, and Guerin the bomb-maker, were identical; acting both under the orders of Lagrange. This strange farce went so far that Guerin, who traced and denounced himself in the reports of Secret Agent No. 8516, did not even murmur when he was sentenced with his supposed accomplices. His equanimity was fully justified, for the inquiry commission of the Commune which unmasked the spurious Guerin eventually released him as " a political victim of the infamous Imperial Police ! "

Napoleon III took an active share in the suppression of real and imagined enemies only in the first half of his reign. In January 1858 an attempt was made against his and the Empress's lives by the Italian Orsini, who nearly succeeded. Orsini threw a bomb at the royal carriage in front of the Opera House : the Imperial couple remained unhurt, but about 150 persons near them were either killed or wounded. History had repeated itself, for had not Napoleon Bonaparte similarly escaped, when on Christmas Eve 1800 an infernal machine was thrown at him ? The reaction of both dictators was the same ; they each personally drew up lists of people to be banished, acting in the most arbitrary manner without enquiry or balanced judgment. But the Third Napoleon added a new feature to the old technique, a feature which in the twentieth century dictatorships was to become a

matter of routine. All persons on the Emperor's Black List were arrested and transported during the night. Broad daylight has indeed always been shunned by the henchmen of dictators.

Though the plot of Orsini and similar attempts to dispose of the Emperor were serious enough, the police even ventured to invent some others to prove their efficiency and quickness. Lagrange not only staged fictitious attempts on the Emperor's life, he also organized all kinds of riots and took pleasure in nipping them in the bud. He was convinced that the suppression of street demonstrations, even if spurious, was helpful to the régime. As he once remarked cynically : " If we had a battle in Paris, the Empire would be consolidated for ten years." It seems that as a typical militarist he believed in an extreme form of coercion, suggesting that the show of armed force must be supplemented from time to time by its application.

4. The Technique of Resistance

As with Napoleon I the success of Napoleon III was positive at home during the first years of his reign. The nation, according to Proudhon " as sick of the Reds as of the Whites ", acquiesced in submission, particularly when Bonaparte succeeded in winning over the clerical faction, the " men in black ", who were given control of the universities. The masses in town and country were for some time attracted by a régime that posed as " the government of cheap bread, great public works and holidays ". Pleasure was turned into a method of government, whilst in the background the ubiquitous Political Police saw to it that it did not degenerate into libertinism. In the sixties, however, the Emperor realized that important strata of the Paris population had remained unfriendly, not to say hostile, towards his régime. The ageing Emperor felt the burden of absolute government weighing heavily upon his shoulders. He started to provoke discussions in the press or in the Assemblies. The result, however, was disappointing—the country remained apathetic and the opposition unimpressed. This is how one French contemporary described the reactions of the people in the country in 1860 : " Not a word is heard as to the actual state of affairs ; and people are silent, not from fear of committing themselves, but because they have nothing to say ; they take no interest in the events of the day. It is useless to say that France is a difficult country to govern " (12). Napoleon III too received daily reports from the Prefect of Police, a position in which Joachim Pietri had

succeeded his brother Pièrre, towards the end of the Empire. Pietri again and again had to strike a pessimistic note. It was clear to him that the upper classes showed unmistakable signs of disappointment, anxiety and suspicion, and set a bad example to the lower orders, who were worried over the high cost of living. The régime was awkwardly muddling through, relying on the police as its only safeguard.

To the very last moment, the political police used all possible tricks. For instance, shortly before the outbreak of the Franco-German War, which was more or less desired by the uneasy Emperor, Pietri had some of his mouchards, disguised as patriotic workmen, touring the Boulevards and shouting "*À Berlin!*" Whilst they did much to work up the violent war-fever which swiftly seized Paris, the censor, too, contributed to its strength by at last, after eighteen years, releasing the *Marseillaise*, now to be sung with heated enthusiasm (13). The farce round the secret police grew in scope. Napoleon's régime and with it the political police in 1865 faced a more determined and clever opponent than it had done twelve years before. When liberty to discuss the policy of the government at public meetings and in the press had been granted to some extent, a revival of the activities of the Catholics, Liberals and Republicans took place with an energy unforeseen by the government. The younger generation had learned a lesson from the many years under the dictatorship and had become much more realistic than their predecessors. The opponents of the Empire included the sons of Orleanists and of exiles from the lower classes as well as from the bourgeoisie. More than a decade of dictatorship had evoked in them a strong antipathy to empty phrases and slogans. They had learned that power was to be respected but not to be eulogized and that the finest ideology is no match for a cunning police force. Before the days of the régime were over the spies and informers of Lagrange had lost much of their power and skill. The opposition organized itself more cleverly. It succeeded in unmasking the tricks of the "Political Division" which still continued to support "red" candidates, actually paid out of the secret funds (14). Before the plebiscite in 1870 a young man named Baury was arrested in an unfrequented street of Paris, with, according to the police records, a loaded revolver and some compromising letters on him. One of these letters was alleged to have come from Gustave Fleurens, later the leader of the Commune. The police put high pressure on its victim who

eventually acknowledged that he had seen Fleurens in London and had received money from him in connection with a planned attack on the Emperor. The whole incident served as a convenient pretext for the immediate arrest of the leaders of the Internationale both in Lyons and in Paris. But this time public opinion, so far as it existed, was not hoodwinked. Some papers alleged that this remarkable plot had been entirely devised by the police. Later, under the Commune, it was discovered that three alleged accomplices of Baury, who were tried with him, had been in constant touch with Lagrange and the Prefect Pietri, and two of them had been acting as *agents provocateurs*.

The Republicans and Socialists developed a new technique to meet the supervision by the Political Police. Bold and tough as they were, they organized a kind of counter-police of which Frank Jellinek in his book on the Paris Commune has given an interesting survey (15). The police knew why they kept a close watch on the little cafés on the left bank of the Seine where a number of young students and writers fervently exchanged revolutionary ideas. Much of this talk was taken down at the adjoining tables by the informers of Prefect Pietri and on the strength of it arrests followed almost immediately. But as there were no longer deportations, the suspected revolutionaries were confined to a Paris jail, a place which soon proved to be a convenient training centre for would-be revolutionaries. There was Auguste Blanqui, " aged master of conspiracy ", always ready to give sobering but inspiring advice.

The man behind the " revolutionary counter-police " was Raoul Rigault, once described by Blanqui as " nothing but a gutter-snipe, but a policeman of genius ". Rigault was actually a new edition of the old Jacobins, and so was his deputy Théophile Ferre, an undaunted terrorist without any sense of humour, full of resentment and desire for revenge, nourished by poverty and a bitter feeling of frustration. These two hardened revolutionaries realized that prevention was better than cure and therefore organized the shadowing of the political police and the tracing of its plans and movements. Rigault had amateur detectives on the track of Pietri's professionals ; their task was to find out the intentions of Pietri's men and to lead them astray.

It is beyond the scope of this short account to deal with the French political police after the fall of the Second Empire. In passing it should be recorded, however, that though the Political Police changed its personnel, its functions altered little. When

Pietri and Lagrange disappeared, their places were taken by the Comte de Keratry as Prefect of Police and by Rigault in charge of its Political Division. The old Political Police had become so unpopular that the ordinary police were in danger of sharing this unpopularity. When the new Prefect took over he had to order the constables " to return to their homes at night in small groups ". He was afraid that otherwise their appearance would provoke the excitement of the public, enraged by certain police agents who, during the Empire, had become notorious for their excesses (16).

PART II

SECRET CONTROL IN OUR TIME

(As developed by Fascism and National Socialism)

CHAPTER I

MUSSOLINI'S OVRA

1. The Origins of the Fascist Secret Police

The Italian Secret Police Service was officially established under the Public Safety Act in November 1926, i.e. four years after the March on Rome. Its entry into the life of the Fascist State was an important landmark in the development of Mussolini's régime. Before the hidden hand of the Secret Police became active, Italian Fascism passed through a severe crisis following the discovery of the Matteotti murder in June 1924. Then the Fascist Party as a whole lived in a state of intense fear and its fate was so uncertain that few members had the courage to appear in the streets with Fascist buttons in their lapels. According to Ascoli (1), during the second part of 1924, Fascist leaders feared that the days of the Party were numbered and they busied themselves with writing memoranda, each putting the responsibility on the others.

With its back to the wall, Fascism had no alternative but to become thoroughgoing or totalitarian, and in doing so the technique of control by fear became of vital importance. Fascism was the outcome of the turmoil of an immediate post-war period. The war had not given those spoils to Italy for which she had ardently hoped. The weakness of the parliamentary parties combined with economic insecurity and social tension had led to an abnormal atmosphere which in its turn formed a favourable breeding ground for the bacilli of fear and for their cultivation by means of terror. Many prominent Fascists had themselves experienced, during the last war, what fear can do to man. They realized " that in every man there is a certain degree of horror, where his physical strength and moral personality melt " (2). Full of fear themselves, they knew how to turn it into violence, thus causing fear in others. Gradually they developed a technique of injecting fear into their fellow-countrymen, which started by making anti-Fascists swallow a jar of castor oil and reached its climax by forcing them to recant or to beg for mercy. This exploitation of fear on a large scale was a novelty in Italy which, unlike Russia, had not known a political police system under the preceding régime.

Prior to the promulgation of the Public Safety Act in 1926,

Mussolini had laid the foundations of a Party Police which was to function as an instrument for defence or revenge. The unofficial origin of this Service can be traced back as far as 1923. At that time the Fascist State was still in the making and busy experimenting in methods with which to shape the final form of Dictatorship. Fascist institutions, such as the Grand Council of Fascism, the Fascist Corporations, etc., were then only bodies of the Party, and not until much later did they enjoy juridical recognition by the State. Though little detailed evidence on the history of the Italian Secret Police is available, there can be no reason to doubt that it underwent an analogous process of development. Originally an organization created by the most prominent Fascist leaders (Mussolini, Cesare Rossi, etc.) in defence of the Party against the opposition of the still officially existing rival parties, it gradually emerged as a defence organ of the State and was enthroned as such after the disappearance of all other parties and the complete identification of the Fascist Party with the State.

In the years preceding this final establishment of the Fascist Dictatorship, for obvious reasons of political expediency, the Head of the Government endeavoured to conceal and even publicly denied the existence of a secret police. On the other hand, he attempted to justify it by stating that the régime did not "yet dispose of legal means for beating its enemies", and that "to fill the gap all governments in a state of transition have need of illegal power to put their adversaries in place" (3). In 1924 it became more and more obvious that behind the numerous "punitive expeditions" against the opposition leaders or other prominent anti-Fascists, culminating in the Matteotti crime, there was an organization serving as a co-ordinating body which planned, organized and executed the "punishment". Before November 1926, however, Mussolini's embryonic secret police, which the Duce and his collaborators referred to as "*Ceca*", did not enjoy full support either from the administrative bodies or from the judicial authorities, since neither had yet been fully integrated into the whole Fascist scheme of centralized power. It still functioned as a separate institution and retained this character until Mussolini, in 1926, proclaiming that "authority was one and unified", began to re-form the Italian administration and to abolish all pre-Fascist institutions. Before that date there was an air of casualness and haphazardness about the manner in which the police conducted their man-hunts of

oppositional elements, a manner markedly different from the systematic and ruthless way in which the Gestapo laid its heavy hand on anti-Nazis from the moment Hitler had come to power. In those early days anti-Fascists like Carlo Rosselli found that " one might be in danger of assassination in Florence, become a University lecturer and be beaten up in Genoa and edit a Socialist weekly in Milan. The left hand of Fascism did not know what the right hand was doing ", a state of affairs which only changed when in Rome the centralized Fascist Police Service for the surveillance of anti-Fascists was established (4).

Four attempts on Mussolini's life, carried out between November 1925 and October 1926 (the last possibly staged by the régime itself, forming a kind of forerunner to the Reichstag Fire), furnished him with a plausible pretext for officially announcing that a Special Police Service and a " Special Tribunal " for the defence of the State had been established. From now on the Italian Secret Police worked under the name of OVRA, meaning *Opera Volontaria per la Repressione Antifascista* or *Organizzazione di Vigilanza per la Repressione Antifascista* (Voluntary Organization for the Repression of Anti-Fascism).

2. The Special Tribunal for the Defence of the State

This institution was set up under a law of November 1926 to pass final and irrevocable judgment on all people charged with political offences. Under the category of " political crimes " came the following :

(1) Acts directed against the life, the integrity or personal freedom of the King, the Regent, the Queen, the Crown Prince and the Prime Minister (Mussolini).
(2) Instigation to such acts or approval of them.
(3) Propaganda of anti-Fascist doctrines and programmes or anti-Fascist activities.
(4) Re-constitution of political parties or other organizations dissolved by the Fascist authorities.
(5) Activities, which might endanger national interest and security.
(6) Diffusion and circulation abroad of rumours or false information relating to the internal conditions in Italy.

It is important to realize that the Special Tribunal was at first intended to function temporarily only, and its duration was fixed at five years. But apparently the " pacification " of the country had not been fully achieved during this period and

therefore the Special Court assumed a permanent character, its life being twice prolonged by the Grand Council of Fascism in 1931 and 1936.

The Special Tribunal had the character of a Court Martial and consequently generals of one of the three services or of the militia filled the post of President and Vice-President respectively. None of them need hold a law degree, whilst the five judges had to be at least colonels in the militia. The institution thus clearly reflected the close correlation between army, Fascist militia and secret police. Not by chance was the first President of the Tribunal, General Sanna, a Fascist Deputy and not by chance were all members of the Tribunal appointed by the Minister of War (Mussolini).

The military character of the Tribunal was underlined by the fact that for its procedure the Army Penal Code was applied. According to Art. 552 of this Code " the superior military authority nearest to which the Tribunal has its seat " had to give the instructions for the opening of the preliminary investigation. The investigating judges, appointed by Mussolini, would collect the evidence and the public trial to follow was based on their reports. During the investigation " preventive imprisonment " was imposed on the defendant. The length of this arrest remained undefined and the investigating judge was under no obligation to inform the prisoner of the evidence to be produced against him. The prisoner's counsel, who in practice has to be a Fascist barrister, was only given eight days for the examining of the evidence, and the President had the power to refuse the inspection of confiscated objects, if he considered it " detrimental to the public interest ".

The unwritten motto over the entrance gate to the Special Tribunal was undoubtedly : " Fascism is always right and brings all its opponents to dust." The great disadvantage from the point of view of the accused was the arbitrary character of all regulations, which enabled the Fascist powers to do entirely as they pleased. For instance, the minimum notice of the trial to be given to the defendant and his Counsel was 24 hours before its opening, but this could be reduced by order of the President. There was only one certainty : against the sentence pronounced by the Tribunal no appeal was possible and it had to be carried out 24 hours after pronouncement.

Reports on sentences promulgated by this tribunal are incomplete, but it seems that during the years 1926–32 it was

particularly active. The Special Tribunal sentenced seven persons to death, 257 people to ten or more years' imprisonment and 1,360 people to sentences under ten years; 584 were acquitted. It has also been calculated that some 12,000 people were kept in custody for some time and eventually found innocent (5). In addition "*la pena del confino*", meaning deportation to the notorious islands of Ponza, Lipari and Ustica, was inflicted upon a large number of persons. The "crimes" with which the accused were charged varied considerably. Their range stretched from plans to kill Mussolini to the mere expressing of regret that these attempts had failed, from the writing of anti-Fascist sonnets and the dropping of them into letter-boxes, to attendance at the funeral of a "Communist" and the wearing of a red carnation. A great number of cases were the outcome of printing or distributing anti-Fascist literature.

During the following four years the activities of the OVRA were less marked. By the imposition of severe penalties the Government had made enough examples and had succeeded in impregnating the masses with fear. "Fear of the authorities; fear of any Italian one does not intimately know; fear of one's friends; fear even of members of one's own family who may get one into trouble unintentionally" (6). And not only were the masses beset by fear, but fear also kept the innumerable small Party Leaders in check; whilst the worker and the peasant worried about his livelihood, the Fascist Leader dreaded falling into disgrace (7).

Though evidence is scarce, it is known that during the first quarter of 1934, 29 persons were sentenced to a total of 270 years imprisonment, whereas from July 1934 to the beginning of April 1935, 315 people were sentenced to terms ranging from one year to 22 years imprisonment (8).

It was not until 1938 that the Italian Political Police entered into its third and last stage. When in that year Hitler visited Italy, German Gestapo men poured into it, partly camouflaged and partly quite undisguised. They were entrusted with two major duties: the one was the protection of their lord and master during his stay, the other the establishing of their second headquarters on Italian soil. It is uncertain whether the German infiltration into the sphere and offices of the Italian police was the outcome of a demand from Mussolini, or whether it was imposed on the Italian Government by the Nazi leaders. The fact remains that the Gestapo penetrated to the very roots of the

Fascist police organization, attempting to reorganize it on the German model. Very probably the growing Gestapo influence in Italy made itself felt in the unexpected and sudden change in the Fascist policy towards the Jews. Himmler could look with satisfaction at the expulsion order of the Italian Government of March 1939 barring all foreign Jews from Italy. As the Gestapo interference in Italy grew, the Italian Political Police lost ground until it ceased to exist as an independent organ for the defence of the State.* When in September 1943 Hitler's SS troops managed to kidnap Mussolini and sponsored the formation of a Fascist rump-state, they saw to it that the OVRA was thoroughly purged and that only " reliable " elements were retained.

3. Organization and Personnel of the OVRA

Little is yet known about the organization of the Fascist Secret Police, particularly after 1926. Before that date " the executive of the Cheka was identical with the General Command of the Militia ". As later in Germany, there was naturally a close co-operation between the Party and the Secret Police, only that in Italy during the earlier years of Fascism this co-operation was somewhat primitive. " The General Command recruited the hired gangsters, furnished the material and financial means, arranged the plans, gathered information, provided—through the office of the Premier's Press Agency—for the ' working up ' of public opinion and made arrangements with the police authorities to guarantee the impunity of the direct culprits " (9). Though the Militia and the OVRA were not identical, the former developed into a valuable assistant of the latter. In the 'twenties it had been Mussolini's theory that there was room for a third armed force in the State, half-way between the Police and the Army. Whilst the Army was busy preparing for war and the regular police followed their main function of keeping order, there was a need for a large political police force. After the abolition of the Royal Guard, established by Nitti for special police duties, Mussolini created the Militia, which was both larger and more expansive. According to Finer, in 1935 the Fascist Militia had a membership of some 450,000, of whom 20,000 officers and men were in permanent service, apart from the special Militia of the Railways, Ports, Frontiers, Roads and Forests, numbering 1,700 officers and 10,000 men. The great bulk of the Militia, however, was mobilized only for review

* See the postscript on p. 66 and also Appendix C.

purposes, though every member of this élite, forming one-fourth of the Fascist Party, was relied upon to act as informer for the Government and to denounce all people who had talked or behaved in a manner detrimental to the Fascist State (10).

The OVRA established under the control of the Minister of the Interior had its headquarters in Rome and its local organizations spread all over the country. In a way there was less secrecy over its organization than later in the case of the Gestapo, for, under the Public Safety Act of November 1926, political investigation officers had been set up in the ninety-three provinces of Italy. Although it is hardly possible to determine in juridical language the limits circumscribing the competence of this service (11), it probably functioned as a connecting-link between the Secret Police and the local administration in a way similar to the provincial offices set up in Germany by the Gestapo.

The first President of the OVRA, Arturo Bocchini (1880–1940), has been sometimes called the " Italian Himmler ". Such a comparison, however, is not very happy, since Bocchini was neither a revolutionary upstart nor had he the political ambitions which made Himmler the most powerful of Hitler's ministers. Before Fascism swept over Italy and carried him into influential positions, Bocchini had been an official in the Ministry of the Interior for 20 years. In 1922 he became a Fascist Prefect successively in Brescia, Bologna and Genoa, and in 1926, the birth year of the OVRA, Head of the Italian Police, a position he held until his death in 1940. Appointed a Senator in 1933, he was more in the limelight than his German colleague, from whom he also differed in mainly concentrating on the tracking down of active anti-Fascists, whilst showing tolerance towards more harmless passive enemies.

Whereas it was possible to obtain an approximate figure of the Fascist Militia, the total number of the personnel of the OVRA has so far remained unknown. Writers on this subject either include the total police force and the Fascist Militia in their estimate, or glibly talk of " countless agents and spies " or of " thousands, if not several thousands of agents ". What is known, however, is that the personnel of the political police can be divided into two categories according to the tasks allotted to them. The first refers to men whose job was unspecified spying and the gathering of information. This category included (*a*) the Militia officer in his official capacity as instructor of the youth ; (*b*) the Militia men " watching the railroads, ports and

air ports" ; (*c*) the Militia officials who stayed in the Post Office to intercept correspondence ; (*d*) the *bidello* (porter) in the universities ; (*e*) the *portiere* (house-porter) or his wife ; (*f*) all the other agents shadowing big hotels, cafés or factories ; (*g*) the *Dopo Lavoro* and the Party Youth Organization. On the whole the minor personnel of this section, especially the *bidelli* and *portieri*, have often proved so astonishingly ignorant and devoid of any intelligent understanding that their efficiency must be rather doubted.

To the second group belonged most of the executive organs of the administration whose task it was to elaborate and utilize the information obtained by the agents of the first type. The personnel falling under this category seems to have been recruited from the Militia only. It included higher officers who, by order of the district command, had to take part in the proceedings of the Internment Commissions set up in the various provinces for the deportation of suspects. They also functioned as judges in the Special Tribunal for the Defence of the State, needing no law decrees for the exercise of this duty. Judicious observers of the Italian scene have declared that their efficiency was undeniable.

Fascism hit its opponents hard, both at home and abroad. After 1925, it had perhaps more reason to be afraid of the latter than of the former. Intimidation and pressure seemed necessary to stop a subversive "attitude" displayed by Italians abroad. Therefore a special law, issued on January 31, 1926, declared :

> Citizenship is forfeited by all who commit or abet abroad any act calculated to disturb public peace in Italy, or from which may result injury to Italian interests, or to the good name or prestige of Italy, even if the act does not constitute a crime. To the loss of citizenship may be added the sequestration, and, in the gravest cases, the confiscation of property (12).

The vagueness of this statement is remarkable, for it omits to define what might injure "the good name or the prestige of Italy". Slightly more specific was a second ordinance, dated November 25, 1926, which threatened with imprisonment of between 5 and 15 years, plus loss of citizenship and confiscation of property, any Italian who outside the kingdom "spread or communicated under any form false, exaggerated or tendentious rumours or news about the internal conditions of the country, to the detriment of the foreign credit or prestige of the State, and whose activities were prejudicial to the national interest" (13). In spite of their vagueness, both decrees clearly indicate the

uneasiness felt by the Fascist leaders about the activities of Italian anti-Fascists abroad.

Agents provocateurs abroad

Fouché's opponents had fled to England, the Russian Socialists, defying the hunt of the Okhrana, had formed cells all over Europe; similarly anti-Fascist Italians who were lucky enough to escape the gallows or deportation had gone abroad, building up active centres of opposition in Paris, Brussels, New York, Buenos Aires and elsewhere. The OVRA followed suit by founding a foreign branch of *agents provocateurs*, whose members tried to ingratiate themselves with these anti-Fascist colonies.

The *agents provocateurs* were used by the OVRA to trap political *émigrés*, to destroy them or at least to extract useful information from them in connection with anti-Fascist groups within Italy. Their organization was built up on a hierarchic basis, with "supervisors" at the top, purely informative and passive elements at the bottom, and the group of active agents between the two. Some of those who had to collect information were officially employed as waiters in cafés and restaurants frequented by the exiles, others just moved in exile circles, watching and spying upon their activities. Some, again, were disguised as commercial travellers, who would offer their goods at cheap prices (mostly Italian specialities like macaroni or parmigiano) hoping thus to become friends of the exiles.

To trap emigrants, the active *agent provocateur* employed various methods. Forged letters were often used and sometimes proved successful, as in the case of Cesare Rossi. Rossi, deeply involved in the Matteotti tragedy, had escaped from Italy and had bluntly exposed Fascist terror. When the Fascist authorities had decided that his presence abroad represented too great a danger for their prestige, "his case" was handed over to an *agent provocateur*. By forged letter he called Rossi to Lugano and from there "he was lured across the frontier with the assistance of a woman friend of the family"; arrested on his arrival and sentenced to 30 years' hard labour.

Elaborate sabotage plans on various occasions served the purpose of instigation to violent action against the Fascist régime. But to gain the *émigré's* confidence and agreement was often no easy job. A "booklover" from Milan, for instance, visited Filippo Turati, the Socialist Reformist Leader, from time to time, but after the real reasons of his visits had been found out by

Turati and his friends, he resigned from his job. In October 1929, Count Sforza, then living in Brussels, was approached by an agent and advised to use more violent tactics and to get interested in some chemical plans for bombs which the agent carried with him. Yet Sforza, realizing the catch, simply refused the agent this hospitality of his house. More successful were the activities of the notorious agent Menapace, an employee of the Italian Embassy in Brussels. He succeeded in throwing suspicion upon the anti-Fascist journalist Cianca by depositing dynamite, incriminating papers and a revolver in Cianca's home. Later the Embassy helped Menapace to escape to Switzerland after he had practised the same method on Camillo Berneri, a professor of philosophy.

By far the biggest plot worked out in France in 1925–6, was that led by the agent Ricciotti Garibaldi, grandson of the great Italian liberator. It was intended to involve a number of leading freemasons, republicans, labour leaders and patriots. Garibaldi, supported by the Italian Embassy, had arranged for four anarchists to assassinate Mussolini ; they were to be arrested on their crossing the Italian frontier, and the police would get hold of all the conspirators connected with the planned crime. But the French police intervened in time to prevent the plan being carried out ; Garibaldi was arrested and confessed to having acted on orders from Rome. G. Salvemini remarks that " the French Government could show not only that the French police had not been inactive, but that plots organized in France were the work of Italian *agents provocateurs* and high officials of the Italian police, travelling under false passport issued directly by the Mussolini Government " (14).*

In France, in the 1920's for some time the Italian Secret Police agents were divided into three groups : the first operated under direct orders from the Italian Embassy in Paris, the second was composed of occasional informers, whilst members of the third group travelled with false passports and tried under the cloak of diplomatic immunity to act as *agents provocateurs* (16) to induce

* Inside Italy, the same technique was used by the *agents provocateurs*. Among the best known cases is that of the chemist Umberto Ceva, an old Liberal, who after showing no interest in the bomb schemes suggested to him by the agents, was left with a design for a bomb on his table, unknown to him. The OVRA, alarmed by the agent, " discovered " the paper and Ceva was arrested. Even when in prison, Ceva, in the belief that the author of the bomb design was an anti-Fascist, would not compromise him and committed suicide rather than betray him. " Ceva's suicide was kept secret by the Fascist Government until a protest from groups of British intellectuals asking for a fair trial was sent to Mussolini " (15).

political opponents of the régime to return to Italy. The police agent abroad had two different ways of approach. (*a*) He attempted to gain the confidence of an *émigré* and to provoke him to carry out individual terrorist acts against the régime in Italy, offering his help in procuring visas, arms, money, etc. If the *émigré* was credulous enough to believe his story, he travelled to Italy and found himself arrested in no time. (*b*) The agent undertook to persuade his victim to organize collective mass risings against Fascism. He told him that there was growing dissatisfaction in Italy and a good chance of overthrowing the Government. He advocated " that the circle of exiles should form in every province and centre of Italy, a group of militant anti-Fascists who can be relied upon to strike a blow for freedom when the signal is given from Paris or Brussels " (17). By these means the agent could easily elicit names and addresses of anti-Fascists in Italy and furnish the Special Tribunal with evidence enabling it to send many enemies of the régime to the deportation islands.

4. Methods of the OVRA

It was Professor Alfredo Rocco who applied the Fascist ideology to the field of jurisprudence, trying to explain and justify the practice of Italian Fascism in general and its secret police in particular. According to this ideology Fascism, regarded as the embodiment of the ethical State (*lo Stato etico*) for its conception of life, is based on a collectivist and universalist foundation. Any comparison between an ordinary and a political criminal would weigh definitely against the latter. " If the common criminal hurts the individual," declared Rocco, " the political criminal hurts a community " (18). As various victims of Fascism could testify, this principle did not remain on paper, but was scrupulously applied by prison warders as well as by Fascist gangs involved in punitive expeditions. Such expeditions were usually carried out by two or four men who worked quite effectively, as the murder of the Socialist deputy Matteotti and the fatal wounds inflicted on the deputy Amendola proved with brutal clarity. Amendola is reported to have been struck down with bludgeons to the point of unconsciousness. This technique, generally referred to as " violence in style " (*bastonatura in stile*) and which often included cudgelling, was frequently suggested in orders issued from the Headquarters of the Militia. After a punitive expedition had been successfully

completed, the personnel involved had to be backed up by the authorities. Cesare Rossi, a highly placed Fascist leader who later escaped to France, described the methods of de Bono, then Chief of the Militia as well as Head of the Police, in this respect :

> When he had to deal with certain crimes against anti-Fascists, or committed by prominent Fascists, in which public opinion had evinced interest, he would arrest a Fascist with whom he had arranged an understanding ; a Fascist who, admittedly, had had nothing whatever to do with the affair in question, and would then give him every opportunity of proving an alibi. When this alibi had been established, and in every case this was easily accomplished, the " suspect " would be liberated and the enquiry closed on the ground of lack of evidence . . . so General de Bono, clad in a black shirt, would organize an outrage with Fascists who were useful for this special purpose, and then the same de Bono, in the uniform of the Director of Police, would arrest the " Criminals," hold an enquiry into the crime that had been committed under his orders, taking care to hide those really guilty, and by his conclusions and decisions would confuse the Court and prevent justice from being done (18a).

Like any other totalitarian police, the OVRA emphasized the importance of information obtained about potential enemies of the régime. The term " socially dangerous people " proved very expedient in this connection. They were defined as " those who have committed or manifested the clear intention of committing acts in defiance of the laws of the national State, or that might endanger public security, or delay or hinder the action of State officials in such a way as to incite manifestations against national interests " (19). Spying on behalf of the OVRA was carried out either directly by way of its own staff or indirectly relying on the assistance of public opinion, the *voce pubblica.* The denouncer's name was kept secret ; " in nine cases out of ten the Tribunal considered as a sufficient proof of guilt the word of police agents or of Fascist Militia men, who stated that their information had been obtained from people whose names they could not reveal ". (20)

Mussolini had established a large network of telephone eavesdroppers with no less than 1,500 expert monitors maintaining a 24 hours' service at switchboards in the Ministry of the Interior. Their task was to report the conversation of all and sundry, including Princes, Cabinet Ministers and even the Secretary of the Fascist Party. Amongst the listeners were 150 linguists, who

specialized in tapping the talks of embassies and correspondents. All information went straight to the Duce (20a).*

The elaborate technique of proceedings against persons labelled " dangerous to the state " was generally applied in three main stages :

(*a*) A police reprimand, complete with search and supervision (*diffida*).

(*b*) The imposition of curfew and restriction of movement by the police (*ammonizione*).

(*c*) Deportation from one's home town to another part of Italy, usually the Islands (*confino*).

In the second stage the person involved is closely shadowed. He is bound to " live honourably, respect the laws, give no cause for suspicion and not leave his permanent residence without due notice to the local police ". Nor must he " associate with any convicted or suspected person, retire later at night or go out earlier in the day than at fixed hours, nor carry arms, frequent restaurants, public-houses or brothels, or take part in public meetings " (21). The most drastic is the third step, deportation. It is decreed by a Commission composed of the Prefect of the province, who presides, the Public Prosecutor, the Chief of the *Carabinieri* (National police) and a high official of the Militia. Though the existence of a Commission might serve to " legalize " deportation in the eyes of the world to some extent, it is in fact a very tyrannical institution. It may even be applied to people who have been acquitted by the regular Court and it can be imposed, without any trial, on people who have already served a term of imprisonment. Altogether it proved an effective method of disposing of people who for one reason or another were looked upon with disfavour by some local Fascist leader. Cases are known where these insisted on a certain person being deported purely from motives of revenge or covetousness. It speaks for itself that the police often described persons sent to the Islands as " Communists " with a view to maintaining the myth of a " Red " danger in Italy. Most deportees were sent to the three islands of Ustica, Lipari, and Lampedusa. Exact figures of the deportees are not available, but it is well known that in May 1927 Ustica had received 400 and Lipari 450 of them. Compared with the German concentration camps in the Third Reich, conditions on the Islands were somewhat better and most of the deportees were allowed to send for their families later.

* The entire system was abolished by Premier Bonomi in August 1944.

Nevertheless, the prisoners were entirely cut off from the outside world and from their professions. Sometimes they were subjected to complete or partial confinement, sometimes to beatings or even to stabbing or shooting. They had three alternatives : to serve the full sentence, to try to escape, or to appeal to Mussolini for clemency.

Conditions were particularly bad at one time on Lampedusa. An Italian, who later escaped, has described the sadistic tyranny of a lieutenant who was absolute master of the island. He was one of those dangerous neurotics who cover their impotence by a mad personal hatred of their victims and by taking a fiendish delight in insulting them. Full of resentment against his educated victims he had shouted : " Useless to talk to you fellows ! you are too educated ! But Fascism is this—the whip ! And with this we will tame you all, without talking ! " (22). This commandant, who had three other officers and one hundred men of the Fascist Militia under him, indulged in the most brutal blows and dagger thrusts at the deportees until some news of their plight leaked out. When the French press published articles on the horrible conditions existing on the island, even Mussolini was forced to order an enquiry, with the result that soon afterwards the local despot was transferred and the political prisoners sent to other islands (23).

Another method practised by the OVRA on a wider scale was the system of " hostages ", forced upon relatives of anti-Fascists who had succeeded in leaving the country illegally. Such hostages were constantly supervised and closely watched and could only move about with a police escort. If there was the slightest possibility of charging these people with having assisted or organized the underground emigration, the Political Police would arrange for their deportation to the Islands (24). The controlled Press assisted the police by vitriolic condemnations and abuse of anti-Fascists abroad. As early as 1926 a Rome newspaper demanded that " those who have gone abroad must be hunted and dragged down, and life must be made impossible for them " . . . and added, " perhaps the danger of popular reprisals will restrain these bastard sons from further activities against their country " (25).

Italian Fascism was sufficiently logical to proceed to the censoring of private letters and the strict control of the press. Without suspending the law that guaranteed the inviolability of correspondence, the OVRA was invested with power to intercept letters and make use of their contents. Anti-Fascist ideas or

opinions, whether publicly manifested or expressed in private letters, were branded as crimes against the State. It therefore became necessary to examine the correspondence of people classified as " suspects ", such as prominent philosophers or historians known for their liberal views, and that of their disciples. When examining a letter, the police official was entitled to interpret its contents as he thought fit. Letters which, *in his opinion*, contained criticism of the Government, often led to unpleasant consequences for the writer. Such was the case, for instance, of the State engineer Mario Maiuri, who had written to the famous historian Guglielmo Ferrero, asking his advice in connection with a book he was going to publish. Mentioning that he regarded the historian's opinion as more valuable " than any other opinion which could be obtained at the present time in Italy ", the Police interpreted this remark as criticism of the statesmen of the régime. Furthermore, the phrase that " the old Romans showed more sincerity than the present makers of history " (the book in question dealt with the character of the Romans) contributed to aggravate the accusation made by the police authorities. Maiuri was dismissed from Government service because he had expressed anti-Fascist sentiments. Later his appeal to the Council of State, the highest tribunal in Italy, was rejected (March 1929). Another case was that of Belotti, a distinguished member of the Italian bar. He had written to Bonomi and had promised to collaborate with him in a new review. Examining his letter the Police found that Belotti " had been criticizing the Government ". The enquiry ended with a charge of anti-Fascist activities against Belotti, who was condemned to five years' imprisonment on the island of Lipari.

With the abolition of the freedom of the Press, the Italian newspapers were reduced to simple propaganda sheets for the Government. It may or may not be true that Mussolini himself conducted " the orchestra of the Press " (to use his own expression) by directing the prefects to give the various editors their daily " keynote " for the day's news, but it remains an interesting fact that the Official Press from time to time mentioned the activities of the OVRA. The notices were usually very short and contained little reference to the actual facts. Some ran as follows : " The special section of OVRA of the department of public safety, a part of the Ministry of the Interior has discovered a clandestine organization . . ." or " The OVRA has likewise identified a Communist organization in Emilia and has made

arrests denouncing the chiefs to the special tribunal ", or " The OVRA has discovered in Rome an anti-Fascist group developing criminal activity by the clandestine distribution of defamatory literature. The chiefs have been arrested " (26). These Press announcements, evidently, fitted very well into the whole Fascist propaganda machine. To hide from the public the existence and activity of the OVRA altogether would have been unwise after Mussolini's statement on May 26, 1928, that " a special Police Service has been established and has rendered remarkable services ". On the other hand, to expose the terroristic character of the OVRA would have led to wholesale desertion by the most faithful and enthusiastic adherents of Fascism inside Italy, and to an undesirable reputation abroad. The Italian people have a sense of proportion, which had to be taken into account if propaganda was to be effective. Therefore, describing the OVRA simply as a department of the Ministry of the Interior or stating that " the OVRA had discovered a clandestine organization " was a clever move. It served as a warning and reminder for the Italian people, and as a gesture of courage and justice for abroad. This policy was, on the whole, successful and contributed to the fact that while the deeds of the Gestapo (and in earlier years of the OGPU) caused much indignation in the democratic world, it bothered little about the activities of the less effective OVRA.

NOTE.—The trial in Rome of Pietro Caruso, the former Fascist Police Chief of that town, in September 1944, has thrown fresh light on the co-operation between the Fascist police and the Gestapo. Caruso was found guilty of (*a*) handing over fifty Italian hostages to the Gestapo for the Ardatine Cave massacre in 1943, when 300 Italians were machine-gunned ; (*b*) of ordering at least 50 people to be rounded up daily in the streets of Rome for deportation as labourers to Germany ; (*c*) forcibly extraditing 60 refugees who had sought sanctuary in Vatican territory at St. Paul's Basilica ; (*d*) granting leave to his police officers to go to Germany for special training in sabotage.

CHAPTER II

THE SS—THE FORMING OF AN ÉLITE FORCE

1. Party and State

To understand the structure and power of the Gestapo we must first glance at its background, Germany as a totalitarian state. The building up of this system meant in Germany, even more than in other countries, an intensive drive towards centralization and monopoly of power. The situation in the Weimar Republic had been determined by a plurality of centres of political energy. An often paralysing dualism prevailed between the *Reich* and the *Länder* (semi-federal states like Prussia, Bavaria, Saxony, etc.), all of which had their own governments and diets. If, for instance, there was a Left majority in Prussia and a Right majority in the *Reich*, conflict and tension soon flared up. Of the various parties some were built on the basis of class, some on that of religion, and others even on the minor strength of some professional or sectional interest. Hitler's coming to power changed this picture entirely. Since then the *Länder* no longer have had political autonomy, are dispossessed of their diets and form only regional administrative divisions. Whilst the Reichstag enjoys but a shadowy existence, what counts are the two main pillars of national life, the Party and the Army. In peacetime, the Party has the major share of control. It is neither a mere organ of the state, a " state party " as in Fascist Italy, nor has it exclusive command over the state as in Soviet Russia. The German form of relation between monopoly party and state, as F. Neumann has aptly pointed out, stands somewhere between the solutions in Italy and Russia and is difficult to describe (1). The Party supplied the skeleton of the state with its flesh and blood. Symbolic of this is the fact that nearly all *Reichsminister* are Party members and that the *Gauleiter* of the Party are very often the administrative heads of the *Länder* or of the big Prussian provinces. But most symptomatic is the close correlation between SS and police. The leading organizations of the Nazi party are the Political Leaders, the SS, the SA, the Nazi Automobile Corps, the Hitler Youth with its sub-branches for boys and girls, the Nazi Students' League and the Nazi Women's Union (2). Though both SS and Hitler Youth occupy " a position superior to the State " (3), the SS is without any rival as regards its

privileged position and controlling function. Between 1933 and 1939 it became the reservoir from which the forces for the police were drawn, a process which led not only to the close co-ordination and interdependence of the two institutions, but also to their entire unification. In the Weimar Republic the Reich possessed no police force of its own, but had to execute its will with the help of the sixteen different police forces of the *Länder*. This state of affairs came to an end in 1936 when the entire Reich police forces were put under Himmler's command. Then Dr. Frick, Reich Minister of the Interior, could boast that for " the first time in Germany's thousand years of history . . . a unified police leadership has been established for the whole Reich under a single leader " (4). This new arrangement meant, to quote another Nazi expert, " a fundamental change in the structure of the police " (5), as it put the entire police, the General as well as the Political Police, into the hands of the SS. The SS is an Élite Guard, as such controlling the police, and from the élite of this élite the most important and powerful part of the police, the Gestapo, is recruited.

This sociological relationship can be expressed in a formula :

$$\text{Party} : \text{State} = \text{SS} : \text{Gestapo}$$

Party and State, SS and Gestapo, are not altogether identical but their functions are closely interrelated. If the function of the Party is to a large extent to back as well as to represent the State, the function of the SS is to a considerable degree to feed the Gestapo formations just as certain army regiments man anti-aircraft batteries on the home front. Take the Party away and the Nazi State loses its backbone ; eliminate the SS and the Gestapo will become an empty shell. In both cases the personal union is characteristic of the larger as well as of the smaller institution. As one Nazi spokesman put it, " the character of our present Political Police is as little understandable without the SS as the State is without the Party " (6). The leader of the SS, therefore, not only belongs *ex officio* to the Führer's Inner Circle but holds the key position in it. Hitler has shown to the world that he can do very well without some formerly powerful members of his Inner Circle ; he had Röhm and Otto Strasser murdered, he sent others like Hanfstängl into the wilderness, and he lost Hess on a delicate mission, but he has never questioned the place and prestige of the *Reichsführer-SS* which grew in the same proportion as that of others faded away.

2. Himmler

Perhaps the best way to characterize one of the most destructive and ruthless tyrants mankind has ever experienced is the method of negative comparison. One has only to state what Himmler is not, by comparing him with other rulers of the Third Reich. Himmler is not a boastful, popular showman as is Göring, nor is he a first-rate speaker or a prolific writer like Goebbels, nor does he possess the hypnotizing power of a frustrated ex-corporal turned demagogue, like Hitler. Non-Nazi observers who had personal contact with the seedy-looking *Reichsführer-SS* and Chief of the German Police have testified two facts: Firstly, that he struck them as an average being, as "the very type of ordinariness and commonness" (7), as "being unburdened with pompousness and having even a modest sense of humour" (8), as "lacking any distinction in appearance, modest in manner" (9). Though Rauschning found Himmler "as ill-proportioned an individual as Hitler himself", Professor Roberts, who, it is true, received much courtesy from him, declared that no man he met in Germany was "more normal". Secondly, all these witnesses recording Himmler agree on "his beaver-like capacity for quiet and effective work", by which he developed into "probably the best organizer the Party has produced" (10). His technical ability is described as "unquestionably great" (11), and after Goebbels he is ranked as "by far the most intellectually active of the Nazi leaders" (12). Like Fouché, Himmler made himself indispensable by preferring to remain for many years behind the curtain of power instead of in front of it; like the French cynic he realized that knowledge is an instrument of power and that power can be better maintained by rational calculations than without them. This twentieth-century despot, too, sacrificed his former friends when it was opportune and assisted in the murder of the man whose secretary he had been only a few years earlier. Yet, unlike his French predecessor, he has not so far betrayed the Party or its leader, and has perhaps changed his fundamental line less than most of the other rulers. Himmler and Hitler can only be imagined together as a complementary duality. For Hitler without Himmler and his organizations would be powerless to a large extent, whilst Himmler without Hitler would lack the backing of the fantastic myth the spell of which has made millions of Germans acquiesce more readily in terror and lawlessness. If

Fouché was first a politician who later specialized as a police-chief, Himmler specialized from the beginning. Fouché made a name before he took over command of the police. Himmler made his career only through building up a new collective organization behind the police. Fouché would have left his mark without Napoleon's coming to power ; but it is very doubtful if the world would ever have heard of Himmler without Hitler's entry into the Berlin chancellery. Himmler only became what he is through the rise of his Party, but he was more instrumental than anyone else, except Hitler himself, in the Party's remaining in power.

Born in Munich in 1900, he went through the usual process of secondary education, and during the war served one year in the German army, like Lance-Corporal Hitler, without distinction. Like so many other sons of the frustrated middle classes, he joined the Nationalist Free Corps after the war, studied then a short time at a higher technical college and obtained a minor position in some industrial concern. The Nazi legend has it that he carried a banner at Hitler's abortive Putsch of November 1923 as a member of the Nationalist organization *Reichskriegsflagge* (13). Afterwards he was for some time private secretary to Gregor Strasser, who occasionally teased him about his passion for keeping registers and compiling " black lists " (Strasser could hardly have imagined that one day his own name would be added to them !) After 1925, however, when the fortunes of the Nazi party were at a low ebb, Heinrich Himmler retired to a poultry farm in southern Bavaria. As such he seems to have led a kind of Jekyll and Hyde existence. Whereas before the world he was breeding rabbits, he was secretly thinking out a scheme for breeding a perfect Teutonic race ; whilst he was dealing with animals, he was reflecting more and more on the animal side of human nature and at the same time he became very conversant with " the literature and technique of revolution and the methods of criminality " (14). He was concerned as much with the methods of the *coup d'état* and of overthrowing an existing régime as with those of maintaining and fortifying the newly established power. He realized that both methods were greatly facilitated by the amorphous character of the masses and by the models set by the deeds of Lenin and Trotsky. If asked how power could be gained in a modern state, Himmler would quote Trotsky and point to the Russian theory of revolutionary cadres. " A State is to be conquered neither by mass

revolts nor by military coups, but by specially drilled, highly trained revolutionary nucleus groups which, in a surprise assault, occupy all the key positions in the State and in industry" (15). Through his appointment as Reich-Leader-SS in 1929, he was in a position gradually to build up these revolutionary cadres after the Party had come to power. Their function changed from promoting revolution to backing counter-revolution, and Himmler's main concern was to crush effectively all actual, potential or imagined opposition and thus to guarantee the continuity of the régime indefinitely. In doing so the Head of the SS was successful for two reasons: firstly, he proved a very capable organizer, and, secondly, his was a Mephistophelian mass-psychology which combined systematic knowledge of the weak points of each individual with cold methodical will to exploit them for the purposes of his domination and that of his private army. Either a man belongs to his powerful group—and then he might get away with much, so long as he remains loyal to Hitler and Himmler, the mystical *Führer* and the uncanny chief of terror—or he does not belong to it, and then he is subject to ruthless regimentation, which might easily lead to untold suffering and eventually to annihilation. As Himmler sees it, "the human material" is divided into three main categories: (*a*) Enemies of the State, particularly, though by no means only, the Jews; (*b*) the regimentated racial comrades (*Volksgenossen*), amongst whom party members have a slight preference; (*c*) the all-superior SS élite.

3. The Early History of the SS

According to the official Party legend, the SS originates from the *Stabswache*, a kind of bodyguard which Hitler formed in the spring of 1923, shortly before his abortive Munich *Putsch*. Their emblem was the death's-head and an armlet with a black border. The *Stabswache* became the forerunner of the SS proper, abbreviated from *Schutz-Staffel* (Protection Squad). It was created, we are told, "for the purpose of giving the *Führer* a particularly reliable troop, to be at his disposal for every activity in the political struggle, as well as for police measures inside the Nazi movement." From the beginning the SS men tried to distinguish themselves by "a fanatic enforcing of National Socialist principles in their own ranks and through a special determination in their devotion to duty" (16). Practically every detachment to begin with consisted of a leader and ten men, but gradually

the units were enlarged and supplemented, and wherever Hitler made his firebrand speeches he could fall back on the protection of this fanatical bodyguard. At the second Party Congress at Weimar in 1926 the custody of the Blood Flag, saved from the Putsch, was entrusted to the SS. In 1929 all the local SS groups were welded together and Himmler, at that time to all intents and purposes an insignificant poultry farmer,' was appointed by Hitler as *Reichsführer-SS* (17). Intended as an élite troop, from the first the members of the SS had to possess many special qualifications, above all physical strength and a pure Aryan ancestry. Already by the end of 1931 the selective principle of what the Nazis called " racial hygiene " was emphasized, a special duty of the SS-men being to " guarantee to the State in the widest perspective, a stock of SS families, of hereditary health, desirable from the racial point of view and with a wealth of children " (18).

Between 1929 and 1933 this élite corps grew with the rapidity of an avalanche. It had in 1926 200, in 1929 280, in 1930 2,000, in 1931 10,000, in 1932 30,000, and in 1933 52,000 men. For 1936 official statistics gave the figure as 210,000 and for 1940 as 432,000 men, comprising thirty-six divisions of 12,000 men each (19).

4. The Purge of June 1934 and its Meaning

The SS, from its beginnings as a private army of a selective kind, developed in the course of a few years into a State institution which did not altogether lose its initial dynamic character. In its progress the decisive point was June 30, 1934, the " night of the long knives ". With it the period of internal revolution, the time of the revolutionary blitz, so to speak, came to an end. Not by chance did the purge take place only three months after Himmler had been made head of the entire Reich Gestapo (April 1934). The dramatic event indicated a shifting of power inside the ruling cliques of Nationalist Germany. What did it mean from the SS point of view ? Its significance was two-fold : Firstly, it broke the power of those non-Nazi Nationalist forces that had put National Socialism into the saddle of power but had later disapproved of its violent and eccentric riding. People such as the banker Schröder and Herr von Papen had undoubtedly desired the elimination of the SS altogether. Secondly, it limited the big rival Party organization, the SA, which would have put itself into the powerful position of the SS,

had it been able to forestall the purge. In that fateful summer of 1934 Himmler, for years the secretary and protégé of both Gregor Strasser and Röhm, expressed his gratitude in the oddest fashion by destroying both men. In Munich, the " night of the long knives " was carried out ruthlessly, with the help of army people and of the SS. In Berlin many men were seized by the SS or by Göring's Political Police and simply shot against the wall of the Lichterfelde Old Cadet School. There Himmler himself was in charge of hasty trials and summary executions, and saw to it that most Berlin SA leaders, old fighters like Karl Ernst, Heines, Hoffmann and others were " liquidated " for good. In addition, the homosexual inclinations of some of them served as an easy pretext for moral castigation. How many people were destroyed on Himmler's orders nobody knows, but there is no reason to doubt the truth of Rauschning's statement that " 1,000 party members were shot without trial, and many others, innocent of any crime, were simply murdered " (20). The SS had in any case proved itself an effective instrument, not only for the annihilation of a riotous faction from the ranks of the Party, but also for the breaking of a potential threat from the dissatisfied camp of the Conservatives, comprising sections of the *Reichswehr* and of the Ministerial bureaucracy. It was some time later that the SS entrenched itself as a political unit and that its chief took charge of the entire Reich police. As the SA had failed in its stormy claim for arms and for the inclusion of part of it in the new *Wehrmacht*, for the time being the army remained the sole bearer of arms. The army, through its passivity, had carried the day in the military field, the SS in the field of control over the Party and the general public. From now on the SS was regarded as the Party élite and as its only exponent that counted. Hardly a fortnight after the purge, Hitler handsomely rewarded the SS for its bloody services by raising it " to an autonomous unit of the Party (*Gliederung*) directly under the *Führer* " (21). A few months later, at the end of December 1934, Goebbels, in a skilful speech in Berlin, found the formula for the new division of power. " Party and Army ", he said, " are the two pillars on which the State rests. Just as the Party jealously keeps watch that no one outside of it shapes politics, so the Army jealously sees to it that no one except it bears arms " (22). The Party, of course, meant the SS, which in future was to control Germany internally, as the Army was to represent it to the outside world.

The purge of 1934 proves that neither the old capitalistic reactionary powers nor the new revolutionary "socialist" forces were to have a monopoly. The SS had proved a more reliable instrument in the *Führer's* hands than the conspiring leaders of the SA who, as Hitler had told Rauschning shortly before the event, believed that "socialism means simply their chance to share the spoils, to do business and live a comfortable life" (23). At the same time the purge had struck a deadly fear into the hearts of the Conservative groups, a result entirely to the satisfaction of the *Führer*. "What I have lost in the trial of the SA" —he remarked—"I shall regain by the verdict on these feudal gamblers and professional card-sharpers, the Schleichers and Co." (24). Hitler and the SS got away with their murders easily. In England a procedure of coldly killing one's former political friends would have fanned a flame of intense indignation; in Germany it inspired fear and awe towards a leader who cared so much for the glory of the Reich that he did not shirk from annihilating his best lieutenants when they were supposed to threaten it (25).

The bloody elimination of the counter-revolution which was to reach its climax ten years later, in July 1944, was only one of the two methods thought out and carried through by Himmler and Hitler. The other was by far less startling, dramatic and fearful; it was a method of infiltration into the ranks of the Conservative camp, a well-calculated way of pinning down and winning over its youth. It was "the noiseless revolution", as Himmler called it, and took place between the autumn of 1933 and the end of 1934; a silent struggle between two groups, each attempting to absorb and weaken the other. By joining the ranks of the SS, the reluctant and better-mannered sons of the old aristocracy and the upper classes hoped to gain influence, seize the leading posts and thus pour conservative water into the revolutionary wine. But Himmler saw through their calculations, slyly met their intentions halfway, and bidding them welcome in the SS cadres, knew how to frustrate their plans. He out-schemed the schemers—as Rauschning could observe after some instructive conversations with him (26). He made them forget their original goals by means of the SS uniform and ideology. They were all out for influence, but what they obtained instead were successful careers—they dreamt of key-positions, but instead they had to eat their way into the army as Himmler's obedient propagandists. Instead of de-Nazifying the SS they

were Nazified and co-ordinated themselves—a subtle process, as gradual and unobtrusive as becoming addicted to a drug. Without the magic voice of Goebbels and the hypnotizing power of the *Führer*, Himmler acted as a shrewd and successful conjuror. At least for the time being he broke the backbone of the young members of a class which he despised with the envious hatred of the member of a less privileged stratum. He saw to it that " they were soon the best and most rabid of the officers in Himmler's *coup d'état* forces " (27).

To understand this astonishing phenomenon of bloodless surrender and permeation, one has to realize that the success of the Nazi *coup d'état* in 1933 was partly conditioned by the existence of large numbers of " unsuccessful " persons in all walks of life. Before 1933 princes without thrones, insolvent and subsidized landlords, farmers overwhelmed by debts, virtually bankrupt industrialists had joined the Movement, together with hard-pressed shopkeepers and craftsmen, unemployed manual and clerical workers and members of the professional classes without means. After the Nazis had come to power, those who had not joined found themselves in an even worse predicament than before, a fact which applied particularly to many Junkers. To quote Rauschning, " it was the spectre of the expropriation and settlement of their estates that drove many Junkers into the arms of the Nazis " (28)—an uneasy alliance which was to last for ten years.

The official Nazi expert, describing the task of the Political Police, distinguishes between the periods of " revolution " and of " evolution " in the history of the Third Reich before the war. The first, he declares, is characterized by Hitler's *blitz* assault on the power positions of his internal opponents and by the destruction of their various organizations and devices. This period closed at the end of 1934 and was followed by the second phase, consisting of a slower but more thorough transformation of all the fundamentals of the national existence.

During the second period (1935–9), the SS, having gradually enlarged and consolidated its power, became a bureaucratic institution. Its structure had a certain similarity to the other two leading organizations of the Party, representing the " Political Soldiers " of the present and of the future, i.e. the SA and the Hitler Youth. In 1936 the SS was divided into eleven SS Chief Sectors (*SS Oberabschnitte*), the SA into twenty-one SA Groups and the Hitler Youth into twenty-three regions (29). It is

noteworthy that, running parallel to these leading offshoot organizations, is the Party organization as such, with its sub-units of Regions (*Gaue*), Districts (*Kreise*), and local branches (*Ortsgruppen*), under their respective leaders (*Gauleiter*, *Kreisleiter*, and *Ortsgruppenleiter*). The local groups in their turn are sub-divided into cells under cell-guards and block-guards respectively. The system of division and sub-division, the hierarchy of higher and lower grades, reveals the character of these power organizations as a mixture of bureaucracy and army.*

5. The Training of a Leading Caste

As in other authoritarian organizations (the Society of the Jesuits in the seventeenth century, for instance) the career of the SS man had been carefully planned and regulated (30). In this curriculum seven stages can be distinguished :

1. The future SS man must have been a member of the Hitler Youth ; in addition his special " SS suitability " and " SS fitness " have to be established. Although the official accounts do not define these special categories, it is obvious that they refer to physical and " racial " selective qualities.

2. At the age of eighteen the ex-Hitler-Youth boy can become a candidate for the SS and is as such admitted into the organization at the occasion of the next Reich Party Congress in Nuremberg. He then receives the much coveted SS card to take the oath of allegiance to the *Führer* shortly afterwards, on the 9th of November, the traditional Party Remembrance Day.

3. During his first year of service much stress is laid on his training in sport, particularly of a kind useful in military service. He has to obtain two medals : the Army Sport Medal and the bronze Reich Sport Medal.

4. Like every ordinary German, at the age of nineteen he joins the Labour Service for six months and then the Army for two years.

5. Unless he stays in the army he will return to the SS as a potential member (*SS Anwärter*). Again he receives a thorough

* In their form SA, SS, NSKK and Hitler Youth again have a similar system of hierarchies. For instance, in November 1942 the official German News Agency published a long list of promotions and appointments in the SA, SS, NSKK and Hitler Youth announced by Hitler on November 9. The list shows the following grades and titles :

SS *Obergruppenführer*, SS *Gruppenführer*, SS *Brigadeführer*, SA *Gruppenführer*, SA *Brigadeführer*, NSKK *Gruppenführer*, NSKK *Brigadeführer*. The higher grades (*Obergruppenführer and Gruppenführer*) are filled by high Nazi officials such as State Ministers, Secretaries of State, Plenipotentiaries, Directors in the various ministries, etc.

ideological training and is particularly instructed in the SS Marriage Order and the SS Code of Honour.

6. When the next 9th November comes along he is at last received, at the age of twenty-one, as a fully-fledged SS man "into the Order of the SS" (Himmler) and definitely belongs to this privileged caste. For himself and for his future kin he has to pledge that they will keep the basic laws of the SS. At the same time he has to be aware of his right and duty to defend his honour according to the special SS Code. Apparently, in order to allow him to do so, he receives permission to wear the SS dagger. This fact incidentally throws light on the privileges granted to the SS. Whilst the ordinary penal court "permits the ordinary citizen to use weapons only in necessary self-defence" a special court decision of November 1938 ruled that "SS men were free to use their weapons even when the attack could be warded off by other means". For, as the decision stated, "the bearer of an SS uniform cannot offer the spectacle of a tussle to his racial comrades" (31).

7. He stays in the General SS until he is thirty-five. On application he will then be transferred to the SS Reserve and later, at the age of forty-five, to the SS *Muster* Detachment. (It is, however, not stated which special SS unit he will have to join on his seventy-fifth birthday.)

6. Code and Ideology *

The SS has been conceived by its leaders as a League of Soldiers or an Order of True Men (*Soldatenbund und Männerbund*), and, according to Himmler, the medieval Order of the Teutonic Knights and the Prussian army of Frederick the Great belong to its racial and spiritual forerunners (32). As with many Orders of the past, it was from the beginning the main intention of the SS leaders to create and train a new social type, educated "on the road to obedience". The task set for the SS by the *Führer* was to take care "of the internal security of the Reich", whilst the ideology behind it was the belief that the German nation "is not at the end but at the beginning of its mission and task within the frame of the nations of this earth" (33).

Himmler, unlike the loquacious Goebbels a man of deeds and not of words, and more fanatic than ostentatious, has, in the only pamphlet he wrote for a wider public before the war, elaborated the four main "directives and virtues" of the SS code :

* See also Appendix A.

1. *Recognition of the value of Race and of Selection.* An élite is based on selection. In the case of the SS this selection is above all a biological one. Primarily those " whose physique comes closest to the ideal of the Nordic type " are chosen (34). There is also a continuous process of elimination amongst the members, though its criterion is only vaguely defined as " the removal of those unfit from the point of view of character, of will-power, of emotions and from that of blood " (35). Selection not only applies to the past, but also covers the future. Not every son of an SS man has the chance or the right to become a SS man himself. Apparently the principle of succession valid in the British aristocracy has been imitated with the important modification that whilst in the latter only the eldest surviving son succeeds to the title (principle of seniority), in the SS families only " the best sons " are allowed to enter the SS " élite " (principle of " quality "). In both cases the élite is intended as an open one, prepared to admit newcomers, as long as they fulfil certain specific qualifications.

2. " *Education in the will to freedom and in the fighting spirit* " (36). To keep both alive, a continuous testing of the capacity to stand the hardest physical exertions is required. The entire Black Corps, especially its leaders, have every year to pass a number of severe physical tests. This attitude differs equally from the easy-going but dignified manner of the English sportsman and from the German pre-Nazi bent towards " *Gemütlichkeit* " (cosiness), expressly condemned by Himmler. He himself has practised a certain simplicity of life and has preached it as a virtue to the SS, claiming that " a community, of whom physical achievements and achievements of will-power are demanded at regular intervals until old age, is bound to remain simple " (37).

3. *Loyalty and Honour.* Hitler has impressed upon the SS men the slogan " Your honour is loyalty ". This loyalty applies to the *Führer*, to the Germanic nation, to the blood, to the descendants, to the kin (*Sippe*), to the comrades. Ironically enough, it also includes " loyalty to the unalterable laws of decency, moral cleanliness and chivalry " (38). Those " unalterable " laws are, however, not paraphrased ; as the ethical code of an exclusive group they are only applied to the members of the same race or nation. Above all stands the loyalty to the *Führer* ; as Himmler put it with rather cynical frankness : " We teach our SS men that there are many things which can be forgiven on this earth, no matter how evil they be, but one thing never : disloyalty to the

Führer. He who fails in his loyalty, excludes himself from our ranks " (39).

4. *Obedience*. It must be " unqualified and utterly voluntary. Every order given by the *Führer*, or lawfully by other superiors, must be carried out " (40). The SS man has no right to act upon his own ; his attitude must be active or passive according to the orders received, whether he likes it or not. " Loyalty " and " Obedience " correspond to the masochistic tendencies in the mental make-up of the SS man, whereas the sadistic ones, as we shall see later, find their outlet in the free hand given to him in his treatment of the " enemies of the State ". Incidentally the most characteristic expression of the unqualified " loyalty " and " obedience " required, is to be found in the formulation of the oath which every SS man has to take :

> We swear to you, Adolf Hitler, as *Führer* and *Reich* Chancellor of the German *Reich*, loyalty and fortitude. We pledge to you and to the superiors named by you, obedience into death. So help us God (41).

This " pledged community " is not only exclusive, it is also of an irrational nature. As Himmler put it :

> No one will be able to understand us who does not try to comprehend us with his inner blood and heart. It cannot be explained why we, in numbers such a small body of about 200,000 men in the frame of the German people, have this strength in us (42).

The entire ideology has perhaps been best summed up in a basic statement on the SS which is typical of its mixture of military and mystical language :

> Thus we have fallen in and are marching on the road to a distant future, according to irrevocable laws, as a National Socialist soldier-like Order of Nordic-determined men and as a pledged community of their kin ; we wish and believe that we should not only be the descendants, who fought it out better, but beyond this, be the ancestors of most distant future generations, necessary to the eternal life of the German and Germanic nation (43).

In spite of all its obscurity, this statement indicates both the esoteric character of a semi-military order and the romantic ideology supporting it. In Germany, unlike the western countries, the leaning has always been strong towards a romantic and anti-individualistic history of philosophy, doing away with the isolation experienced by the individual. Himmler makes his

followers feel that they are very insignificant as individuals, but receive significance and purpose by belonging to the mystical community of the nation, presented as an endless chain of generations. He is convinced that only " a generation, embedded between ancestors and descendants, can conceive the true criterion for the greatness of its task and obligation, and for the minuteness of its own transitory significance " (44). The individual life gains meaning by being admitted to the élite, the élite in its turn by consciously representing a small link in the eternal chain of the German nation, connecting an awe-inspiring past with a still more grandiose future. The almost fatalistic conception of a unique national mission furnishes the fleeting life of the individual with a higher significance.

This ideology has led to the most drastic statements, not only impressing upon the individual that he must be prepared to die for the Fatherland, but also that before dying he must procreate new life for it. The *Reichsführer SS* who in 1936 had proclaimed " the victory of the German child " as one of the foremost tasks of his élite guard, in 1940 under the sign of Mars re-emphasized this sacred duty in a special order :

> Every war is a letting of the best blood. . . . The unfortunately necessary death of the best men, regrettable as it may be, is not the worst feature. Much worse is the lack of children not procreated during the war by the living, and not after it by the fallen.
>
> The old wisdom that only he can die peacefully who has sons and children, has to become true again for the SS. Only he can die peacefully who knows that his kin (*Sippe*), and everything that his ancestors and he himself have wished for and aimed at, will continue in his children. The greatest gift for the widow of a fallen soldier is always the child of the man whom she has loved.
>
> Beyond the limits of otherwise perhaps necessary bourgeois laws and habits, it can be a high task even outside marriage [not from frivolity but from a very deep moral seriousness], for German women and girls of good blood to become mothers of children of soldiers who go to the front and of whom Fate alone knows if they will return or fall for Germany.
>
> Also for men and women whose place is at home by order of the State, the holy obligation holds good, particularly in these days, to become fathers and mothers.
>
> We must never forget that the victory of the sword and the blood shed by our soldiers would be without meaning if they were not followed by the victory of the child and by settlements on fresh soil.
>
> During the last war many a soldier, from a sense of responsibility, in order not to leave his wife behind after his death with worries and miseries through an additional child, decided not to procreate

> more children. You SS men need not have these doubts and worries. You SS men and mothers of those children for whom Germany is hoping should show that by your belief in the *Führer* and in the eternal will of our blood and nation to live, you are willing to pass on life for Germany as bravely as you know how to fight and to die for Germany ! (45).

In this rather boorishly styled appeal the individual responsibility felt by the soldier in the last war is replaced by the collective responsibility suggested to the soldier of this war. Ideological, emotional and security arguments are marshalled as means of persuasion and the belief in the immortality of the individual is gently replaced by the creed of the immortality of the nation. Quixotic idealism goes hand-in-hand with stoic realism and with a solemn magic, springing from the monopoly of rights and duties of a political élite.

After the summer of 1934, when the SS was granted the status of an independent formation of the Party, it had considerable liberty of planning and training on the basis of this ideology. With the exception of the growing army, it need hardly consider the claims of any other body. It could carry out its own system with an unprecedented ruthlessness, a feature which characterizes the various branches of the SS as well as the Gestapo.

7. Organization

Undoubtedly the strength of a privileged political body of the type of the SS largely depends on its effective organization. This was planned between 1933 and 1939 in a very careful and adequate manner. Following the general principle of Nazi hierarchy with a leader as its all-powerful and all-responsible head, the hierarchy of the SS begins from above with the Reich-Leader-SS and Chief of the German Police. Under him are his Personal Staff and the Chief of the SS Disciplinary Court. Then follow three main Offices : the Race and Settlement Central Office, the SS Central Office, and the Security Central Office. The most important of them is the SS Central Office, under which come the three chief branches of the SS, the General SS, the SS Shock Troops (*SS Verfügungstruppen*) and the SS Death's Head Formations. The General SS differs from the other two formations fundamentally in that it is in its vast majority a body of men and leaders who have civil occupations, whilst the members of the SS Shock Troops and the Death's Head Formations are professionals (46).

(*a*) *The General SS*

Before this war the organization of the General SS (*Allgemeine SS*) comprised the following head offices, all of them under the ultimate control of the Reich-Leader-SS (Himmler) :

Chief A.D.C. to Reich-Leader-SS.
Education.
Chief of SS Command.
Race and Settlement.
Central Office.
Administration and Economic Affairs.
Tribunal.
Personnel.
Germanic Liaison.
Security.*

In 1936 Himmler gave the number of the General SS as 200,000, and it is known that by the outbreak of this war it had gone up to 240,000. By then the General SS was divided and subdivided according to the principle of regional distribution as follows (47) :

18 Main Regions.
38 Regions (one of them autonomous).
104 Detachments (*Standarten*).
10 Mounted Detachments.
14 Messenger Brigades.
9 Pioneer Brigades.
36 Motorized Units.
34 Ambulance Brigades.

Thus every Main Region, under the command of a Main Group Leader or Group Leader, as the case may be, is divided into Regions, Detachments, Brigades and Units. This follows the principle of regional organization, whereas the principle of systematic organization can be traced from the thirteen different offices united in the SS Central Office. They deal with every aspect of the life of this private army such as recruiting, liaison, supply, security, medical welfare, physical training, etc. (48).

* The first head of the Security Department was the notorious Reinhold Heydrich, succeeded in 1942 by Dr. Ernst Kaltenbrunner, who at the same time is in charge of the Reich Security Police. By training a barrister, he became leader of the Austrian SS before his home country was incorporated into Germany in 1938, and afterwards Senior SS and Police Leader in the Army District XVII in Vienna.

Whilst the SS Security Service will be discussed below, a word should be said here about the SS Race and Settlement Central Office, which *inter alia* is concerned with the SS code of marriage qualification. It advises on and controls the various necessary documents of both prospective marriage partners. To this office with painstaking pedantry certificates of hereditary health must be submitted, and also statements from people who are in a position to pledge the "good race and character" of the bride. The granting or refusing of a marriage-permit depends solely on "the racial and hereditary suitability of the couple" (49). Bride and bridegroom are in any case forced to pay enormous attention to their ancestry, as the "Aryan" purity of their respective genealogical trees has to be proved in the case of an SS sub-leader or SS man back to 1800, in that of an SS-leader and of all higher ranks even back to 1750. (Incidentally this grotesque enquiry into the "purity" of long past generations has at least brought prosperity to one profession—that of the genealogists, who frequently offer their services in various Party newspapers and periodicals.)

Under the personal staff of the Reich-Leader-SS comes also a special society named *Lebensborn* (Source of Life), consisting mainly of members of the SS. Its purpose is to alleviate the difficulties of confinement for women with large families by accommodating them in model homes where they enjoy all necessary comfort before and after the event. In addition these homes "offer a possibility of a carefree confinement for premarital and unmarried mothers of good race" (50).

The head of the Race and Settlement Central Office was, until April 1942, the Reich Peasant Leader, Senior Group Leader SS Walter Darré.* Himmler himself has emphasized that this appointment was not incidental, but had its ideological foundation. "The SS idea of blood", he declared, "is indissolubly connected with the conviction of the value and of the sanctity of the soil," a correlation expressed by the Nazi slogan of "*Blut und Boden*" (Blood and Soil) (51). According to Himmler, peasants and SS men have much in common as social types; for neither "belongs to that kind of people who waste time over superfluously amiable and kind words".†

* In 1943 Richard Hildenbrandt, *SS Obergruppenführer* and Police General became his successor.

† At the beginning of this war the activities of the SS in this field were enlarged by the task of settling German peasants in the conquered East, first in Poland, later in the Ukraine and in Bessarabia.

(*b*) *The Professional SS*

In pre-war days the men of the SS Shock Troops (*Verfügungstruppen*) joined up for a service of at least four years, were armed and lived in special barracks. They were regarded as a selected troop " trained under the severest conditions, destined to become leaders and sub-leaders of the General SS, of the Police and of the Security Service ". With this aim in view the men underwent an intense training, both political and military. The SS Death's Head Formations signed on for no less than twelve years and consisted mainly of ex-soldiers serving in four regiments. They were engaged particularly in guarding " enemies of the State " in concentration camps. Before the war the SS Shock Troops were also divided into four active regiments (*Standarten*) of which the most outstanding was the *Leibstandarte SS Adolf Hitler*, which guarded the Reich Chancellery ; others were stationed in Munich, Hamburg, Arolsen, Radolfzell and in several places in Austria. In addition there were special sub-sections, pioneers and despatch riders. Potential junior members were trained in two special schools, the *SS Junker Schulen* in Tölz near Munich and Brunswick. The para-military character of these professional SS bodies becomes particularly evident from the fact that the following leading personalities were subordinated to the Chief of the SS Central Office :

The Inspector of the SS Shock Troops.
The Leader of the SS Death's Head Detachments.
The Inspector of the SS Frontier Guard Units.
The Inspector of the Mounted SS Units.
The Inspector of the SS Riding Schools.

(*c*) *The Waffen SS*

Long before this war it could be clearly seen that part of the SS were to play a special rôle should war break out. Together with a special SS Police Division the SS Death's Head units and SS Shock Troops were to form the nucleus of the present *Waffen SS* (Armed SS). During a war it would be the function of the latter to act as a protective guard for the maintenance of the inner front.* In a secret speech to the German General Staff of the army, which Himmler is said to have delivered in 1938, he outlined the task of the Death's Head Divisions on the home

* There is reliable evidence from Swiss sources that in 1942 part of the *Waffen SS* was indeed devoting itself to " the needs of the Inner Front " (52).

front in case of war, emphasizing the following salient points (53) :

(*a*) No unit will operate in its home district, i.e. a Pomeranian division will never be stationed in Pomerania.

(*b*) Each unit will change its field of operations every three weeks.

(*c*) The members of these units will never be used singly, for instance, a man with a Skull-and-Crossbones badge will never be on duty in the streets alone.

(*d*) If it becomes necessary, these units will be used ruthlessly ; no other way is possible.

As early as 1938 the range of tasks of the armed SS had been enlarged through the incorporation of Austria and Bohemia. For the first time armed SS units affiliated to the army took part in the occupation of foreign territory when Hitler marched into Bohemia, and again during the Polish campaign in which single SS divisions participated. Formations of the *Waffen SS* were knit into a war unit of their own during the *Blitz* campaign against Holland, Belgium and France in May 1940. German propaganda, especially, emphasized the share in these operations of the *Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler* led by *SS Obergruppenführer* and *General der Waffen SS* Sepp Dietrich, and claimed that it had also greatly contributed to the success of the war operations in Greece in the spring of 1941.

The organization of the *Waffen SS* is again based on a number of main offices all of which are under the supreme control of the Reich-Leader-SS (Himmler). Amongst these offices the following are of major importance :

High Command.
Recruiting.
Protection of Railway, Post and Broadcasting.
Services.
Personnel.
Chief Medical Officer.
Concentration Camps.

The Chief of the High Command is *SS Obergruppenführer*, Lieutenant-General of the Armed SS, Hans Juttner, very likely after Himmler the most important man in this institution. The *Waffen SS* includes two Armoured Corps each led by a General of the *Waffen SS*.

In summer 1942 the numerical strength of the *Waffen SS*

totalled 750,000 men, or ten divisions, and this in spite of an alleged promise by Himmler to the military authorities in June 1940 that the *Waffen SS* would never comprise more than ten per cent. of the peace time strength of the German army (54). During 1941 and 1942 recruiting for the *Waffen SS* continued, mainly in order to obtain more men for the military and police forces on the Eastern front.

At the ceremony of Heroes' Remembrance Day in Berlin in March 1942, the *Waffen SS* was officially represented as an autonomous part of the armed forces (*Wehrmacht*), side by side with the Army, the Navy and the Air Force. Gradually it encompassed all types of arms—infantry, artillery, cavalry, tank troops, mountaineering troops and flak. What is more, the *Waffen SS* developed a full scale of ranks corresponding more or less precisely to that in the Army, ranging from private (*SS Schütze*) to that of Colonel-General (*Generaloberst der Waffen SS*), as can be seen from the table on page 87.

In 1942 German propaganda boosted the structure of the *Waffen SS* as " an effective élite troop ", provided " with the best weapons in the world ". (55) Exclusively composed of volunteers, of which the vast majority were selected from the Hitler Youth, the strictest military discipline and an *esprit de corps* based on the common outlook were said to prevail in it : " the SS-man has always regarded himself as a political shock troop leader ; he has remained particularly so in the *Waffen SS*." The *Führer* alone decides the specific military tasks on which the *Waffen SS* shall be employed. In this war it has fought on various fronts, always as a closed unit, mostly under orders from the commander of the relative armed force. It has its own divisional commanders, and it is characteristic of the privileged position of this body that it has been exempted from the jurisdiction of the military courts by special decrees, issued in October 1939 and in April 1940 (56). Most of the men are of the same type as those of its original nucleus, the *Führer's* personal bodyguard, known as the *Adolf Hitler Leibstandarte.* An Englishman who saw these men before the war described them as " giant robots who in physique, fanaticism and ferocity were the picked paladins of Germany, trained to such toughness that they could fire on their own families " (57).

TABLE OF THE CORRESPONDING RANKS IN THE *WAFFEN SS* AND THE GERMAN ARMY PROPER *

Waffen SS	*German Army Proper*	*British Army*
SS Schütze	Schütze	Private
SS Oberschütze	Oberschütze	Senior Private
SS Sturmmann	Gefreiter	Lance-Corporal
SS Rottenführer	Obergefreiter	Senior Lance-Corporal
SS Unterscharführer	Unteroffizier	Corporal
SS Scharführer	Unterfeldwebel	Lance-Sergeant
SS Oberscharführer	Feldwebel	Sergeant
SS Hauptscharführer	Oberfeldwebel	Senior Sergeant
SS Sturmscharführer	Stabsfeldwebel	Staff Sergeant-Major
SS Untersturmführer	Leutnant	Second Lieutenant
SS Obersturmführer	Oberleutnant	First Lieutenant
SS Hauptsturmführer	Hauptmann	Captain
SS Sturmbannführer	Major	Major
SS Obersturmbannführer	Oberstleutnant	Lieutenant-Colonel
SS Standartenführer	Oberst	Colonel
SS Oberführer	———	———
SS Brigadeführer und Generalmajor der Waffen SS	Generalmajor	Major-General
SS Gruppenführer und Generalleutnant der Waffen SS	Generalleutnant	Lieutenant-General
SS Obergruppenführer und General der Waffen SS	General	General
SS Oberst-Gruppenführer und Generaloberst der Waffen SS	Generaloberst	Colonel-General (ranking between General and Field Marshal)

8. The Function of the *Waffen SS* as a Super-Police Force

(*a*) *A Significant Document*

From the beginning all was not well in the relationship between the *Waffen SS* and the older formations of the Army. Professional soldiers showed a good deal of suspicion towards the newcomers, and it is interesting that in August 1940 a special document was issued destined to allay this suspicion and to defend Hitler's motives in strengthening the *Waffen SS* and in sending it into the front line. This document was originally circulated to the highest ranks in the German Army in August 1940, reissued and made available to the lower ranks in May 1941 and captured

* This table of corresponding ranks was published in the German press in September, 1943. The ranks in the British Army have been added to assist the reader. Some of the Germans ranks are without an exact corresponding British rank.

by British soldiers in the Libyan campaign in March 1942. The document states that in August 1940 the *Führer* laid down the principles on which the function of the *Waffen SS* is based. This is their essence :

> The Greater German Reich in its final form will not embrace exclusively within its frontiers national units *per se* well disposed to the Reich. It is therefore necessary to maintain State police troops outside as well as inside the present core of the Reich, capable on any and every occasion of representing and asserting the internal authority of the Reich. This task can be fulfilled only by a State police force with men in its ranks of the best German blood, who unconditionally identify themselves with the philosophy of life fundamental to the Greater German Reich. Only a contingent composed of such men will resist disruptive influences in critical times. Such a contingent will feel a pride in its integrity and will therefore never fraternize with the proletariat and with the underworld which undermines the fundamental idea. Moreover, in our future Greater German Reich only a police force trained to a soldierly mentality will possess the necessary authority in its relations with the other citizens (*Volksgenossen*). Through the glorious events in the military sphere and through its education by the National Socialist Party our people has acquired such a soldierly mentality that a " sock-knitting police " (as in 1848) or a " bureaucratized police " (as in 1918) can no longer assert its authority. For this reason it is necessary that this " State Police " should prove itself in SS units at the front and should shed its blood like every other contingent of the armed forces. Returning home in the ranks of the Army after proving themselves in the field, the contingents of the armed SS will possess the authority to carry out their tasks as " State Police ". The use of the armed SS at home is likewise to the interest of the armed forces themselves. It must never again be tolerated that the German armed forces, conscripted from the whole people, should be sent into action in times of interior crisis against their own fellow-citizens (*Volksgenossen*). Such a step is the beginning of the end. A State which is compelled to resort to these measures thus renders itself incapable of sending its armed forces into action against the exterior foe, and therefore abdicates. Our history provides sad examples of this truth. From now on the task assigned to the armed forces will be solely and exclusively action against the exterior enemies of the Reich. To ensure that the man-power of the units of the armed SS shall remain of the highest quality, the establishment of these units must remain restricted. The restriction envisaged by the *Führer* is that the units of the armed SS in general should not exceed 5 to 10 per cent. of the peace-time strength of the Army (58).

This highly revealing document was written before the Battle of Britain, when Hitler still hoped to stage a successful invasion of England and afterwards to establish his control over all Europe.

On the other hand, the date of its wider circulation (May 1941) coincided with his plans for the campaign in Russia, in which the *Waffen SS* was about to play a prominent part. The most interesting point in it is the clear marking of the armed SS as a future " State Police Force " and the description of this State Police as a ruling caste able to check " in critical times disruptive influences " both inside and outside the Old Reich. The instructions make good use of the high prestige that military experience and achievements in bloody battle have always held in Germany, and indicate it as the reason why " only a police force trained to a soldierly mentality " would have later " the authority to carry out their tasks as ' State Police ' ". Its function would be to represent and assert " the internal authority of the Reich " which in its future frame was to include foreign national units. In other words, the ruling positions in the European Nazi State were to be the monopoly of these picked men " of best German blood, who unconditionally identify themselves with the philosophy of life of National Socialism ". The document takes pains not to antagonize the professional caste of the *Wehrmacht*, by emphasizing the limited number of these special units and by playing up to the traditional anti-Socialist attitude of its Junker-officers. Therefore the assurance that the *Waffen SS* will " never fraternize with the proletariat and with the underworld which undermines the fundamental idea ". But these sops to the outlook of the old professionals could not hide the fact of the growing rivalry between the two bodies, a rivalry which remained latent and potential in the days of military success and glory, but which was to become acute in the days of setbacks and threatening defeat. The forming of the *Waffen SS* meant the introduction of a new stratum into the officer corps of the German *Wehrmacht*. In Imperial Germany the officers had been recruited to perhaps two-thirds from the nobility and the landowners. During the first World War shortage of personnel from the traditional soldier ranks forced the admission of a greater proportion of sons of the middle classes to the officer corps. Under the Republic, when Germany was only allowed an army of 100,000 men, the officers of the Reichswehr were chosen mainly from the ranks of the old aristocracy and of the conservative bourgeoisie. The *Waffen SS* in contrast has been composed primarily of men " without social standing or economic independence, men without prospects except within the SS, ready to obey any order and face any contingency in return for a privileged status " (59). As one huge

bodyguard of the *Führer* it has been more closely identified with the Nazi régime than any other section of the society of the Third Reich. From 1942 onwards its sphere of power and influence increased greatly. In July of that year German papers published a photograph of Göring and Himmler smiling happily at each other with the caption "*Reichsmarschall* Göring, on the occasion of a long conversation at his Headquarters when he bestowed on *Reichsführer-SS* Himmler the Golden Flying Medal with Brilliants, in token of the close comradeship of the *Luftwaffe* with the *Waffen SS*". (60) The real reason for this meeting was not given, but it had been known for a long time that Göring and Himmler, representing different interests and wings of the Party, seldom saw eye to eye. The official pose of fraternity between the two powerful men, the decorating of the *Reichsführer SS* by the chief of the *Luftwaffe*, indicated at least the great importance of the *Waffen SS*. If there was rivalry between the *Luftwaffe* and the *Waffen SS* (which had no air force of its own), it seems to have ended as a compromise which was by no means to the disadvantage of the *Waffen SS*. Moreover, in October 1942, the non-political, markedly Catholic Chief of the General Staff Halder was replaced by General Kurt Zeitzler who, during the campaigns of 1941 as Chief of Staff of a Tank Corps, had come in close contact with the *Waffen SS* divisions attached to his unit and had made friends with Himmler. This appointment was bound to increase the influence of the *Waffen SS* but also to cause resentment and opposition amongst the more orthodox type of German generals.

(*b*) *The Purge of the "Traitor-Generals"*

It is true that before the dramatic events of July 20, 1944, when a *coup d'état* was attempted by a group of high officers, Himmler had no direct power over the armed forces; but his indirect check of and spying on the latter had secured a "legal" basis by a decree of Hitler's forbidding any "political activities" to members of the armed forces and threatening any criticism of Army Orders with severe punishment. At the same time the newly created type of political officers in the army (*N.S. Führungsoffiziere*) probably helped to extend Himmler's influence. There is reason to believe that further, most regiments had their discreet "spotters" in the form of members of the SS Security Service who were quick to report any unorthodox remarks overheard from officers and men. If a Swiss report can be relied

upon (61), a special Punitive Camp for such defaulting officers was erected at Spandau, near Berlin. There officers of all ranks were detained, waiting for the day when they would have to appear before a Special Court with judges the majority of whom were members of the SS. The following are two of the cases reported. An officer with high military decorations became involved in a quarrel with SS officers in the officers' mess in Riga, in the course of which he made disparaging remarks about Hitler's "pleasant" black bodyguard. Result: six years' hard labour. A first lieutenant who had distinguished himself at the front, whilst on leave expressed the view that the *Führer* would have done well to listen to the advice of Field-Marshal von Brauchitsch; he was promptly cashiered, and sentenced to four years' hard labour.

On July 22, 1944, the latent rivalry between Army and Party came to its dramatic climax. Though at the time of writing much of the background of this attempted *coup d'état* remains still obscure, the underlying sociological issue has become clear: it is the bitter struggle between two "élites" which has ended with the defeat of the one and the—at least temporary—victory of the other. Whatever Himmler's rôle was before the miscarried revolt of the generals, after it he reached the peak of his blood-stained career. With one stroke of the pen, the Reich-Leader-SS advanced to the post of Commander-in-Chief of the German Reserve Army, a position enabling him both to eliminate all "hostile" elements from the army, and to use the *Wehrmacht* as one extended *Waffen SS* against any real potential opposition. The hanging of a Field-Marshal and of a good many other officers, both high and low, is the most drastic symbol of the shifting of power German history has ever known. It left no one in doubt that now the iron grip of the Gestapo and *Waffen SS* was total indeed, embracing both army and home front. After a trial of two days, conspicuous for its showmanship and the complete absence of detached justice, members of the oldest Junker families, like von Witzleben, York von Wartenburg, who had been connected with the Prussian army for centuries, were ignominiously destroyed. It was not by accident that, at the same time, a score of promotions amongst the higher officers of the *Waffen SS* were announced. (62) They included the promotion of the *SS Obergruppenführer* and generals of the *Waffen SS* Sepp Dietrich and Theodor Hauser to *SS Oberstgruppenführer* and *Generaloberst* of the *Waffen SS*. As can be seen from the table

on p. 87, this top rank corresponds to that of *Generaloberst* in the German Army, a position held by no one less than Ludendorff in the war of 1914–18. Earlier Hauser had been put in charge of the Seventh German Army in Normandy, a clear indication that the former subordination of the *Waffen SS* under the traditional German Army set-up was now reversed. In mid-August 1944, a few days after the trial of the " traitor-generals ", an even more significant appointment was made: by a decree of the *Führer* the post of Commander-in-Chief of the *Wehrmacht* in Belgium and Northern France (previously filled by the Conservative Junker General von Falkenhausen), was united with that of Supreme SS Leader and Police Chief; *SS Gruppenführer* Jungclaus, who up till then had only held the latter position, became in addition C.-in-C. of the Armed Forces (63).

It is safe to assume that the two " élites ", which clashed on July 20, differed from each other not only in their origin, but also in their interpretation of the trend of events. The rebellious officers must have realized that the war was lost and that Germany's as well as their own best chance of survival lay in surrender.* A reasonable peace, they probably hoped, would allow them to prepare for a third world war. If the present was hopeless, the future still held possibilities. The *Waffen SS*, on the other hand, could not admit that the war was lost, knowing only too well that this would mean their own final destruction. Needing a scapegoat, however, to blame for the precarious military situation, they found it conveniently in the Junker caste, which had proved more and more unwilling to continue a losing fight. To use a well-known German phrase, the rebels preferred an " *Ende mit Schrecken* "—a terrible end—to a " *Schrecken ohne Ende* "—an endless terror; whereas Himmler and his SS men, in their turn, rejected the " *Ende mit Schrecken* " for a " *Schrecken ohne Ende* ", trusting that the continuation of terror, no matter whether open or underground, would at least extend their ticket-of-leave from certain death and annihilation.

(*c*) *Foreign Auxiliaries of the Waffen SS.*

This account of both the General SS and the *Waffen SS* should not be concluded without a few words on their foreign auxiliaries. After the occupation of large parts of Western and Northern Europe in 1940, it was only logical that the SS with its stress on the German race should aim at the establishing of branch-forma-

* See the note on p. 94.

tions in occupied "Germanic" countries. Thus a number of General SS units sprang up, formed by extreme pro-Nazi elements in each country, such as Quisling's *Nasjonal Samling* in Norway, Mussert's *N.S.B.* in Holland, Degrelle's *Rexists* in Belgium, etc.* They appeared as the *Norges SS*, the *Nederlandsche SS* and the *SS Vlaanderen*. These SS units, intended to function within their own territories only, were first under their respective local commanders, but in the course of 1942 a significant change took place: the name of the *Norges SS* was changed into the *Germanic SS Norway*, that of the *Nederlandsche SS* into the *Germanic SS in the Netherlands*, and that of *SS Vlaanderen* into the *Germanic SS Flanders*. Moreover, their members no longer took the oath of allegiance to their local leader, but to Hitler himself. They received their orders ultimately from Himmler and were told that their life was now ruled "by their self-imposed obligation to defend the National Socialist world and the German attitude of life, inspired by loyalty and honour, and bound together by their oath to the *Führer* and the Reich" (64).

The purpose of these formations was primarily one of Germanization and of repression of the pro-Allied majority in their home countries. On the other hand, the foreign elements of "Germanic" stock, who joined the *Waffen SS*, were expected to fight side by side with their German "brothers-in-arms." As early as 1940, the *Standarte Westland* (Dutch and Flemish) and the *Standarte Nordland* (Norwegian and Danish) were founded. Later these national regiments amalgamated with the predominantly German *Standarte Germania*, forming the *Viking Division* of the *Waffen SS*. This motley "Germanic" unit suffered heavy casualties on the Russian front and was re-formed again and again. It is one of the odd ironies in the history of the Nazi system that the *Waffen SS*, intended to be *the* standard-bearer of Teutonism, had, in the course of this war, to abandon its sacred racial principle. Owing to the increasing drain on man-power and to the disappointingly small support the Quisling parties obtained from their country-fellowmen, the *Waffen SS* resignedly had recourse to admitting foreign auxiliaries without any Germanic blood in their veins. In 1943 and 1944, a SS Division Galicia, including Ukrainians and Caucasians, an Estonian SS Legion, a Latvian SS Legion and an Italian SS Legion made their appearance. Even a special Moslem SS Division was formed in Yugoslavia recruited from Bosnia, Herzegovina and Albania and

* See Appendix D.

solemnly approved by the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, who had fled to Germany. Probably not a few members of these heterogeneous assortments were forced into it. Altogether, the lowering of the " Germanic banner " stands in sharp contrast to the cult of the Germanic race, propagated so fervently during the last twelve years. Once more, as so often before in human history, expediency carried the day and ideology faded discreetly away.

NOTE.—According to a German officer who had taken part in the revolt of July 20, 1944 and who later succeeded in fleeing to Sweden, at least 2,000 officers and 300 civilians were wiped out by the SS after the *coup d'état* had failed (65). Amongst the civilians who were sentenced to death by a People's Court, Karl Goerdeler, the former burgomaster of Leipzig and at one time deputy-chairman of the German Employers' Union, von Trott zu Solz, a counsellor in the German Foreign Office, Ulrich von Hassell, former German ambassador in Italy, and Paul Lejeune, a former member of the Reichstag, belonged to the conservative circles of the Right, whilst Wilhelm Leuschner, under the Weimar Republic Minister of the Interior in the Federal State of Hesse, was a leading Social Democrat. It seems that only a few people knew of the planned *coup d'état* intimately, but everywhere in the Army and probably in the Gestapo too, there was, before that fateful day, a feeling that something would happen, but nobody knew when or where. The plot miscarried for three reasons : the attempt on Hitler's life was unsuccessful, the garrison of Berlin hesitated to join the rebels, and the orders given over the teleprinters of the War Office in the Bendlerstrasse to 20 generals' headquarters in Germany and Occupied Europe, failed to be carried out. Moreover, important documents of the rebel officers, which had been kept in a secret safe in the Bendlerstrasse, fell into the hands of the Gestapo during careful searches made in the night following the Putsch, a fact which explains why the arrests and executions were so numerous from the beginning. It seems that methods of refined cruelty and torture were applied by the Gestapo in extracting information from their victims. Field-Marshal von Witzleben, General Höppner and the eight other officers sentenced by the People's Court were executed, not by ordinary hanging, but by strangulation. That meant in this case that they were hanged with a broad band round the neck which made the death-struggle last roughly 40 minutes.

CHAPTER III

THE GESTAPO: STRUCTURE AND DEVELOPMENT

1. Before its Centralization under Himmler (1933–4)

It would be a mistake to assume that no Political Police existed in Germany before the Nazis came to power. Long before, during the days of the Second Empire as well as during the stormy days of the Republic, the various German states possessed special political police departments. Particularly in Prussia was the political police of some importance (1). The Gestapo, or *Geheime Staats-Polizei*, as created by Göring in 1933, differed fundamentally from its predecessor, however, in two vital points: (*a*) it became centralized, spreading its tentacles and ramifications over the whole of the Reich, and (*b*) it soon acquired practically absolute autonomy and established its own "law", far exceeding the bounds of ordinary jurisdiction. The function of a Secret State Police differs in a parliamentarian republic and in a dictatorship if not entirely, at any rate to a large extent. In the former it is a supplementary, in the latter a primary institution. Before we analyse and compare this difference of function we must first glance at the development of the Gestapo. In its early stages, that means between February 1933 and April 1934, Himmler was called in to reorganize the existing political police departments, one after another; first in Hamburg, then in Mecklenburg, Lübeck, Thuringia, Hesse, Baden and Saxony (2). Whilst Himmler was busy with these big jobs, the energetic and ruthless Göring built up the Secret Police in Prussia (3). In his somewhat frank, exhibitionist manner he allowed the world some insight into his reorganization and Nazification of the Prussian State Police:

> To begin with it seemed to me of the first importance to get the weapon of the criminal and political police firmly into my own hands. Here it was that I made my first sweeping changes of personnel. Out of thirty-two police chiefs I removed twenty-two. Hundreds of instructors and thousands of police-sergeants followed in the course of the next months. New men were brought in and in every case these men came from the great reservoir of the Storm Troopers and Guards (4).

From the police the Prime Minister of Prussia demanded, in the most drastic manner, that they should devote all their energies

" to the ruthless extermination of subversive elements ". In one of his first meetings in Dortmund in spring 1933 he declared, to use his own words :

> that for the future only one man would bear responsibility in Prussia, and that one man was myself. Whoever did his duty in the service of the State, whoever obeyed my orders and took severe measures against the enemies of the State, whoever ruthlessly made use of his revolver when attacked; could be certain of protection. Whoever, on the other hand, was a coward and avoided a fight, and looked the other way, whoever hesitated to make use of his weapons, would have to count on being thrown out by me at the earliest possible moment. I declared then before thousands of my fellow countrymen, that every bullet fired from the barrel of a police pistol was my bullet. *If one calls that murder, then I am a murderer.** Everything has been ordered by me. I stand for it and I shall not be afraid to take the responsibility upon myself (5).

Through this remarkable statement Göring gave *carte blanche* to the Prussian police and allowed to them any terror as long as it was applied in the direction required by the head of the state. He, so to speak, deliberately advertised terror in order to frighten opponents and to win over the hesitating majority. Göring talked glibly of his building up of the Secret State Police (6) :

> The state of things in the political police was very bad indeed. Here I found nearly everywhere the trusted agents of the Social Democrats, the creatures of Herr Severing.† These men formed the ill-famed IA division (Political Police). I could in the prevailing state of things make no use of them. True, the worst elements had been removed by my predecessor Bracht.‡ But now I had to make a complete job of it, and for weeks I was personally engaged in the work of reorganization.

One of Göring's closest collaborators, his chief of staff, has later supplemented this story of the purification of the Political Police and described the establishing of secret police stations : on the one hand, they " worked in the closest co-operation with the local police authorities and with the State police headquarters ", while on the other " they received direct instructions from the secret police department of the State " (7). The " closest co-operation with the local police " meant at the same time the closest check on it. According to Göring's lieutenant " this was

* Italics by the present writer.

† Severing was a Socialist and, with interruptions, Minister of the Interior in Prussia from 1920 till the summer of 1932, when he was removed from office by force by Reich Chancellor von Papen.

‡ Bracht was Prussian Minister of the Interior, after Severing's removal, from July 1932 to February 1933.

necessary" because when the measures of surveillance over political opponents were first carried out, "the greatest resistance was offered by the local police". In addition, Göring created the "State Security Service", described later in this chapter. Here it is sufficient to register that he warmly acknowledged the support given to him by the SS in building up a new and efficient instrument (8).

During this early period the head of the Prussian Gestapo was Rolf Diels. When Göring published his account of the rebuilding of Germany through the Nazis in 1934, he praised Diels in glowing terms, pronouncing that "the achievements of Diels and his men will always remain one of the glories of the first years of recovery" (9). Five years later, however, in the only authorized biography of Göring, there is complete silence about these "glories" and the name of Diels is even omitted altogether. Instead, strong hints are given that the all-powerful Göring had not always been fortunate in the choice of his collaborators for the new Secret Police. If at first he did not find the right man, it is admitted this was due to the fact that "the personal knowledge of that young statesman and of his colleagues was not yet as extensive as it was a year later" (10).

Viewed from the dynamic development of the Nazi counter-revolution, it seems only logical that Diels was soon succeeded by Himmler; whereas Diels was an ambitious Civil Servant who had turned Nazi for merely practical reasons, Himmler was the fanatical Party man who, in the wake of Hitler, had long prepared himself and others for the days of power. Rolf Diels was, as Martha Dodd observed, "an opportunist with a thirst for power, ready for activity in no matter what régime" (11). The Nazis did not trust him and from their point of view were right in their suspicions. Moreover, Diels hated Goebbels and was probably feared by Göring; he quarrelled with the latter over the notorious Reichstag Fire Trial, and by means of a timely indiscretion to a foreign newspaper correspondent, prevented Göring from carrying out the planned death sentence on the Bulgarian Communist leader, Georgi Dimitrov (12). Threatened with dismissal and even with the concentration camp, Diels seems to have saved his skin by a method typical of the key-men in the Third Reich. He probably saw to it that his detailed, inside knowledge of the facts of the Reichstag Fire was lodged outside the Reich. For, as Hermann Rauschning has revealed, the depositing abroad of money and of incriminating evidence about

his opponents alone could make an endangered politician immune (13). Consequently, Diels was only demoted and given a high Civil Service appointment as Governor of the *Regierungsbezirk* Cologne. Having laid the foundations of an effectively functioning Secret Police, he had outlived his usefulness and would be replaced by the Party man, whose name will for ever be associated with the Gestapo inside and outside the Reich. The soon forgotten Diels episode was over, the long-drawn-out drama, produced by Himmler, began.

2. Himmler introduces the "Soldier-Official"

In 1934 Himmler attained the actual command of the entire German Gestapo, and later his immense power was even further accentuated by his appointment as Chief of the German Police.* By a special decree of the *Führer*, in June 1936, the *Reichsführer SS* was made head of the entire German police and as such affiliated to the Reich Ministry of the Interior (15). This appointment not only led to a reorganization of the police force then subdivided into two main branches, the *Ordnungspolizei* (Ordinary Police) and the *Sicherheitspolizei* (Security Police), of which the Political Police was a branch, but also made it possible to train and direct the entire police forces in a unified spirit. Himmler aimed at the creation of a new type of "soldierly official". The German past, he once declared, had produced two types, that of the official and that of the soldier, but "it had missed the type of the self-confident cavalier and gentleman developed by other nations of Germanic kind". In his description of the "soldier-official", the Chief of the SS looked far ahead, planning in a pseudo-mystic manner for generations and even for centuries:

> We have to evolve, and are already evolving a soldier officialdom which will be more and more trained, and this will be the work of generations and centuries. It must become more and more identical with the spirit of the SS, an organization . . . which has been created as an Order based on blood, deliberately furthering the family, and which has to be developed throughout centuries, perhaps throughout millenniums (16).

After Himmler had taken over, he continued to purge the police of all unreliable elements, "his aim being the creation of a reliable National Socialist police force by the education of every police official as a National Socialist . . ." with the deliberate "homo-

* Nominally Göring remained the Chief of the Prussian Gestapo, Himmler being only its Vice-Chief (14).

geneous moulding of the entire police force " as the final goal (17). To reach this goal the principle of careful selection was emphasized : " Through strict selection practically only racially valuable people have entered the police force. Every police official, by reason of his racial origin, contains within him all the conditions for the absorption of National Socialist ideas." As the years passed by, the police became increasingly a vehicle, if not an instrument, of the Nazi movement. Hitler's speech to the police at the Nuremberg Party Rally in September 1937, clearly indicated this trend :

> The German police shall be more and more vitally bound to the Movement which politically not only represents but constitutes and leads the Germany of to-day. . . . Thus I give you to-day your banners in the firm conviction that thereby you too will become more and more merged in these great common marching ranks of the people's community. Heil Police ! *

3. The New Significance of the Political Police

With the new reorganization of the police personnel in Nazi Germany went hand-in-hand a considerable shifting of its functions and tasks. This applied to the Ordinary Police as well as to the Political Police, though particularly to the latter. In an address delivered by a leading legal authority on " Old and New Police Law " to an audience of high SS and Police officials in October 1936, it was proudly stated that :

> National Socialism has fundamentally changed the police ; from a civil service institution, functioning according to routine, it has transformed it into an alert corps (*Einsatzkorps*) in the service of the national community. This new conception of the police has exploded the system of police law so far valid. We could clearly observe the new principle working in the Gestapo, the Criminal Police and also in the Ordinary Police (20).

This change in the scope and methods of the Political Police in the Third Reich becomes particularly evident by a comparison with its structure during the Republic. Then the Political Police

* As was to be expected, the process of progressive identification between the SS and the police forces has been carried a stage further during the war. Since then the officers corps of the Ordinary Police and the men destined for the leading positions of the Security Police were recruited from the SS Cadet Schools (*SS Junkerschulen*), whereas the other police posts were, as far as possible, filled from the *Waffen SS* (18). This close identification is all the more important as the war set entirely new tasks to the German police. Amongst those carried out within the Reich was the job of the A.R.P. police which, it is alleged " has greatly outstripped all other sections of the police in size and in importance " (19). Other additional war duties in the homeland included " the supervision of price control, the supervision of call-ups and the registration of foreign workers ".

was not unlike a branch of a German Scotland Yard and had, as such, to fulfil a strictly limited, well-defined task, i.e. the tracing and combating of "forces hostile to the state" or in other words of "persons and organizations hostile to it". Its activities and, to a certain extent, its methods too, were regulated by the law, and the minister in charge of the department was responsible to parliament. In the Third Reich, however, the Political Police has been set its task by the dictator and it is therefore no longer an institution of its own, but the threatening arm of the Nazi movement, as personified by the SS. The official definition given in the first paragraph of the Prussian Law on the Secret State Police of February 10, 1936, hardly expresses adequately the immense increase in its function and power:

> The Secret State Police has the task of enquiring into and combating all tendencies in the entire state-territory, dangerous to the State; of collecting and employing the result of these enquiries, of instructing the government, of keeping the other authorities informed of observations important to them and of providing them with suggestions (21).

The vital concept of "tendencies dangerous to the state" has not been precisely defined, and a leading Gestapo commentator even declared it impossible to issue a complete catalogue of these "tendencies", arguing that "it cannot be foreseen which forces might threaten leadership and the nation in the future" (22). Yet the same spokesman gave some characteristic examples of situations in which the Gestapo would interfere: they arise if the following organizations or values respectively are endangered:

> the state-leadership and the state-structure (*Staatsaufbau*) through intended terror and planned revolution, the armed forces and the military man-power through espionage and intellectual or technical sabotage, the national community and the positive attitude towards the state (*Staatsgesinnung*) through subversive actions or incitement, the nation's health and purity of blood through immorality (for instance homosexuality) and racial pollution, the ideological unity of the nation through psychological poisoning and befogging (*Vernebelung*), for instance by the "Earnest Bible Students" and other sects (23).

This definition sounds rather harmless, as it stresses neither the totalitarian extent of the organization nor its concentration of all possible means of power. In describing its function as that of a fighting intelligence service, only its inquisitiveness, but not

its inquisition is touched upon. Whereas in pre-Nazi days the task of the general police was the protection of the individual, in the Third Reich it is the protection of " the nation and its community values as well as the safeguarding of their development " (24). The special task of the Political Police has been described as " the protection of the state with all its institutions, serving as an instrument for the self-maintenance of the nation (i.e. administration, courts, army, etc.), the protection of the Party and of all its formations, the protection of the big organizations which combine the people as a concentrated unit, such as the Affiliated Organizations, the corporative formations, etc. (25). " The Gestapo," says another Nazi commentator, " had to be created in order to get hold of the most dangerous enemies of the national community, as the set-up of the Ordinary Police, which was determined by the protection of the individual, was insufficient for it " (26).

The main difference between the functions of the Republican and the National Socialist Political Police was two-fold : (*a*) During the Republic the Political Police confined itself mainly to the defensive, combating the actual threat from individual opponents of the state ; in the Third Reich, however, the Political Police is deliberately offensive and motivated in its actions by the idea of prevention. The preventive measures of the Gestapo working " according to an extensive systematic plan, aim at the annihilation of the enemy even if he is not about to prove dangerous by a specific deed " (27). " The New State," says an official survey of the Third Reich, "rightly no longer waits with its defensive measures against attacks . . . until it is almost too late (as, for instance, happened under the Weimar régime against the Communists), but pounces as soon as any resistance to or undermining of its authority makes itself evident" (28). The " enemies of the State " have to be traced, repressed and destroyed, whenever and wherever they are found. (*b*) In the Republic the political criminal was only held to account for his unlawful political excesses, and, moreover, a sharp distinction was drawn in the police practice between an ordinary criminal and a " political criminal ". A high police official under the Weimar Republic, particularly hated by the Nazis, once expressed the view that the moral level of the political criminal is much higher than that of the ordinary one : " The political criminal lacks the egoistic motive, his unlawful deed is a deed of an altruistic kind, it is a deed in the service of others, in the service of an

idea" (29). The humanitarian attitude of the police towards political detainees, made obligatory under the Republic, was precisely defined as: "Polite and considerate behaviour of the police officers, avoiding any harshness when interviewing, house-searching and arresting, the granting of facilities during the detention in the police prison, if at all compatible with the purpose of the examination" (30) *

This humanitarian attitude, demanded for themselves by the Nazis in the days when they were still a political minority, was despised by them later when they controlled the entire state apparatus. They fully realized that the comparative insignificance of the Political Police during the Republic was as much the result of liberalism as that of a limited machinery (31).

In the Republic the private life of the State's opponents was respected and, if at all possible, not tampered with. Then the individual had rights of his own; now "the nation" has taken over these rights and anyone violating "the rights of the nation, the Party and the State" is branded and brings down upon himself the full pressure of the State machinery. "An enemy of the State," according to the official version, "is to-day anyone who deliberately opposes the Nation, the Party and the State, their philosophical foundations and their political actions" (32).

Though this definition leaves open what particular actions are to be regarded as hostile to the state, it is made clear that neither the private sphere nor the honourable motives of the "enemy of the State" are recognized. Nazi policy is quite blunt on this point. "From the point of view of a united nation striving forward, no political criminal can be allowed an honourable conviction for his deeds, for it cannot be honourable to fail in loyalty to his nation and to oppose its work because one believes something else to be politically right, let alone to attack Nation and State from political egoism."

Therefore the basic idea of any national defence against attacks hostile to the State must be to break them unconditionally as offences against the Most Sacred Value (*das Heiligste*), to frustrate them by every means promising success. . . . "Untouchable rights of the person or 'private spheres' cannot be acknowledged whenever they hinder the functioning of the Nation" (33). In this pronouncement the totalitarian claim of the so-called Nation

* The facilities included permission for reading, for smoking, for providing one's own food, etc.

(which actually means the ruling stratum) is as much emphasized as is the Machiavellian principle of the end justifying all means that prove successful. There are a variety of " enemies of the state ", as well as a number of different means of combating them. In any case, owing to the preventive function of the political police, they cannot wait for the moment when an opponent of the régime is caught red-handed, but arrest and punish all those whom they suppose to be prone to such misdeeds. " According to the liberal ideology, only the deed hostile to the state and the organization of the enemy of the state carrying out this deed were combated. National Socialism, however, is concerned with the intellectual forces of these opponents. It must trace and hit them " (34). The enemies of the State therefore have to be identified by their character and ideas rather than by their acts. Before the war the main types coming under the category of " enemies of the State " were Jews, Communists, Freemasons, and Church officials who meddled in politics (35). Besides these main opponents, the Gestapo concentrated on hunting down all those who, " through their selfishness ", try to prevent or to hamper the big campaigns organized by State and Party, such as the Four-Year Plan, the Winter Relief Collection or the Collection of Old Clothes. It interfered with unsocial leaders of firms and factories or with short-sighted employees and workers ; it held to account " malicious grumblers ", hoarders, black-marketeers and people who overcharge the public. It suppressed " tendencies towards social snobbery and class-hatred " (36). Persons guilty of these deeds or tendencies were not labelled " enemies of the state " but " dangerous to the state " or, in cases which led to a regular death-sentence by a court, were classified as " people harmful to the nation " (*Volksschädlinge*). The Political Police has further to " prevent the forming amongst the people of new fronts ", which for political or non-political reasons " present a danger of disintegrating the unity of the nation ". Moreover, the Gestapo must keep an eye on existing organizations " in order to prevent them from producing such detrimental effects " (37). A number of " means of power " are at the disposal of this all-powerful body, to enforce its will. They range from a mere warning regarding the obligations of the suspect to reporting daily at the local Gestapo office ; and from restrictions on movements and place of residence to detention in the Gestapo prison or in the Concentration Camp (38). This official inventory is certainly far from complete, for it omits

the much-used category "shot while trying to escape" which frequently accounts for the murder of political prisoners, both during transport and in the Concentration Camp.

4. Organization and Scope of the Gestapo

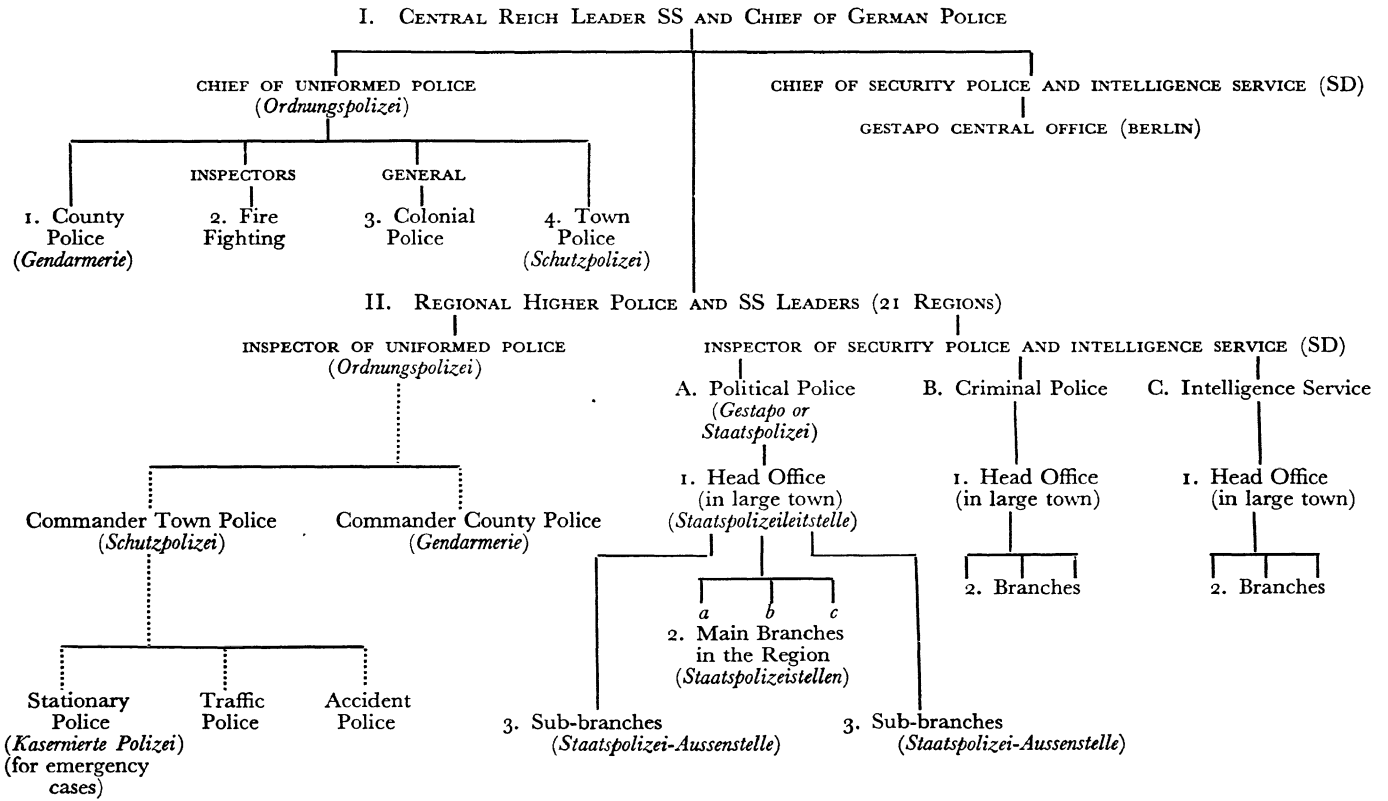
(a) *The Set-up of the German Police*

With the thoroughness and zest for organization which is so characteristic of the German mentality, Himmler has gradually developed an elaborate police set-up comprising all branches of the police force and extending like a well constructed net all over the Reich. Both Uniformed Police (*Ordnungspolizei*) and Security Police (*Sicherheitspolizei*) have their fixed place in it, the former embracing both metropolitan and country police forces (*Schutzpolizei* and *Gendarmerie*), the latter the Criminal Police, the Political Police (*Gestapo*) and the Police Intelligence Service (*Sicherheitsdienst*). From June 1936 to the summer of 1943 the Reich-Leader-SS and Chief of the German Police was nominally under the supervision of the Reich Minister of the Interior, Dr. Frick; in August 1943, however, Himmler managed to oust Dr. Frick and hereafter himself held the posts of Reich Minister of the Interior, of Reich-Leader-SS and of Chief of the German Police. Whilst Himmler continued to be the highest authority in police matters, it is likely that General Daluege was actually in charge of the German Police forces.

A glance at the chart on page 105 shows that under the Chief of the German Police are the respective heads of the Uniformed Police and the Security Police. It is important to realize that the set-up on the lower, regional level corresponds to that of the higher, central level. The entire Reich has been divided into 21 regions which in 1939 were identical with the 21 Army Districts (*Wehrkreise*). At the head of each region is a Senior SS and Police Leader (*Höherer SS- und Polizeiführer*), with both an Inspector of the Uniformed Police and an Inspector of the Security Police and Intelligence Service under him.* For instance, in the Wehrkreis area Number VI, which consists of large parts of the provinces of Rhineland, Westphalia and Hanover, the Senior SS and Police Leader was attached to the

* As a result of the German conquest of foreign territories during the war, further high SS officials of this type were appointed, working with the civil administration of the Government General in Poland, with that of the Reich Protectorate in Bohemia and Moravia, with the Reich Commissioners for the Netherlands, for Norway, the Eastern Territories (Ostland), and the Ukraine, finally with the Military Commanders in Yugoslavia and in France.

SKETCH OF THE ORGANIZATION OF THE GERMAN POLICE (WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE GESTAPO)



Oberpräsidenten of the Rhine Province, of Westphalia and of Hanover, and to the *Reichsstatthalter* in Lippe and Schaumburg-Lippe. Holding the rank of SS Group Leader and of Lieutenant-General of the Police, he resided in Düsseldorf. Under him were the Commander of the Uniformed Police and the Inspector of the Security Police and Intelligence Service, the former with the rank of Major-General of the Police, stationed at Münster, the latter with that of an SS Sub-Group Leader (*Standartenführer*) at Düsseldorf.

Since 1940 the Security Police of the Reich and the Police *Intelligence Service* (SD) has been divided into 17 Inspectorates (*Inspekteurbereiche*). Their centres are :

Königsberg.	Hamburg.
Stettin.	Brunswick.
Berlin.	Wiesbaden.
Dresden.	Nürnberg.
Stuttgart.	Vienna.
Düsseldorf.	Salzburg.
Munich.	Danzig.
Breslau.	Posen (Posnan).
Kassel.	

To these 17 regions the various German conquests added four occupation areas (*Befehlshaberbereiche*) outside the Reich :

The Protectorate (Centre, Prague).
The Government General (Cracow).
Lorraine (Metz).
Alsace (Strasbourg).

Each Inspectorate has a well organized set-up for (*a*) the Political Police (*Geheime Staatspolizei* or *Gestapo*), (*b*) the Criminal Police (*Kriminalpolizei*) and (*c*) the Police Intelligence Service (*Sicherheitsdienst*). The head office of each of these three services is usually in the leading city of the area, whilst their branches are in other important towns. The Head Office of the Gestapo in each region is known as *Staatspolizeileitstelle*, or in some smaller regions as *Staatspolizeistelle*, and the sub-branches, which before the war existed in minor places, were labelled with tedious Teutonic thoroughness *Staatspolizeiaussenstellen*. More important than the names is the fact that this net of branches and sub-branches enables the Gestapo to act and react quickly. They work hand-in-hand with the Intelligence Service (SD), which in

its turn has a head office (*SD Leitabschnitt*) and a number of branch offices (*SD Abschnitte*) in each region.

In charge of all offices of the Gestapo and of most of those of the Criminal Police are SS leaders with their ranks carefully graded according to the importance of their position. Thus leaders of Head Offices are styled *SS Obersturmbannführer* and leaders of Branch Offices only *SS Sturmbannführer*. All these pompous names given to offices or ranks throw an interesting sidelight on the magic of power as well as on the magic power of verbosity in a totalitarian state !

(*b*) *The Position of the Gestapo*

Our survey of the police organization shows that the Political Police has at its disposal a skilfully centralized apparatus, the ramifications of which spread over the whole of Greater Germany. With the headquarters of the Gestapo, the *Geheime Staatspolizeiamt*, in Berlin, the head regional offices are located in the capitals of various *Länder* (Munich for Bavaria, Dresden for Saxony, etc.) and in the main towns of the Prussian Provinces, and their branch offices at a number of important administrative centres of each area This set-up is based on a decree issued in August 1936 by the Reich-Leader-SS and Chief of the German Police, which made the chiefs of the Head State Police Offices (*Staatspolizeileitstellen*) and of the State Police Offices (*Staatspolizeistellen*) ex-officio liaison officers to their respective provincial and district administrative authorities (39). There can be little doubt that the co-ordination and co-operation between Gestapo and other Government authorities has proved effective on all levels.

In truly German fashion much attention has been given to the training of Gestapo specialists. For the easy running of the government machinery, specializing is as important as totalitarian control ; each actually balances the other. Specialists are constantly trained and employed to deal with all important departmental tasks (40). No indication as to the nature of these special tasks or to the demarcation line between the various specialists has been given, but it seems that before the war all organizations and social groups described as " enemies of the State " were the targets of a number of these " specialists ". Jews, Communists, Freemasons and Christians who did not conform to modern Cæsarism were all opposed by the Political Police, which, to quote their own spokesman, " operates on the basis of large scale directives aiming at crushing blows. In this

field embittered underground struggles, fought with mines and countermines, prevail " (41).

In the scanty official accounts of the Gestapo two criteria of the Secret Police are underlined : its independence and its omnipotence. Its independence is determined by practical as well as by legal considerations. As the legal problems of this organization are discussed in another part of this book,* it must be sufficient to mention here the underlying practical point of view. The efficiency of a Political Police in its fight against all enemies of the state—to quote again the Nazi writer—can only be guaranteed " if it is led by one will as an autonomous close organization, if it operates by the shortest route of command and report from the top to the least sub-branch, if it is unhindered by any considerations outside its task and if it is protected against incompetent persons, who have no share in its work, obtaining information of its measures, plans and evidence which must be kept secret " (42). This autonomy of the Gestapo is a condition of its unity as an exclusive body and has a parallel in the structure of the army ; for both organizations share a uniform appearance and an *esprit de corps* distinguishing all their members from " outsiders " and both are privileged and self-contained social units with a sharp demarcation-line between them and all " civilians ".

This boosted autonomy of the Gestapo is equivalent to its omnipotence. The Political Police, according to another Nazi commentator, is " comprehensive through its omnicompetence, sharp through its instruments of power and elastic towards the living development of Nation and State, which it serves " (43). Its uncanny competence means in the Nazi jargon, that it is " not the only, but the central instrument for the protection of the state ". As such it gives orders and issues requests to the heads of all regional and provincial governments and to all police authorities (44). Its overruling, unique position in the social system is not seriously questioned by the co-existence of certain powerful disciplinary institutions set up by the Party and the organizations affiliated to it, as they are only allowed a controlling and punishing function in a strictly limited and marked sphere.

Amongst these institutions the disciplinary chamber of the party or Party Court, the *Uschla*, is most dreaded on account of its ruthless praxis. The *Uschla*, a word which means Tribunal of Inquiry and Arbitration †, was first established in 1927 under

* See Part III, Ch. 2.

† *Uschla* is an abbreviation of *Untersuchungs und Schlichtungs-Ausschuss.*

the leadership of its present head, Major Reich Leader Buch, one of the Party's vanguards. It keeps a close watch on all Party members and questions their loyalty (45). Its power to terrorize is considerable, its procedure rather unbureaucratic, as no records of its decisions are kept—in any case they often become redundant. " A Nazi, however blameless he may be, usually puts a pistol to his head when one of Major Buch's ' Black Hundred ' begins to make enquiries about him " (46). Against the quick decisions of this powerful Court Martial there is no appeal and it would be idle to guess how many waverers and incautious critics inside the Party have been liquidated by it. The fact of its existence is not concealed ; on the contrary, it is advertised in every pamphlet on the Party organization, a clear indication of the ruling clique's belief that the evocation of fear pays in the case of Party and non-Party members alike. On its fifteenth anniversary the Party press gave a cautious description of its work (47). " Party Courts," it was said, are " courts based on the principle of honour " (*Ehrengerichte*). " No law book takes the responsibility from them, as the law which they proclaim as Right must be within themselves." Their task is arbitration in cases of discord within the Party and the promulgation of judgment " wherever it is necessary to preserve and to strengthen the striking power of the Party, to eliminate those who do harm and to dismiss unsuitable members ". The different phrasing used in German for the cases of elimination (*Ausmerzen*) and of dismissal (*Ausscheidung*) is a clear hint that the former is equal to liquidation by force. In all cases in which the Party interest is at stake " the decisions of the Party Courts must be hard and clear . . . consideration for the individual must be put unconditionally behind the demands of the community " (48).

A similar control is carried out by the corporative institutions set up for the organization and control of various occupational and professional courts. The *Reichskulturkammer* (Reich Chamber of Culture) with its seven affiliated chambers for music, the fine arts, the theatre, literature, press, radio and film provides a good example. The fact that only those who are members of it are allowed to indulge in cultural activities indicates its far-reaching controlling power. The law which established the *Reichskulturkammer* in September 1933 states that :

" Admission into one of the Chambers can be refused or a member can be excluded, if facts exist from which it can be seen that the person due for cultural registration (*der Kultur-*

pflichtige) does not possess the reliability and suitability necessary for the exercise of his activity" (49). The conception of "reliability" is described as moral and political, whereas the concept of "suitability" is above all technical. Thus a person can be excluded because he has wrong political ideas or because he lacks the necessary artistic qualifications. A double control is exercised, by the respective Chamber and by the police. The Chamber acts against truculent members whilst the police keep a check on the cultural activities of non-members. The professional supervision, only thinly disguised by ideological "Chamber-music", has three effective weapons at its disposal: number one, a simple warning; number two, a fine; number three, expulsion from the Chamber; this step not only means the definite end of a career (as in the case of a person struck off the register of the British Medical Council), but in most cases it also brands the offender as "politically suspect" and, to say the least of it, switches the searchlight of the Gestapo on to him. The Secret Police come into play even more if non-members participate in cultural activities, as it is one of their duties "to carry out the regulations regarding membership of the Chamber". "This does not mean," a leading official in the Ministry of Propaganda once explained carefully, "that they should enforce membership of the Chamber by means of police power, but that they should not tolerate the practising of cultural activities due for registration, if membership of the Chamber has not been acquired" (50).

Co-operation between the Chamber and the Political Police, however, does not amount to any subordination of the latter to the former, as the Gestapo reserves the right to act and interfere on its own. "The Political Police within the frame of the task set for it," declared its spokesman (51), "keeps a watch on the undisturbed development of art and science in the National Socialist spirit, by observing all branches of artistic and scientific life, by informing the authorities and even by interfering in certain cases." Whilst the Gestapo is aware that "it is not alone in its task of protecting the nation" and that "the corporative disciplinary powers (*die ständische Zuchtgewalt*) take a share in it", it jealously points out that "this does not affect its fundamental omnicompetence, the enforcing of which it can only give up in suitable cases" (52).

The check on the activities of the churches and of other religious bodies certainly does not count amongst those "suitable cases". The fact that every SS man has to declare emphatically

that he believes in God (53), and that Himmler, at least in his writings, rejects atheism, does not prevent the Gestapo from victimizing priests and religious organizations which are suspected of not being 100 per cent. National Socialist. Out of the many examples of their ruthless interference in church affairs, backed by docile courts, only two can be given here. When the police had made an order " calling upon a Catholic priest to give information about ecclesiastical organizations and to furnish particulars of church subscribers to church periodicals among his flock ", the priest protested and appealed to a court, which promptly dismissed his appeal (54). An even more grotesque decision was promulgated by the Supreme German Court, the *Reichsgericht*, in September 1938. In upholding a decision of the lower court, it declared a minister of the Confessional Church guilty of committing a breach of the peace, for including the following words in a prayer :

" Now we shall pray for those brothers and sisters who are in prison. I shall read their names. . . . Social worker L., Berlin, in protective custody since February 2, 1937, although the court had decided in her favour. . . ." (55). In its fantastic decision the *Reichsgericht* found that " the minister's assertion about L. implied . . . the criticism that L. should have been freed and that the protective custody was unjustified " ; this endangered the public peace since the minister, " in reading the list, might have led the congregation and others to the belief that the State was acting arbitrarily rather than in accordance with justice and law " (56).

(*c*) *SS Finance*

Very little information is available about the financial background of the SS and the Gestapo. It seems fairly obvious that the confiscation of much property formerly owned by the Jews and by other " enemies of the State " in the Reich and in occupied countries must have swollen the funds of the Party and with them those of the SS, though if we can believe the account given by Thyssen (57) the sources of income for the SS were before the war different from those of the SA. The various local branches of the SA were then either financed by the Central Party fund or from the proceeds of lootings, particularly of Jewish property, whereas the SS had two main sources of income ; firstly through its close connection with the Minister of Agriculture, Walter Darré, a kind of bargain was struck between his organization,

the *Reichsnährstand* and the SS. To use Thyssen's words, Darré " finances Himmler and his SS men. In return, Himmler and the Gestapo support Darré against his enemies ". This version is credible as the Reich Leader SS in a speech in 1936 emphasized the close co-operation prevailing between SS men and peasants symbolized by the close connection between Darré, then Head of the SS Office for Racial and Settlement questions, and Himmler, who proudly declared himself to be a peasant. Before the war the budget of the *Reichsnährstand* from which Himmler and his men were thus benefiting, gained several hundreds of millions of marks per year through exploiting the difference between home prices and foreign prices. As the *Reichsnährstand* controls home prices of agricultural products, it can buy various commodities cheaply abroad and sell them at home at the fixed price at a considerable profit.*

Secondly the SS relied on " voluntary " contributions from well-to-do people, who wanted to ensure for themselves the goodwill of the Gestapo :

> A certain number of well-to-do personalities are solicited to pay a regular contribution to the SS. In return they receive a diploma and a pin bearing the two initials of the Black Militia. They are called " Protectors of the SS ". This honour costs dear, but it serves as a " recommendation " to the Gestapo. Industrialists, merchants and officials compete for it, especially if they are not members of the Party. Thus they believe themselves to be protected by Himmler (58).

5. The SS Intelligence Service (*Sicherheitsdienst*)

The efficiency of every political police depends largely on the thoroughness and reliability of its intelligence service. In the case of the Gestapo it was built up by the SS long before the Nazis came to power and afterwards remained a part of the SS organization. It, too, had its predecessor under the Republican régime, in the shape of the " News Service " of the Political Police in Prussia. Between 1918 and 1932 the Prussian Minister of the Interior, who was in charge of the police, had to be regularly supplied with " reports on the political situation " which, in a way, were similar to the daily bulletins submitted by Fouché to Napoleon. They reviewed the organizations and persons hostile

* It appears that even Himmler could not protect Darré for ever against his opponents, for in spring, 1942, Darré had to resign as Minister of Agriculture and his office has since been administered by another member of the SS, Secretary of State Backe. It is not known if the arrangement described between the two organizations still holds good.

to the republican régime (59). Contrary to the practice of the Gestapo the much weaker police of the Republic were eager to take the public into their confidence, their maxim being : " It must be a principle of the political police not to conceal anything of its activities " (60). A cynic might observe that this very frankness together with the express rejection of the principle that the end justifies the means (61) actually caused the remarkable impotence of this service. It possessed neither sufficient power nor cunning to stop the rising tide of the National Socialist movement. As a Nazi spokesman put it in retrospect : " At that time the Intelligence Service was not very successful and therefore not very much feared by the enemies of the State " (62). The main reason for its failure was obviously the obsolete methods employed against an enemy which had successfully explored new devices for the political battle. The Intelligence Service of the Republic used more or less the same technique as that under William II : watching of meetings hostile to the State, shadowing of dangerous individuals, careful reading of all legal and illegal literature of the opposition and scrutiny of voluntary information received from the public. In addition, the police planted informers inside the hostile organizations who were either functionaries in them or enjoyed their special confidence (63). The small success of this technique, when applied against the Nazi Party, was a result of the vigilance of the SS Intelligence Service. Since 1925 the SS have had a special sub-section devoted to the gathering of information. Such intelligence warned Party members of planned police action against them or of opponents in the Socialist or Communist camp who might attack them. It also advised the party leaders about the safety of meetings and processions and at the last moment often suggested a deviation of route to avoid clashes. Sometimes the information obtained of moves planned by the opponents was deliberately published as a straw in the wind in the hope that this might intimidate the enemy and make him abandon his plans. Thus a well organized apparatus of information was gradually built up by an élite that, from the Nazi point of view, was more reliable than paid informers. After the Nazis had taken over the control of the Reich the task of the SS Intelligence Service extended to the informing of the Political Police and of various state authorities (64). Its job has, however, been confined to the obtaining of information, and the Service has no executive power, which is reserved for the Political Police itself.

As a major branch of the SS, the Intelligence Service has the same status as the SS Shock Troops and the Office of Racial and Settlement Questions. Its basic aim, to quote Heydrich, is " the providing of the strategic foundations for the leading of the Movement and through it of the State by means of intelligence and enquiry " (65). In June 1934, by special decree of the Representative of the *Führer*, Rudolf Hess, it was declared " the only political intelligence service of the NSDAP " (66). Little has been made public about the methods and organization of this clandestine service, except that Schweder vaguely mentions the use of " all means of well calculated activity and of well trained specialists."

The centre of the Intelligence, or Security Service under the Reich-Leader-SS is the " Security Head Office " (*Sicherheitshauptamt*). Its chief up to 1941 was Reinhard Heydrich, the former head of the Security Police. The Security Service, since 1939 renamed " Reich Security Office ", is divided into a number of main and sub-sections (each covering a region), which largely coincide with those of the General SS (67). Nazi writers emphasize the elasticity of this service and hint that " the work of the Security Service cannot be calculated for the moment only, but is always viewed on a large and far-seeing scale " (68).

It is difficult to estimate to what extent this internal spying service of Himmler has been supported by common informers from the ranks of the general public and of the Party. A high Gestapo official defined " the ultimate goal of all forces working for the security of the state as the total mobilization of the attention of the entire nation towards all efforts dangerous to the state " (69). It seems that the officially encouraged wave of private denunciations reached its peak during the first three years of the Third Reich. At that time so many former or present, alleged or actual, enemies of Party and State, so many grumblers and rumour-mongers had been denounced that the authorities had to take drastic steps against this officially sponsored habit. In 1936 the Secretary of the Reich Press Chamber in Berlin pinned a large notice on his office door : " Denouncers will have their ears boxed ! " (*Denunzianten erhalten Ohrfeigen*) (70). During the war the game of denouncing your neighbour has by no means disappeared, but has been applied to a less political sphere. In a speech in October 1942, Göring had to reprove the German people for petty keyhole-spying : people, he thundered, should not attempt to find out if their neighbour had

by any chance half a pound of coffee more than they had themselves, and should not flood the next police office with this information. (Quite likely the police have no need of these bits of information as their own channels keep them fully, and perhaps more accurately, informed !)

Though the Nazi authorities have always been careful to hang a thick cloak over their information service they have again and again advertised its frightening efficiency. As early as 1934 Göring set the pace :

> I alone created, on my own initiative, the " State Security Service ". This is the instrument which is so much feared and which is chiefly responsible for the fact that in Germany and Prussia to-day there is no question of a Marxist or Communist danger. . . .
>
> By means of a network of centres in the provinces, with Berlin as the headquarters, I am kept daily, I might almost say hourly, informed of everything that happens in the vast Prussian state. The last refuge of the Communists is known to us. However often they change their tactics and change the name of their couriers, a few days later they are tracked down, reported, watched and arrested (71).

Three years later this internal spying organization had become much more elaborate and bureaucratic. The spontaneous informing of the earlier years (Göring had expressly acknowledged the help of many SA men outside the SS Security Service) had given place to the well-calculated methods of a full time martial bureaucracy.

In April 1937, Alfred Meyer, one of the powerful *Gauleiter*, in an address to foreign diplomats in Berlin, made this significant statement :

> I have 100,000 eyes in my territory to see that everything goes all right. I have 100,000 ears close to the bosom of the people. They report in the shortest time where disturbances and economic difficulties emerge, where food prices are unjust, where there is a shortage of food—in short where the people feel thwarted. With such an excellently functioning intelligence service, as *Gauleiter* I am in a position to provide for immediate readjustments (72).

The war has had a double effect on the SS Security Service. On the one hand it has increased its scope and provided it with the character of a State office. On the other hand so much publicity has been given to it that it seems to have lost much of its clandestine character. In August 1942 the Reich

Minister of Justice issued a decree, summarized in the German press, to the effect that the Security Service (abbreviated SD for *Sicherheits Dienst*) was *the* police information service for Party and State, and its special duty was to inform the leading Reich offices of the popular reactions (*stimmungsmässigen Wirkungen*) to Government measures. Therefore close understanding and co-operation between the Service and the juridical authorities was called for and the exchange of information between them made compulsory (73).

Incidentally, the function of gauging the barometer of popular moods and reactions is also, though to a lesser degree, exercised by the local branches of the Party Office for Communal Politics, i.e. for local government affairs. In August 1942 German propaganda emphasized the controlling influence which the Party had in local government, an influence that extended to the masses as well as to the officials. "It is a particular task of the *Gau* Offices for Communal Politics," explained a leading Berlin paper, "to observe the effect of war measures on the morale of the people and to watch how the officials carry out those measures" (74).

It would be wrong to assess the task of this Security Service simply as an instrument to furnish material for the repression of hostile elements. It has, in addition, the function of testing the public morale and thus of gaining vantage points for the direction and, if needed, readjustment of policy. It is fairly obvious that no dictatorship, or any system lacking the democratic structure of the Western Powers, can do without such a barometer. This holds good particularly regarding the reactions to economic measures. In a parliamentary state parliament and the press provide the channels through which public opinion finds its outlet. Information and criticism are advanced directly in open discussion between government, parliament and people. In a non-parliamentary state, the rulers have to explore the reactions of the masses to government measures by special devices and channels, not running from below to above, but planted on the masses below from their rulers above. This function of enquiring into the morale of the controlled by a special apparatus directed by the controllers could at one time be also observed in Soviet Russia. In the 'thirties, Stalin, in order to keep in touch with the people, employed a special staff of about one hundred persons, selected from the highest Soviet officials and their wives. Their job was similar to that of the mass-observation practised

in the Anglo-Saxon countries, with the difference that in the latter the results of the observation have been made public, whilst in Russia they were reserved for the information of the rulers only. As to Germany, the historian of the Third Reich will do well not to underrate the importance of the reports on morale furnished regularly by the various regional offices of the SD.

CHAPTER IV

ORGANIZED HELL: THE CONCENTRATION CAMP

1. "I Shall Spread Terror"

Many a German of the older generation, when asked, during the first years of the Third Reich, what he thought of concentration camps, would express his horror and disgust, but hasten to assure you that they were only a temporary institution, a by-product of revolutionary change, which would soon disappear after the final establishment of the régime. Women, particularly, impressed by the emotional appeal of Hitler's mass meetings, were confident that Hitler himself could have no idea of what was going on in the concentration camps or he would undoubtedly stop such a revival of medieval barbarism. In any régime—so ran their argument—subordinates make mistakes, but it is not fair to put the onus for their blunders or wrongs on to the leading personalities. I heard it once said by an English sympathizer of the Nazis that the *Führer* could as little be made responsible for the cruel happenings in the concentration camps as Queen Victoria for certain events in the camps erected for women and children during the Boer War. Naturally, the Nazi propagandists, at home and abroad, did their best to encourage this legend.

The concentration camp is, as every careful reader of *Mein Kampf* can see, the clear outcome of Hitler's mass psychology. Hitler never made any bones about his view that masochism is the basic attitude of the masses and that the necessary supplement in their treatment by their rulers must be sadism. "What they want," he declared in 1927, "is the victory of the stronger and the annihilation or the unconditional surrender of the weaker" (1). Hitler has always regarded fear as the basic motive of the masses. To him the people not only need fear, they also alone respect the state executive that knows how to work upon it. People acknowledge brutality and physical strength, then cry for someone "to frighten them and make them shudderingly submissive". Hitler is deeply convinced that the masses to-day, as in the days of the Romans, need bread and shows that give them a thrill of horror. In a democratic society people find an outlet for their horror-instinct either by reading about some

actual case of murder, or by absorbing detective thrillers. In a Fascist dictatorship the whispers of political murder and cruelty put detective stories in the shade. Only a few intimates from the " Inner Circle " were allowed by Hitler to learn of his real ideas of the political value of concentration camps. To them the Führer expounded his mass-psychology with cynical frankness and complete indifference towards the life of the individual. Hitler made it clear that brutality paid, because it created fear, fear of frightfulness. " Terror," Hitler once explained to Rauschning, " is the most effective political instrument . . . it is my duty to make use of *every* means of training the German people to severity, and to prepare them for war " (2). A truly Machiavellian line and a far-seeing one ; for not only was it Hitler's aim to cause fear, but to cause it suddenly. He has always believed in " Blitz " methods and he deliberately applied shock tactics against the inner foe before using them against the exterior enemy.

> I shall spread terror [he said in 1933] by the surprise employment of all my measures. The important thing is the sudden shock of an overwhelming fear of death. Why should I use different methods against my internal political opponents ? These so-called atrocities spare me a hundred thousand individual actions against disobedience and discontent. People will think twice before opposing us when they hear what to expect in the camps (3).

Thus the concentration camps have above all the function of a deterrent. Only few understood in 1933 and 1934 that the cruelties of the camps were carefully conceived and carried out. Rauschning, however, early realized that there was method behind this sadistic madness. " The cruelty of a nature increasingly refined dealt out then and later by the SS and the SA to political opponents was part of a political plan " (4). Technically the concentration camp is based on the conception of " protective custody ". This German concept had a different meaning in pre-Nazi days. Then, it referred to the detention of a person who was innocent but, having contracted the animosity of the mob, had to be detained by the police for his own safety. Himmler theoretically maintained this concept and once defined it to American journalists as " the detention of a person to protect him from the fury of the masses " (5). Actually, the protection of the individual from the mob changed to that of the mob from the individual—a slight enough difference on paper, but one which in reality cost

many innocent lives. Himmler even went one better by claiming that the main task of the concentration camp is " re-education ", " to fit the prisoner for the type of life he will have to lead in the Third Reich " (6).

It is most difficult, if not impossible, to estimate correctly the number of persons detained in concentration camps of the Reich since 1933. As far as can be seen from limited evidence, there have been two " peak periods " between Spring 1933 and Autumn 1939 : one at the beginning, in 1933, and the other after the pogroms in November 1938. The German Government gave some figures in 1933 and 1934 which, of course, have to be taken with caution (7). In July 1933 the number of political prisoners for the entire Reich were given as 18,000, of whom two-thirds had been arrested by the Prussian Gestapo. In March 1934, according to a statement by Diels to the Foreign Press Association, 9,000 were still detained, including 200 women, whilst some 30,000 had passed through the camp. Diels incidentally, took pains to explain that the camps would most probably be liquidated within two years, although they had been intended for ten. There was indeed a decrease in the numbers of camps between June 1933 and June 1934; for instance, in the Berlin district the figure went down from 14 in summer 1933, to 2 in October 1934. On the other hand, at the end of 1938, in the camp of Buchenwald near Weimar, no less than about 10,000 Jews were confined (8).

2. Categories of Prisoners

One of the strangest features in the structure of the concentration camps is the elaborate system of divisions under which the victims are organized. This system originated partly in the German bent for punctilious organization, partly in the Fascist craving for " order ", and is modelled on the army pattern with its many ranks and branches. It offers an outlet for the urge to humiliate the hapless victims and to make their " crimes " visible. It presents one more device of branding the " enemies of the state ". Most camps were organized after the model of Dachau, with a commandant and a deputy-commandant, who were the superiors of about 30 non-commissioned officers, each of them in charge of one barrack, and controlling the barrack and room orderlies, and the gang-leaders.

All the prisoners, officially labelled " people under protective custody ", were marked by triangles on their garments, which

for the sake of easy identification were fixed on the left breast and the right trouser leg. In all cases these triangles were placed with the apex downwards ; Jews, however, were given an additional yellow triangle turned upwards, and those branded as " race polluters " who were suspected of forbidden intimate relations with " Aryan " women, had to wear over the yellow triangle another striped with black. The following categories were recognizable with the help of different colours :

The " real criminals " were " Green ".
The political prisoners were " Red ".
The " work-shys " were " Black ".
The emigrants were " Blue ".
The Bible Students were " Mauve ".
The Homosexuals were " Pink " (9).

It largely depended on chance and circumstances into which category a man was put. Often the most heterogeneous elements were clubbed together. The " Work-shy " and " Asocial " included tramps and beggars, labourers who had refused to work on State motor roads or to comply with some trivial order issued by the " Labour Front " and also employers who had been denounced by some artful employee. One man was branded as " work-shy " because he had changed his job three times in one year—each time by order of an official of the Labour Front (10). In addition some idle sons of rich landowners and entire tribes of gypsies and numerous drunkards were incorporated in this group. In Buchenwald it was the second largest in 1938. There were no tramps and vagabonds amongst them, but instead some technical workers who had left low-paid employment to obtain higher positions and had been denounced to the Gestapo by the Labour Exchange (11).

The " real criminals " were not in " protective custody " but in " preventive custody ". Some of them had committed serious crimes, whilst others had been ostracized for minor charges, which in some cases they had atoned for ten or fifteen years before. Some had been arrested only on account of the incidental finding of some local Nazi who had unearthed a dusty file of long-forgotten misdeeds. Particularly with Jews, former convictions, often dated back to a decade or more, were used as a convenient pretext. Thus, a breach of traffic regulations or similar trifling offence was sufficient to stamp a man as a criminal (12). By this primitive but cunning technique,

the Nazis succeeded in transforming a good many reputable people, business men and university teachers, into " criminals ". It was one of the paradoxical facts of the concentration camps' social order that these so-called " criminals " were supervised by older prisoners who were actually professional criminals. Theirs was the task of " maintaining order " and they were given full authority to punish other prisoners. Many of them tried to curry favour with the SS by rough treatment of their charges.

The " political prisoners " comprised men from all parties ; German Nationalists suffered the same fate as Communists, and Bavarian Catholics worked in the same gang as former Prussian Trade Union leaders. Members of the Schuschnigg cabinet were as badly treated as the Socialist ex-mayor of Vienna ; intellectuals, politicians, journalists, they were all labelled " political prisoners ". Before this war some ex-members of the Reichstag and of the regional Diets had already spent six years in Dachau.

The " emigrants " consisted of people who had left Germany either for good or temporarily and had made the crucial mistake of returning to see their relatives or friends in the Reich. Some of them were lured back to the fatherland by false promises or by force, with the help of unscrupulous agents abroad. In one case, a Social-Democrat, who had left Germany and settled in a town in Czechoslovakia, had been persuaded by some friends to join them in a motor ride across the border into Germany. When he was arrested, he realized too late that the good " friends " had been Nazi agents in disguise (13).

The " Earnest Bible Students " had to suffer persecution on account of their faith in the " Jewish " god Jehovah and for being conscientious objectors to any form of military service. At the same time they were in a better and worse position than the Jews. In a better, because they needed only to sign a renunciation of their faith to gain full liberty, whereas a Jew could not undo the " curse " of belonging to a hated race—in a worse position, because the Nazis hated the more people who were not by birth excluded from joining them and from conforming to their creed, but who obstinately refused to do so.

Other groups who brought down a special Nazi wrath on themselves were the gypsies, the homosexuals and the " race polluters ". Apparently it was the intention of the Nazi authorities to exterminate the gypsies whom they regard as " asocial "

and inferior. The number of homosexuals was small and " they all claimed to have been arrested as the result of denunciation or of unfortunate accidents " (14). It has been a favourite tactic of the secret police to charge those it dislikes with this offence (15).

As to the " race polluters ", in many cases, their detention in a concentration camp threw a significant light on the endeavour of the Gestapo to establish itself as a court of its own. For it revised the judgment of ordinary courts, that had either acquitted the accused from lack of evidence or had promulgated light sentences only (16). The branding of sexual relations declared taboo by the State as an all-powerful " super-ego ", has been extended during the war to " relations " between German women and members of conquered nations such as prisoners of war and workers. Here the Gestapo technique combines the punishment of the concentration camp with a public announcement of the cases in the local press, intended to act as a deterrent.

For instance, in January 1943, the Breslau local press carried this announcement from the *Reichsführer SS* and Chief of the German Police :

> The German citizens Marie Werner, *née* Exner of Hohendorf, Kreis Habelschwerdt, Hedwig Mann, of Kieslingswalde, Kreis Habelschwerdt, Agnes Köberlein, *née* Warionenko, of Neu-Altmanndorf, Kreis Frankenstein, have been imprisoned in a concentration camp on December 8, November 20 and January 7 respectively, for getting in touch with a Ukrainian for dishonourable purposes. Further the German citizens Agnes Hoffmann, *née* Ast, of Wikoline, Kreis Guhrau, and Hedwig Kretschmer, *née* Tomitzek, of Kuhnau, Kreis Guhrau, have been imprisoned in a concentration camp on December 11 and 29, for dishonourably contacting a Pole.
>
> The German citizen Erna Liche, of Deutschhammer, has been confined in a Youth Protection Camp on January 13, for dishonourably getting in touch with a Pole.

3. Degrees of Punishment

Perhaps most striking in the life of the concentration camp is the strange contrast between its monotony and the variety of possible tortures intended to cause both pain and fear. Hard labour for ten hours continuously, the many chicaneries connected with articles used in the daily routine, the blows and humiliation by the SS men, the specific torture instrument, all this created

an atmosphere of gloomy uncertainty. "One of the hellish features of concentration camp imprisonment is precisely this nerve-shattering uncertainty" (16a).

In an army "spit and polish" is part of the traditional routine and through it of the military ideology. Every soldier must conform to the code, and in doing so share the honour of this institution. In a concentration camp, however, the same spit and polish is a means of chicanery, of making life uncomfortable and of humiliating the prisoner. This started in the morning with the making of the bed. "The beds were not primarily for sleeping in" reported an ex-prisoner of Dachau camp (17). "Their essential function was that they had to be made. These beds filled our life with apprehension. . . . The eating utensils were made of the most treacherous material, a particularly shiny and easily marked aluminium alloy . . . the usual punishment for a stain was an hour's hanging on the tree. The drinking glass was equally dangerous. . . . Most dangerous of all were tooth-brushes, for a tiny crumb hidden at the roots of the brush might easily escape the most vigilant eye, and that again meant an hour's hanging. . . . Our boots had to be absolutely spotless." In a similar way work in the concentration camp was not looked upon mainly from its utility value. It was above all a means to damage and hit the man who had to carry it out. Work had no rational purpose except that of increasing the burden and torture of the unfortunate prisoners. They usually toiled on and on "without rhyme or reason" and it happened that they had to move a rubble heap from one point to another, only to move it back again to the old place afterwards (18). In Buchenwald camp the prisoners (eighty per cent. of whom had never done manual labour before) were ordered to carry stone blocks "so heavy that the effort of lifting would have seemed considerable even to a navvy in good training". The weight of the stones that had to be carried to a place a mile away was such that "it took several men to lift the block on to the shoulders of the person who had to carry it" (19). Eventually thirty out of one hundred prisoners collapsed and two of these died.

This, incidentally, was work and not yet punishment. A scale of punishments inflicted on the unhappy inmates was elaborate. It aimed at making their lives so uncomfortable and miserable that many would prefer death to so wretched a life. Though the behaviour of the SS guards was often erratic, the

following catalogue of punishments practised emerges from the various published accounts of former prisoners :

Degradation is equivalent to humiliation, as the prisoners are regarded and treated as " dangerous criminals " and henceforth known by numbers only (20). Convict uniform and the shaving of the head underline the position of outcasts. The levelling down imposed also finds its expression in the regulation that all prisoners must address each other with " *Du* " instead of the more polite " *Sie* ". Any attempt at privacy is impossible. Another part of systematic degradation is constant abuse by the guards, the prisoners having no outlet for their feelings of resentment and depression and being forced to remain passive without the possibility of answering back.

Although life in a concentration camp is a strange mixture of pedantic regularity and brutal arbitrariness, its routine takes second place to the fertile imagination which again and again invents new ways of discomfort and pain for the helpless victims. No possible means of making life desperate and wretched are forbidden.

There are several methods of inflicting severe physical pain ; one is flogging, a procedure which took place in Buchenwald at the afternoon roll-call. Like a scene from Dante's sinister Purgatorio, the penalties, fixed beforehand, were read out. The prisoner had to step forward and was lashed to a board ; two guards stood one on each side with riding whips and administered twenty-five strokes on the buttocks. A stoic attitude was expected from the victim, because if he cried out the strokes were increased up to thirty-five. " The guards used all their force, sometimes springing into the air so as to bring the arm down with increasing momentum." After the flogging the men had to stand to attention with their faces to the wall until the end of the roll-call. Often while two hefty SS men carried out the sentence a third would hold the victim's jaws together to stifle any cries. In summer 1938, hardly a day passed in Buchenwald camp without cases of flogging, the number of which was given by one former prisoner as from two to ten, by another as several every day (21).

The " treeing " of a prisoner is another characteristic form of punishment. The victim has to fetch a heavy pole and set it into a hole in the ground. He is hung up three metres from the ground by the arms, which are violently bent back for this purpose (22). A remarkable sadistic inventiveness has been shown by the guards in developing the possibilities of this torture.

> If only a slight offence had been committed, the prisoners would be bound to the tree in such a way that they stood facing it, and as if embracing it, their hands pinioned together. The straps that bound them would be pulled so tight that they could barely move. The guards would now play " merry-go-round " with them, that is, they would force them to make their way round and round the tree. If they could not move quickly enough it was usual to help them by kicking their ankles (23).

A more severe form of the same punishment often ended fatally. The victim would be strapped to the tree, facing outwards, his arms pulled back and round the tree-trunk and then bound together, the thighs and feet sufficiently tight to stop the circulation of the blood. The prisoner would be left hanging in this position for hours at a time. These barbaric tortures were by no means exceptional; in Buchenwald they happened daily (24). The cruellest punishment, work in the stone quarry, was nothing but a death-trap. An exhausted prisoner falling behind his companions would be driven out of the line by his guard towards the SS post, who without more ado would shoot him " while attempting to escape " ; or he would be pushed on to the highway near the quarry and forced in front of a heavy lorry driven by another SS man, more often than not with fatal results.

There were other methods of a more refined brand of sadism, punitive overtime and drill for instance. Punitive overtime was a chastisement for an alleged offence at work. After the evening roll-call the victim would be made to continue working until shortly before the " lights out " signal was given. A man would be called " lazy " when he was slow, " loitering " when he rested for a moment, and " unwilling " when he was clumsy or physically incapable of carrying out the task. Again the factor of uncertainty would be played upon, for such punitive overtime might last one month, two months or even longer, and only on the last day would the prisoner learn that it had come to an end. Even worse was punitive drill. For instance the " frog-hop ", when the man had to hop along in a crouching position " after ten hours of back-breaking toil ". As many of the men collapse there follows a torrent of curses, blows and kicks (25).

Dachau camp even boasted a special " punitive company " of its own. Strictly isolated from other prisoners, they had to carry out the hardest tasks and were directed by the most brutal overseers (26). Additional taboos were imposed upon them.

They were prevented from writing letters and could only receive ten marks from home every three months as compared with the fifteen marks allowed every week to the ordinary prisoner. This practically deprived them of the chance to buy additional food. At one time the Jewish prisoners in Buchenwald had their rations halved on the pretext that " they had been throwing bread away ". The unfortunate men were expected to do hard labour on the strength of " a quarter of a litre of acorn coffee in the morning, half a litre of soup at mid-day, and half a pound of bread with a smear of margarine and a little brawn in the evening ". On three successive Sundays the prisoners received no food at all, but were required to work as usual (27).

In Dachau, as well as in Buchenwald, there was a canteen where prisoners could buy food. They were allowed to receive money from their homes, but no food parcels, as the official slogan ran " everything could be bought in the camp ". This was, however, just another ill-concealed trick played upon them, for the canteen was badly stocked and the prices high. In Buchenwald it was impossible to buy bread and often nothing but lemonade powder was available. Owing to shortage of goods the canteen had to close from time to time, and then set in the golden time for the Black Market, run by the professional criminals who were in charge of the barracks. They made full use of this chance of enriching themselves. The prices for sausages, tobacco and chocolate rose from 300 to 600 per cent. To the prisoners this exploitation was, in a way, but a milder form of punishment.

4. The Behaviour of SS Guards

As we have seen, the cruelty shown to political opponents and others was deliberately planned. Therefore, it is only logical that the authorities purposely selected persons with an inborn streak of cruelty. Competent observers have agreed that the members of the SS Death's Head Formations, who formed the guards of the concentration camps, were mostly asocial and abnormal types. " Notorious drunkards and criminals were selected from the military organization of the Party and placed in special sub-divisions " (28). A German ex-officer and Catholic youth leader, who spent four years in the clutches of the Gestapo and now lives in the U.S.A., deduced from the " fantastic and inhuman cruelties " he saw perpetrated by concentration camp officials that they are " especially picked for the job after proving

abnormal sadism and even degeneracy" (29). A German bank clerk, who had been an officer in the last war, and though a Nationalist was not a member of the Party, told the present writer in 1934 that he had had an opportunity of visiting a concentration camp near Hamburg and was disgusted with the marked criminal types he had found in charge of it. He regarded the fact that they were all ex-convicts who had been deliberately chosen as a stain on the honour of a régime which he otherwise welcomed. What he overlooked, and millions of other Germans with him, was that this feature was not incidental but a deliberate consequence of a régime based on terror.

If we try to analyse the motives from which the SS guards acted, at least three of them become evident: firstly, asocial and criminal elements wanted to satisfy their perverted instincts; secondly, they strove to give satisfaction to their superiors and were ruled by fear of cruelty and by hope of promotion; thirdly, fanaticism played a big part. Many SS men undoubtedly believed what they were told, i.e. that the defenceless prisoners were sons of the devil, "enemies of the Reich", whose destructive trends must be crushed at any price. Some of them may have been a brutalized edition of Don Quixote fighting against a fictitious enemy. As to the second motive, it should not be overlooked that the life of the SS guards supervising concentration camps was, even judged by low standards, far from being enviable. This held good as much in the beginning as at the end of the first decade of Nazi rule over Germany. A former prisoner at a moorland camp in the Rhineland (Börgermoor) in 1933–4 discovered that the SS spent their time off duty in boredom and drinking bouts. "They felt themselves like exiles." Far away from any towns, they were thrown back upon themselves for entertainment (30). Similarly, an American journalist who visited Dachau in 1941 was more impressed by the conditions under which the guards themselves had to live than by the unhappy lives of the prisoners. "Their barracks are as barren and cold as the rooms inhabited by the prisoners, and their food is no better." They are constantly threatened by their superiors and it is "by no means uncommon for a guard suddenly to find himself an inmate undergoing the torture he was perhaps too gentle in dealing out to the prisoners" (31). The composite picture arrived at by a study of various printed reports by ex-prisoners, seems to indicate that whilst all the men in charge of barracks were asocial criminals, many of the ordinary

SS men guarding the camps were fanatics who did a brutal job because they were told to do it " for the sake of Führer and Reich ". Besides the specialist in sadism, who owing to a peculiar kink indulged in one favourite method of maltreating prisoners, was the young fanatic to whom a barbaric behaviour gradually became a habit which he rationalized as part of his duty as a true Nazi and German. A former prisoner of Buchenwald Camp, a Christian non-Aryan, described the SS men employed in the camp in summer 1938 as " mostly very young men of 17–20 who had been specially ' trained ' for the purpose ". In spite of their youth " they were already so brutalized and sadistic that it was a constant wonder to Herr Z. how it could have been brought about " (32). Another witness, an Austrian prisoner in Dachau, shared this amazement at the possibility of ordinary youngsters being transformed into systematic torturers :

> As we marched past the SS-barracks the boys who were off duty used to crowd to the windows and make more or less witty remarks. They looked just like other mischievous boys of their class, and I often asked myself whether they were really the same creatures who tormented us when they were on duty. Having sons of my own, I was filled with vague despair as the realization came to me that these children were deliberately trained to become beasts (33).

The paramount psychological question " how is such behaviour possible ? " cannot be answered by any hasty generalizations or attractive formulas. Without deep-rooted sadistic instincts as a potential in human nature no Himmler would have the slightest chance of carrying out mass torture. Sadism has been described by a psycho-analyst as the impulse " to have complete mastery over another person, to make of him the helpless object of our will, to become the absolute ruler over him, to become his God, to do with him as one pleases " (34). There can hardly be any greater dependence of the ruled upon the ruler than that prevailing in a concentration camp. The victim is entirely helpless and completely at the mercy of his overseer who has total mastery over his life and death. It is the irrational character of *sic volo sic jubeo*, in its crudest form. The prisoner is divested of his quality as a human being and can be treated as a dog or as a tree or as lifeless matter. This state has not only caused arbitrary wounding and killing, but also less dangerous but more grotesque situations, with a pointed discrepancy between the commanded action and the feelings of those forced

to carry it out. For instance, in Dachau, the young SS-men superimposed their own habit of singing upon their charges whilst marching them to work. The prisoners had to obey and to sing some stupid ditty. Those who did not display sufficient zest were frequently struck with the rifle butt, others received blows for no reason whatever (35).

A mere description of the nature of the sadistic drive does not yet account for the sudden mass appearance of sadistic behaviour. As we have seen, such behaviour has been carefully planned and favoured by the ruling clique of the régime, but it could only succeed because the seed fell on unusually fertile soil. In this connection it should not be overlooked that, since the end of the last war, homosexuality has played a large rôle in Germany, particularly in the male youth organizations. It is well known that the romantic German Youth Movement of the 'twenties had strong though idealized homosexual tendencies, which have even been eulogized in pseudo-philosophical literature.* Even the exclusive circle of poets and historians round the much celebrated Stefan George was not entirely free of them, this perversion appearing in a " higher " aesthetic and in a " lower " commonplace and vulgar edition. In the 'thirties homosexuality took a political turn by dominating the leading SA circles round SA Chief Röhm. After his violent death Hitler, in his explanatory speech, castigated the immoral perversion of the Röhm clique. Whilst Himmler, personally, seems to have waged war on homosexuals and even branded them in concentration camps by special colours, there is no evidence to show that the vice has decreased in a state controlled by huge masculine organizations as is the Third Reich. A British Consular official who stayed in Germany from 1932–9 has testified that " sexual perversion, and in particular homosexuality, are prevalent in Germany ", and has suggested that mass sexual perversity is partly responsible for the waves of sadistic cruelty in that country (36). As the psycho-analyst alone will be able to disentangle the hidden correlation between sadism and homosexuality, the contemporary historian has to confine himself to registering their striking co-existence.

As early as 1933 the political tone set by the leading SS group in one concentration camp (Börgermoor) at least could be explained only by " their perverse sexuality " which particularly

* See, for instance, various writings by H. Blüher and G. Wyneken, published during and after the last war.

accounted for the Jew-baiting in the style of Julius Streicher. These men came from " the better classes " and included a declassé young teacher, a man with a polytechnical education and another who played the flute and read Nietzsche. In this connection, the social composition of the SS guards in Börgermoor is of interest as it can be regarded to some extent as typical of the early years of the Nazi régime. Twenty per cent. were workers, another 20 per cent. belonged to the intelligentsia, in the wider sense of the word, i.e. unemployed engineers with university training, technicians, teachers and students. The bulk (60 per cent.) consisted of the sons of impoverished tradespeople, innkeepers, post office and railway officials, all men without means and without the chance of a regular career. The rôle of economic and social insecurity in the making of these camp guards is thus considerable and has very likely accentuated their potential sadistic drives (37). The sadistic atmosphere in these camps has been so often described that it would be pointless to go into details. " Abandon hope, all ye who enter here ! " was the invisible inscription over every entrance gate. Buffeting, kicking and bastonading with steel rods was part of everyday routine. Some guards never spoke to a prisoner without hitting him across the mouth with the back of the hand (38).

The all-round cruelty and humiliation, arranged " according to plan ", was intensified by the sadistic obsession of certain guards and overseers. There was the specialist, indulging in the throwing of stones at prisoners engaged in heavy work, and the other smacking them while marching past. There was a minor tyrant who suffered from a " make the men stand motionless " complex, who " liked to have all prisoners leap to their feet with such a thunder that the entire room would shake whenever he entered " (39). He satisfied his particular lust by making all prisoners stand as straight as pokers, and by beating up and kicking those who did not. Another SS man in the same camp was a boot-fetishist obsessed by the idea that the prisoner's boots had to be highly polished and must not show the slightest trace of dirt. Otherwise, severe and painful punishment was in store for the " culprit ". Others were given to a similar complex directed towards a towel and tooth-brush parade. Whilst some of these men were undoubtedly pathological, it must not be overlooked that the planners of these camps, by putting them in charge of prisoners, encouraged them to give free rein to their perversions.

By contrast to these sadistic " specialists ", in nearly all the camps there are apparently a small number of guards or SS leaders who are " abnormal " in the opposite direction, and show no traces of the standardized cruel behaviour. In Dachau the SS official in charge of the canteen spoke to prisoners in a normal tone, treated them courteously and never beat any of them (40). Another rare bird, in the same camp, was a SS block leader of aristocratic descent who always behaved decently (41). In Buchenwald, too, prisoners encountered " a very small minority " of SS men who did not maltreat them (42). Sadistic behaviour is always provoked by the display of physical or mental weakness. The sadist of power-politics instinctively despises the weak and acknowledges the strong. At the same time, this behaviour, when displayed by a member of the lower classes, often prefers socially and/or intellectually superior types as target. During the pogrom period, at the end of 1938, the young SS guards in the concentration camp of Sachsenhausen, near Berlin, singled out Jews for torture who were elderly, corpulent, bearing outstanding physical features of their race, and belonging to the upper classes, such as rabbis, professors and lawyers. On the other hand young Jews of a more sportive type received much better treatment. Social humiliation was particularly accentuated against a former high official of the law, who had made the mistake of mentioning his title, and against the owner of a chain of well-known restaurants (42a). Thus, coupled with the primitive instinct of sadism, aiming at hurting the weak, goes a feeling of triumphant revenge against the socially unfrocked, who until recently had been the subject of ill-concealed envy. The Jews and other victims are in this context a kind of substitute. Whilst they have been dethroned there remained thousands of Gentile " high-ups ", firmly in the saddle, even during the Nazi régime. In this way, maltreating the weak few is an " Ersatz " for being prevented from bringing down the still superior many. They sometimes tried to ease their conscience by explaining to the prisoners that they could do nothing to improve conditions and that they were bound by the orders from their superiors. Such people are failures from the point of view of the planners of concentration camps ; if they dare to sympathize with a prisoner, they run the risk of quickly sharing his fate and might even be shot by their comrades.

5. Prisoners amongst Themselves

From the detached point of view of descriptive sociology, a concentration camp represents a strangely unique social situation. There people are thrown together into a helpless position of terror, people of all ages, professions, social origins and political or religious convictions. As in an army, these men are subject to rule and command, but their life is not, as in an army, based on a code of " honour ", but is overshadowed by the grim label of " dishonour and disgrace " branded on them by ruthless persecution. How do these men get on with each other under the impact of such unnatural and sinister circumstances ? Two cross tendencies strike the eye of the observer : from the levelling downwards imposed on them by the Nazis has sprung much practical comradeship, yet with it goes a sharpening of the innate characteristics of the various human types.

The enforced use of the familiar " Du " in addressing one another is intended to obliterate all social and economic differences between them. Undoubtedly, in some instances, it causes a certain satisfaction to those less privileged in ordinary life ; they soon realize that property and education mean very little in this veritable hell. Peter Wallner reports that in Dachau many prisoners " who were neither superior nor reserved in their manner, but merely maintained their bearing " often received a sharp reminder of their common insignificance : " You are no better than me " was a phrase frequently heard (43). Some men who had to some extent proved to be failures in life, detested and abused those who had achieved something. But this feature should be seen in its true perspective. If there was on the one hand a good deal of antagonism, misunderstanding and irritability, there was on the other an astonishing amount of silent comradeship and mutual assistance. As often in life, a situation of equal treatment, or rather equal maltreatment led to a marked inequality of reactions.* The unusual social situation showed up the various characters in their true light—it had a revealing function. " All masks are removed in a camp and a man's real character stands revealed. The brave man is courageous, the coward is more miserable, the egotist manifests his worst traits and the good comrade shows himself as the noblest

* There was, however, an inequality of physical equipment for, naturally, prisoners toughened by their civil life—farmers, labourers, mechanics—stood a much better chance of survival than shopkeepers and intellectuals.

type of this inferno" (44). It is interesting that a well-known English writer had a similar experience in another emergency situation, when he sailed on board a refugee ship from Gibraltar to England, after the fall of France in summer 1940. It seemed to him, too, that "the selfish become more selfish and the unselfish more unselfish" (45). In the concentration camp, people who early in life had been disciplined by a powerful collective such as an army or revolutionary party, have shown a strong spirit of comradeship. This applied to army officers, ex-soldiers and Communists alike. On the other hand, very little comradely spirit is said to have been displayed in the Dachau camp "by tradesmen, many former public officials and a large number of intellectuals". They behaved as individualists "who could not find their places in this mass of men . . . they lacked the necessary training" (46).

It speaks for itself that in the police prison of Moabit, where the treatment was less cruel than in a concentration camp, little fellowship amongst the prisoners could be found. The only idea was that of self-preservation; "each looked only to easing his own situation", and this was especially true of former Nazis, who for one reason or another had fallen into disgrace and now hoped to regain favour by informing the authorities about their fellow prisoners. They seized any opportunity to denounce them (47).

Before the war the much hunted Communists displayed such a high standard of discipline and comradeship that even prisoners who, as convinced Catholics, were hostile to the Communist ideology, paid a tribute to it. One of them testified that he had never seen "a more comradely spirit and selfless assistance than amongst the Communist prisoners" (48). Another Catholic ex-prisoner, who had been subjected to cruel treatment in the Gestapo headquarters, shared this opinion, observing that "the identical horrors developed an instant, unquestioning camaraderie. Back in my cell, a Communist gave me his shirt, another washed my face. For hours two of them supported me as I crouched on a cot . . ." (49).

Apart from such political groups, forming a nucleus of practical comradeship, there were, in most camps, closer ties between the members of one room who understood and assisted each other as far as possible. It was like an object lesson in Kropotkin's famous principle of "Mutual Help". Mutual assistance materialized more easily between pairs, who formed "sacrificial friendships that helped them through the terrors

of the day " (50). Such mutual comforting obviously has great psychological importance. From it sprang a kind of silent agreement that when the one suffered the other would succour and console him, and vice versa. They also co-operated in the managing of the daily tasks of barrack life such as, for instance, washing up, cleaning, etc. Sometimes two prisoners would pool all their money and would buy together the small goods available in the canteen.

So far as generalizations from rather limited pre-war accounts on this subject are advisable, it appears that both the oldest and the youngest generations have suffered most. The plight of the elderly prisoners has been described. All had to perform the same tasks and to comply with the same pace, no matter whether they were twenty or sixty-five. Yet, Wallner found that the young comrades between eighteen and forty had less power of resistance than the men between forty and fifty-five. For whereas the older generation had been hardened in the tough school of the last war, the youngsters felt that " they were being robbed of their youth ". They had really nothing to look back on and hardly any hope for the future (51).

Another striking difference was that between brain workers and manual workers. The latter had been trained in physical labour and could therefore do the enforced work in the concentration camp much better than their highbrow colleagues. But they also continued their earlier habit of pausing from time to time and this brought down on them the rage of the SS guards. Consequently they were often beaten ; unlike the intellectuals, they were slow in realizing that what mattered in these odious surroundings was appearances, not results, an appearance of continuous labour being the only means of placating the insidious guards.

The devilish institution of the concentration camp has hung over Germany and progressively over Europe like a dark and frightening cloud. It has spread from Germany to Austria and Czechoslovakia, to Poland and to Norway, to Greece, the Low Countries and to France. A whole technique of brutality has been gradually developed, and perhaps even incorporated in esoteric directives only accessible to Gestapo officials. The scourge of the concentration camp covers all Europe ; only the nationality of the victims has changed and the reservoir from which they are drawn enlarged. The sadism finds even worse outlets against foreigners. A Dutchman who had been in one

camp in Germany and two in Holland reported that the treatment meted out in the concentration camp in Germany was nothing compared with the cruelty displayed in the camps run by the Germans in Holland. In one of the latter victims were put into cells six feet by five feet. "Jews were beaten, starved and tortured until they could hardly stand. Weak starving people were forced to do work which is normally done by machines or horses. Those leaving the camp were human wrecks, physically crippled and mentally broken" (52). This report was confirmed shortly afterwards by that of another Dutchman who had escaped from a concentration camp near Amersfoort (53). He, too, observed that many Dutchmen died as the result of brutal treatment, and many fainted regularly, aggravated by whipping. Both witnesses testified to the terrible treatment given to Russians in Dutch camps. In one case ninety-five out of one hundred Russians taken to a camp had perished under the most abominable circumstances. Ten years after their accession to power, the Nazis still maintained their practice of sending the bodies of the murdered from the camp to relatives on condition that they were buried immediately, without change of coffin. After the killing of the former Dutch Minister of Justice, Dr. Goseling, in Buchenwald camp, relatives of Dutch victims were always informed that the cause of death was "pneumonia"—an impressive specimen of twentieth-century cynicism (54).

NOTE.—The advance of the Allied armies in 1944–45, both in the West and in the East, has led to some grim revelations. To give only some especially drastic examples, at the Gestapo headquarters at Rennes and at Issy-les-Moulineaux near Paris, at the Dutch camp of Vught near Hertogenbosch and at the Belgian camp of Breendonk near Antwerp instruments of torture as well as traces of torturing itself have been found. On the conditions in Breendonk in particular, the British military authorities of the 21st Army Group carried out a thorough enquiry, examining reports of victims and other witnesses. In Russia, in addition to official statements, British and American Press correspondents were in a position to see for themselves the aftermath of the horrors of the concentration camp of Majdenek near Lublin (August 1944). This camp, unofficially called by the Germans the Lublin *Vernichtungslager* (annihilation camp) in which victims from 22 nations found a ghastly end, had its own skilfully arranged gas-chambers and a crematorium presided over by a greedy SS-man, a true merchant of death. One British reporter saw fifty bodies the Germans tried to burn just before their departure. On November 3, 1943, according to captured Gestapo guards and surviving prisoners, about 18,000 persons were killed in the chambers and by shooting. In the storehouses the returning Russian army found stocks of thousands of pairs of boots and shoes, bearing marks from all over Europe, and special rooms for children's clothes, men's hats, women's corsets and handbags, etc. etc. Much light was also thrown on the systematic German methods of destroying civilians by the trials of some members of an *SS Sonderkommando* in Kharkov in December 1943, and of a number of Russian collaborationists in Krasnodar in July 1943 (55). But it was perhaps only the overrunning of huge concentration camps in the Reich itself (such as Buchenwald, Belsen and Ohrdruf), in the spring of 1945, which exposed to the world the full dimensions of the concentration camp as an unrivalled playground for systematic cruelty and annihilation.

PART III

TERROR AND RESISTANCE

CHAPTER I

TECHNIQUES OF TERROR

(Methods of Control and Annihilation)

1. An Attitude of Contempt

Behind the cunning devices and speedy action of the Secret Police as experienced from Fouché to Himmler, there is a certain basic conception of what man is and how he must be treated. This may not always be directly formulated ; it may even be deliberately hidden behind a smoke-screen of high-sounding words and patriotic gestures; the fact remains that an autocratic régime is bound to adopt a rather negative view of man and an even more negative approach to him. Man is regarded as a partly weak, partly dangerous collective animal that can be kept in check by playing on its fears and by exploiting its lusts and desires ; an animal that can be eliminated as easily as a cockroach or a rabbit if only an efficient method is devised and carried out with superb indifference. This cold-blooded approach is best summed up by the utter contempt of the Devil in Goethe's *Faust* :

> Denn alles was besteht,
> Ist wert, dass es zugrunde geht.
> (For everything that exists deserves but to perish.)

At the same time this negative conception is markedly rational, for it implies that man is a bundle of instincts and emotions, easily perceptible and controllable, which, if necessary, can be annihilated by various specific techniques. Such an attitude is primarily based on rule by the inspiration of total fear.

Whilst to the autocratic rulers the aspect of coercion is the central nerve in their sketch of human nature, it is only one of its three main nerves. Coercion, bribery and persuasion are the three potential channels through which to get at man and to make him display the attitude required by the rulers. Translated into terms of practical policy the three nerves appear in the shape of terror, corruption and propaganda. The totalitarian

engineers either threaten man with dangerous insecurity, turning the screw on him by various forms of terror, or they promise him a deceptive security by the cash value of corruption or the mental opium of propaganda. In all these cases they reckon that man will eventually prefer the security of complete submission to the grave risks of an independent attitude. Many advantages of an economic or social kind are promised and sometimes granted. The mind of the masses is filled with colourful suggestions of what is marked as good or bad for them. It is the combination of these three agencies which constitutes the mental climate of a dictatorship.

Terror, corruption and propaganda are only three different sides of the same triangle, and it is impossible to recognize its geometrical proportions without taking all three into consideration. All three aim at directing people according to a preconceived pattern of thought and action. They reduce them to an attitude of docile passivity and make them the mere object of intellectual hypnosis, however subtly applied. Man, when successfully approached by any of these three methods, does not act but reacts, he does not think but follows a stimulus. At the end he is enchained by fetters of which he is often only vaguely aware. There exist indeed close links between propaganda and terror, propaganda and corruption, which are worth an intimate study.* The Secret Police is, however, mainly concerned with terror as a direct approach to rule, whilst propaganda and corruption serve it only as indirect instruments to achieve this aim. Here we must therefore concentrate on the aim of total control, which is only another expression for terror. Total control has a subjective as well as an objective side. Subjectively its exertion might help to satisfy certain power instincts or sadistic instincts on the part of those who exercise it; objectively it creates a social *milieu* and atmosphere of its own and greatly moulds the pattern of behaviour as well as the relationship between the individuals in a given society. What is the goal, one has to ask, of a police system, based on and favouring total control?

Prevention the Aim of Total Control

The work of the Gestapo is primarily directed at prevention. "It is their aim and ambition to render harmless all efforts dangerous to the State, before they can cause any damage."

* For the relationship between propaganda and terror, see below, pp. 164–175.

This was said by a leading Gestapo official (1), according to whom punishable acts have to be prevented before they can be carried out by enquiring into their preconditions and by eliminating them ; they include " the joining together of persons for a special purpose, the preparation of means, the propaganda of certain opinions and aims ". This deliberately vague definition leaves the door open for any arbitrary interpretation and can " legalize " any arbitrary operation. In order to know in time what *might* happen and be detrimental to the safety of the realm, a policy of continuous suspicion and distrust seems imperative. Heydrich, in an article in the law periodical, *Deutsches Recht*, has explained this preventive attitude of the Gestapo (2) : " According to the liberal school of thought," he said, " only action inimical to the state and the organization of the enemy of the state, which makes this action possible, has been combated. National Socialism, on the other hand, is concerned with the intellectual forces of the opponents. It is they whom it wants to reorganize and strike." In other words, the Secret Police does not wait for the moment when it can catch an opponent in the act, but arrests and punishes in anticipation all those whom it suspects of intending to carry out such an act. Conservatives who utter a few words of criticism are as much subject to the preventive care of the Secret Police as artists and scientists whose general outlook does not conform with that of National Socialism. The old business maxim of the middle classes : " You can't be too careful ! " has here received a much more sinister meaning. Unless a person constantly proves by word and deed that he or she is loyal to the régime the searchlight of the Secret Police will be thrown upon him or her. The principle is *In dubio contra reum !* (" When in doubt, turn against the accused ! ") and the accused is potentially everybody outside the limited circle of privileged organizations and the ruling clique. Even members of the latter and their families are by no means beyond interference by the Gestapo, as has been shown for instance by the sudden flight of Hitler's former adviser, Dr. Ernst Hanfstängl, to Switzerland in 1935 and the reported arrest of Frau Hess, after the arrival of her husband in Scotland.

2. Techniques of Control and Destruction

It is one of the basic ideas of this book that dictatorship and mass regimentation are largely based on the skilful use of rational

methods of control. Such techniques can be roughly divided into four main groups :

(*a*) Methods of gathering information.
(*b*) Methods of collective detention.
(*c*) Methods of intimidation.
(*d*) Methods of elimination.

All these methods have two points in common : firstly they aim at dominating people, not at assisting them. Secondly, they are more concerned with groups than with individuals. The labelling of various sections in the German concentration camp, described in a previous chapter, is significant of this group collectivism. Under Fouché people were indiscriminately labelled as " Jacobins " or " Royalists ", under Himmler as " Communists " or " Jews ". In both cases the method has been identical. Even if it was by no means proved that a person was a " Royalist " or a " Communist " he was conveniently described and branded as such. This simplifying method undoubtedly makes for quick effectiveness, as it disposes with one stroke of any effort towards a fair, objective enquiry into the background of each case.

(*a*) *Methods of gathering information.* Knowledge as a weapon of power is the pivot of any secret police. This knowledge has to be systematic as well as practical. It must cover as many aspects of the life of the persons or organizations involved as possible ; it must lend itself to realistic conclusions about their potential actions and reactions and about the most appropriate means of paralysing them. To keep it up to date is a full-time occupation and needs the combination of efficient news-gathering with continuous research. Though not very much is known of the structure of the information services of OVRA and Gestapo, it can be taken for granted that they differ from the system used in France under Napoleon I in extent and variation, but not in basic character. It was Fouché who proudly pointed to his twofold catalogue in which he had registered the so-called *Chouans*, the Royalist enemies of the régime, his *topographie chouanique* and his *biographie chouanique*. The former was a kind of topography of the Royalists, and the latter a biographical index of about 1,000 of them, registering important details of their lives inside and outside France. They included notes on their appearance, their habits and families, their associates and opinions (3). Fouché's topography had the purpose of locating the Royalists who at that time, like De Gaulle's Free French during the present

war, had their headquarters in England but remained connected with their country by underground communications. Therefore his "map of criminals" indicated their main strongholds in France, their landing points when coming from England, the routes and homes of their agents and spies, the places of secret gatherings and lines of communications, the seats of their followers and sympathizers. The biographical index, containing from 1,000 to 12,000 cards, covered the former officers and sub-officers during the Royalist revolts in the Vendée between 1793 and 1799, the chiefs of Royalist partisan bands and their parents and friends, the names of the keepers of lodging houses where they resided, etc. It speaks for itself that Fouché had built up this instrument of information with much patience during a comparatively quiet period, his motto being: *Qui a chouanné, chouannera*—"Once a Royalist, always a Royalist", incidentally a rather involuntary compliment to his opponents.

No details of the card index of the German Security Service have so far come to light, but it is known that Himmler, in whose character exactness is as much a trait as in Fouché's, has always had a passion for keeping registers and that the careful filing of information, as a method applied long before the Nazis came to power, has been extended to many thousands of people. Compared with Fouché's system, the modern totalitarian methods in this field have been extended and intensified. In the age of the masses, not only limited groups, but practically everybody is secretly observed and the information on him filed. The Gestapo inside the Reich is assisted in this task by the voluntary co-operation of many Party members. Dr. Ley once pointed out that the Party's care for every German consisted of two elements: supervision and training. "The Party," he declared, "can form a picture of the lives of all citizens, of all classes and occupations including every house and family" (4). Since 1936 all German households have been united into blocks of 40 to 60 families each, and the block leader in charge is, undoubtedly, able to furnish the Security Service with much valuable information.

Whereas in the Reich the Gestapo can rely on the co-operation of the Party, in the Occupied Countries the members of pro-German "Quisling" organizations were given the task of spying and reporting on their heretic fellow-countrymen. To quote only one example, in Holland the NSB, corresponding in its structure, though by no means in its extent and power, to the

NSDAP in Germany, has—to use the official jargon—" been entrusted with the leadership of the people ". Thus it, too, has its group leaders, local leaders and block leaders and, since the second half of 1942, the last named have exercised control over all the families in their blocks, no matter whether they are members of the Dutch Nazi Party or not, and no matter whether they approved of it or not. As one local Nazi Party paper neatly put it, " the task will be heavy for those authorities who, owing to their position as ' block leaders ', ' local leaders ' and ' group leaders ' come into direct contact with the people " (5). Another potential type of spy is the collector of the Dutch Labour Front, the NAF. His official task is to collect the obligatory subscriptions for his organization from all Dutch workers. " He not only has to visit the members in order to collect the subscriptions, but he must also try to win their confidence : he must give them advice " (6). Small wonder that many workers became suspicious of this uncalled for " adviser " and, as even the Dutch Nazi paper admitted, " tried to keep the representatives at a distance ".*

Agents provocateurs : Since the days of Fouché they have served as a weapon of any secret police, from that of the Second German Empire, through the Okhrana to the Ovra.† The Nazis, as might be expected, replenished this weapon at first inside the Reich and later outside in the Occupied Territories. Compared with the intelligence work done by the ordinary Party member, the work of the *agents provocateurs* is more complicated, needs more subtlety and trickery, and is on the whole nearly always a paid job. The ordinary Party informer might overhear the grumblings of a dissatisfied family, or report the anti-Nazi jokes of a business rival. The *agent provocateur* has to jump over higher hurdles if he wants to be successful in the unmasking of members of the opposition. He has to pose as a secret enemy of the machine which pays him and he has to do this so convincingly that the tongues of his victims are loosened and they talk freely. There are various methods of putting people off their guard, working either directly or indirectly. The direct method aims at inciting

* In other cases the spying function of pro-Nazi organizations formed by non-German natives has been more openly admitted. In Czechoslovakia, for instance, the Fascist League *Vlajka* asked its members to draw up lists of people for the benefit of the Gestapo. The task of this organization is to denounce Czechs who listen to the B.B.C. or retain food produce, or sympathize with Jews, or violate any other Nazi regulations (7).

† For the employment of *Agents provocateurs* by the Ovra see above, pp. 59–61.

persons known as being unsympathetic to the régime to commit acts of opposition and sabotage. Thus *agents provocateurs* amongst industrial and dock workers lead them on to labour disputes. The technique of the agent is similar to that of the confidence trickster. By suggesting ways and means how to remedy a very unsatisfactory position, he is able to learn what his victims intend to do just in time to give them away. According to Martha Dodd such methods were particularly employed in the Third Reich on voting days, when Hitler arranged a mock enquiry into the will of the masses. A man, or a group of men, were encouraged to speak their minds, their words being of course registered, and retribution followed at once. " The culprit is sometimes called before the Nazi local headquarters, sometimes summarily arrested and taken to a camp and often snatched from his home or apartment at night " (8). During the Spanish Civil War a municipal official in a German factory town gave the impression to a number of workers that he was in favour of Republican Spain. He visited the workers' homes, discussed the possibilities of how to help the Spanish Loyalists, and finally drew up a clandestine petition for financial aid to the Spanish Government. Fifty workers were credulous enough to sign the ominous document and soon found themselves changing work in the factory for that in a concentration camp (9).

A similar technique was employed in 1942 in certain Yugo-Slav districts, then controlled mainly by Italians. Amongst the Slovenes hatred against the Italians was at that time as strong as the inclination towards Communism. The authorities decided to curb both by sending out Germans and Italians as " Communist " agents ; in due course they trapped Communist sympathizers and accounted for the arrest of 650 people. The intention behind this ruse was two-fold : to transfer the hatred of the suppressed from the Italians to Communism and to furnish an excuse for further severe measures against the population (10). In another case the Gestapo went even further by training some specially suitable Nazis to pose as Czechs and thus to get access to the real thoughts and intentions of Czech people. These men spoke Czech so perfectly that they would never be taken for Germans and could pretend to be members of an underground movement busy recruiting new disciples. All people sympathetic towards their spurious " organization " were immediately denounced to the Gestapo and disappeared overnight to a concentration camp in Czechoslovakia or Germany (11). In

the twentieth century technical devices such as the telephone and the gramophone record have opened new possibilities of obtaining information unobtrusively. The Gestapo has made it a habit to obtain genuine evidence of illegal acts or opinions by putting records in cupboards and behind panels which automatically register every spoken word. In 1934, as the present writer learned from a British observer in Berlin, a German Jewess was arrested by the Gestapo when returning from a visit to her parents in the then Polish part of Upper Silesia. The Secret Police accused her of having been involved in the activities of a clandestine Socialist group. When this woman denied the accusation, her husband was arrested too. He was at first well treated and was even allowed visitors in his prison cell without any warder attending. One day he was incautious enough to tell one of his visitors the real story of what his wife had done. (He himself had taken no active part in it.) Next morning his wife was taken before the public prosecutor and again she denied the allegations. When she had finished, the official smiled and invited her to listen to a record. To her surprise and shock it reproduced the conversation of her husband on the previous day. Involuntarily he had given her away and she was consequently sentenced to several years of hard labour by the People's Court.

The Germans have further developed an ingenious device of telephone-tapping which became familiar soon after the arrival of the Third Reich. Diels, the leader of the Secret Police before Himmler, gave a strong hint to Martha Dodd about its usefulness. " Whenever we went away," she said, " for a week or even a few days, we felt that either dictaphones were being installed or the ones we had being tested, with the collusion of our servants whom we never trusted after the first few months " (12). Visitors were often led by their friends into the bathroom, a room not easy to tap, and there they exchanged the latest news in whispers. Diplomats and officials met in one of the public parks in order to escape eavesdroppers—mechanical and otherwise. As a result in many houses a tea cosy was put round the telephone receiver as a wise preventive measure. During the war people in Berlin who wanted to talk freely still either disconnected their telephones from the wall-plugs or put them under their desks (13).

(*b*) *Methods of Collective Detention.* Ruthlessness and speed mark the behaviour adopted by the Gestapo when their target

is the rounding up either of individuals or of whole groups of "enemies of the State". Blitz methods, which combine surprise, quickness and the infiltration of fear, have made their way first through the Reich, then through Austria and Czechoslovakia and finally through nearly all other countries of the Continent. Hitler's invasion of Poland, Denmark, Norway, Holland and Belgium started at dawn ; his raids on Jews, Poles, Norwegians and other victims took place at the same time or even earlier during the small hours, when human vitality is at its lowest and the nervous system most easily upset.

This technique of the night surprise raid has been applied to people all over Europe. We give examples from three countries only. In Czechoslovakia, the hunting down of the university youth began six months after the occupation of the country. On November 17, 1939, between four and five in the morning, the SS surrounded the dormitories of the Czech university in Prague and took away all the male students, many of them in their night clothes, crammed into trucks, to some barracks outside the city. About a dozen of the students who tried to escape by jumping from the windows were mown down by machine-guns. The well-calculated shock, brought about by this mixture of surprise and brutality, becomes evident from the following account given to his father by one of the Czech youths :

> We were woken up between four and five in the morning by screaming in the corridor, blows on the door, and the whole door fell out into the corridor. We first thought it was some silly joke played on us and wanted to go on sleeping. But in a moment there were SS men standing by our beds and driving us to the staircase, who started kicking us out of our beds. Some boys had no time to put on a single thing and stood on the stairs barefoot in their pyjamas, and thus were taken away, some having blood streaming down their faces from the blows they were waked with . . . (14).

Afterwards most of these Czech students, who represented an intellectual and social élite, were taken to a concentration camp in Germany. In 1941 the same technique was applied in Norway, this time to well-known personalities of public life :

> As usual the Germans acted while people were asleep. The Gestapo came at 5 o'clock in the morning with large trucks and began systematic mass arrests. The total of these arrests reached into thousands, among whom are such well-known figures as the

> secretary of the Labour Party, the Editor-in-Chief of *Arbeiderbladet*, the Socialist paper, the Rector of the University of Oslo and three professors, also the former chief of the Oslo police. Mass arrests continued both Thursday and Friday as in the grey dawn the Gestapo's trucks rolled through the streets, and SS soldiers in full field equipment broke into homes and woke up their unfortunate victims, who were then taken to the headquarters of the Gestapo (15).

It seems that the nightly deportations of Jews from Holland to Germany, and from there to the east, in the summer and autumn of 1942 were organized in the same manner. Whole towns, with thousands of Jewish inhabitants, were " cleansed " in a few days. At first those due for deportation received written orders to be, on the same evening, at the railway station. This method, however, did not lead to the required results, as only a few Jews complied with the order. The next move of the Gestapo was to take about a thousand school-children, aged from eight to sixteen, away as hostages, but even this met with little success. Thereupon the Gestapo dropped the method of " call-up ", substituting for it that of the " round-up " in streets and houses. Every person wearing a Jewish star was taken along to the station, until the number required for the next deportation transport had been reached. Again the fear of the sinister shadows of the night was exploited, for every Jew had to stay at home from 8 p.m. to 6 a.m. to facilitate the round-up. " One can imagine ", commented the Swiss paper reporting this, " the anxiety in which the Jews spend their nights. The trains crammed full with the deported, depart at 1.30 a.m., in order not to give the population any opportunity of demonstrating " (16). Soon afterwards, in December 1942, the same practice was carried out in Belgium, this time not against the Jews, but against Belgian gentiles who were needed for war-work in Germany. Suddenly people in Brussels or Bruges were intercepted in squares, cafés and cinemas ; the Gestapo surrounded the area to be checked, confiscated all identity cards and told the people to collect them at a given address next day. There the persons picked received their instructions and were promptly despatched to Germany.

(*c*) *New Methods of Intimidation.* Intimidation has always been a means with which autocratic ruling cliques endeavoured to break their victims. Quite apart from physical brutality and torture, the subtler methods of mental cruelty have been greatly

developed by the Gestapo. Round its headquarters the whole atmosphere impresses itself on the minds of the subject population as an arrow pointing to a hydra of horror lurking behind the walls. The effect of this atmosphere is thoroughly calculated, and even extends to people who are still free. The following description of the Gestapo headquarters in Oslo, from the pen of a Norwegian who has since escaped, makes this evident :

> Even the quislings look at the curtained windows of the building with an uneasy feeling. If one goes there with a completely clear conscience—to obtain a pass—or seek permission to visit a friend or relation who is in prison—one gets a paralysing feeling of uneasiness and fear when one goes through the main gates.
>
> The long rows of SS patrol cars and ambulances which stand outside remind one of the Norwegians who perhaps at that very moment are undergoing " treatment " from the German Gestapo torturers. It may happen that while you stand and wait to get a pass to go on holiday, you hear desperate, heart-rending cries from prisoners on the floor above. You perhaps look fearfully and questioningly at the German office girl. She merely shrugs her shoulders in a non-committal manner and mumbles something about " Norwegian idiots ".
>
> You remember what you have heard about prisoners who have jumped from the windows on the fourth floor : they preferred death to inhuman tortures (17).

The police authorities aim at the creation of an " anticipation-neurosis " in the mind of their victim. The anticipation of evil things to come they hope will produce hysteria and a diminished power of resistance.

> I was brutally pushed into the waiting car and then driven at full speed to Victoria Terrasse. I cannot remember very well what I felt during that few minutes' ride. I was certainly paralysed with fear, because I remember I was unsteady on my feet when I was pushed through the main entrance to the building and I found it difficult to climb up the narrow steps into the guardroom.
>
> I probably wondered what I would feel like when I came back down those steps. In the guardroom there were two dogs, one at each door. It is funny how well I remember the details of my first experience in this " waiting room to hell ". On one wall there was a large portait of Hitler, on another a poster. Behind the desk was a German SS officer, Wertmann, a typical Prussian, brutal and terrifying. I was pushed over to the desk and Wertmann cried " Achtung " and all the guards clicked their heels together. The whole room seemed to tremble (18).

This feeling of fear and suspense is deliberately provoked. During the interrogation of the arrested, which may last up to fifteen hours, in addition to the " ordinary " third degree methods, not unknown to the police proper of many countries even in peace time, a number of special devices have been elaborated. Throughout the interrogation the accused must stand, while his interlocutors continually move about. The latter appear restless and nervous in order to make the prisoner nervous himself. They scream, shout orders and focus a sharp, blinding light on the victim. Terrifying threats alternate with promises of large sums of money, good positions and mild sentences, if the prisoner is ready to confess (19).

Modern technical development has indeed proved very helpful to the twentieth century inquisition. Light or heat is applied to break the victim's will by the use of the dark or the hot cell. The dark cell is in the cellar of the Gestapo building, a little room almost bare of any furniture. From time to time two soldiers enter the cell, one of them holding the prisoner while the other throws a strong light on him. Both shout that he must confess. The hot cell is a little cupboard built into the wall and provides just enough room for one man. In its ceiling is a little ventilation hole, whilst the heat pours in through the floor of the cupboard. Rings are put under the prisoner's arms to hold him up when he faints. After a while he loses consciousness and when he is eventually taken away feels broken down, weak and ill (20).

Loudspeakers, newspapers, and above all the wireless, are other instruments for the intimidation not only of individual prisoners but of the population of entire districts. A grim illustration of this technique was furnished by the German authorities during a State of Emergency in the Trondheim area in October 1942. Thirty-four Norwegian hostages were shot and hundreds thrown into prison. According to carefully checked reports from eye-witnesses the whole action had been coldly planned in all its details, and press, loudspeaker and radio had been employed for this purpose. The first idea that something was brewing was conveyed to the people of Trondheim by the discovery one morning that no newspapers could be obtained. And it was from the newspapers on the following morning that they learned that ten of their leading citizens had been executed. During the twenty-four hours in which the papers ceased to exist the population had to rely on the loudspeakers which

had been suddenly set up in the streets. Perhaps the most cruel use in this affair was made of the radio. By a deliberate trick, the condemned men learned of their own execution over the wireless. It was announced on the radio a day before they were actually carried out. All thirty-four hostages, who died in batches on different days, were given an opportunity of listening to this pre-dated radio report of their death—a feature which certainly presents a novelty in the history of planned annihilation. The only detail which, it seems, the hostages were spared was the ransacking of their homes and the confiscation of their property, which duly took place on the morning after their execution (21).

(*d*) *Methods of Elimination.* All the techniques described are accentuated by the principle of striking silently. Information is obtained about people and their property without anybody realizing it ; people are suddenly fetched from their beds and deported without their neighbours being aware of it for some time. It is the silence of the prowling fox of which the Gestapo is so proud. " A good Security Police," wrote a leading German paper in its obituary for Heydrich, " and a good Security Intelligence Service as an efficient instrument have to keep in mind that the general public should learn of things only when they are no longer topical and when the enemy cannot draw any conclusions from them for the present " (22). This art of keeping the public ignorant as much and as long as possible has been particularly applied in the cases of the elimination of " hostile " elements. There is perhaps no more exhaustive, stark example of the mixture of rational calculation and primitive brutality embodied in the methods of extermination than the mass evacuation and murder of several hundred thousands of Polish Jews by the SS in the summer and autumn of 1942. If for a moment one abstracts from the motives and results of this large-scale killing operation, it must be admitted that the ugly job was done thoroughly and methodically. From a purely technical point of view, this action was as skilfully planned and carried out as any other. It was a triumph of pure technique against defenceless civilians ; *proceeding as it did in the four stages of concentration, isolation, evacuation and mass slaughter, it was accompanied throughout by ominous silence.* Isolation and concentration went hand in hand. Jews in all Polish towns were forced to live separately from the rest of the population in special ghettoes. Even in very small towns, with only a few hundred Jewish families,

separate districts were set up for the " defamed ". During the winter of 1941–2, the bulk of the Jewish population were locked up, either in the Warsaw ghettoes or in concentration camps, which were to be found both in the Government General and in the newly incorporated south-eastern parts of Poland. As a rule, the ghettos were set up in the worst parts of the towns and under the worst possible conditions.

The deliberate isolation was rigorously enforced by an order issued in autumn 1941 to the effect " that any Jews leaving these ghettoes without permission were liable to the death sentence, together with any outside persons aiding them to do so. According to a special report on the situation in Poland,* indeed many Jews were executed in trying to escape from the ghettoes, whilst some actually succeeded in getting away. It is said that a great number of Jews were still hiding outside, a very risky enterprise as their discovery would mean instant execution. These Jews were " either rich or closely assimilated with the Polish nation ".

The Warsaw ghetto was formed in 1940 and was easily the largest in Poland. The number of its occupants was never exactly known and has sometimes been exaggerated. It seems, however, that about 450,000 to 500,000 people were living there, consisting of Polish Jews as well as of Jews deported from Germany. During 1941–2, the population continuously decreased owing to deportations, escapes and, of course, to a sharp decline in the birth-rate. This ghetto was an enormous cage containing about half a million people, with its size being constantly contracted. Means of transport and communication, such as tramcars and telephones, were abolished and no hospitals at all were provided for its inhabitants. Owing to congestion and entirely inadequate rations, the death-rate was high, averaging in autumn 1941 about 5,000 persons monthly. In 1942, in addition to the victims of typhus, thousands of people were dying of tuberculosis or starvation. During the one month of March 1942, the deaths in the streets alone, due to starvation and exposure, numbered 300. Jews in the ghettoes could exist only with the help of food supplies which were either smuggled in to them by Poles or with the silent approval of German guards and controllers, who took heavy bribes as the price of their silence.

When it became evident that the war would last longer than

* Issued by the Polish Ministry of the Interior in London (No. 6/42).

the Germans had anticipated, a new policy of wholesale evacuation of the Jews, followed by mass slaughter, was pursued. Although the evidence so far available seems to be incomplete and not always reliable, it is a fact that in spring 1942 the German terror against the Jews increased in strength. According to a Polish Government report, thousands of Jews were executed as, for example, in Vilna over 60,000, in Rovno 14,000, in Kovel 10,000, whilst in Lublin out of 30,000 Jews there remained only 2,500, only seventy of whom were women. The evacuation of the population from the Warsaw ghetto was carried out very methodically. In July 1942 the Polish police was entirely withdrawn from the ghetto and detachments of Lithuanians and Latvians took their place. They consisted almost exclusively of fanatic young boys aged sixteen to twenty under the leadership of equally youthful non-commissioned officers.* Immediately after a visit by Himmler in July 1942, the Jewish Council had to announce that with a few exceptions, the whole population of the ghetto was to be evacuated.

The usual method of clearing a district was to force its inhabitants to leave their homes, attend a roll-call at a certain place and form marching columns, early in the morning at about 6 to 7 o'clock. The district in question was then surrounded by the Jewish ghetto police (who were exempted from deportation for the time being) and by a great number of the special Latvian and Lithuanian detachments. Columns of evacuees were driven away like cattle, with constant beatings, torturing, shouting and even shooting into the crowd. They were taken to points of transit where the Germans picked out the old or infirm and transported them straight to the Jewish cemetery where they were killed. The rest were loaded into railway trucks and then taken to one of the special " death camps " of which three are known to have been in Treblinki, Belzec and Sobihör. According to information received by the Polish Government on the death-camp of Belzec, executions were carried out there during the summer of 1942 in the following manner :

> A train carrying Jews is brought to the unloading place by German personnel. The men are taken into barracks to the right, the women to those on the left, and all are forced to take their clothes off, ostensibly to take a bath. Then each group is driven to a third barrack with an electric floor where the electrocution is carried out. Afterwards the bodies are taken out of the camp

* See below, pp. 173–4.

by railway and unloaded into a ditch thirty metres deep. This had been dug by Jews, who after they had finished the job were executed themselves.

It is a special Nazi technique to obliterate all traces of the crimes they have committed, and it has been said that sometimes even Ukrainians who helped them in this grisly task were themselves eliminated. Only after the war will the world learn how many human beings were destroyed by these devilish devices. If this is madness, there is method in it, and a method that exploits to the full every modern technical development. It is easier to gas or electrocute masses of human beings than to shoot them ; it is easier from a rational point of view, and perhaps more satisfactory to the half-conscious emotional response of the Fascist type, a type that extracts power and pleasure from gradually reducing its enemies to utter nonentity.

3. The Annihilation of Potential Leaders

The record of National Socialism, both inside the Reich and in occupied territories, makes it clear that the main aim in Nazi policy was the elimination of actual or potential rival leaders. " Eliminate the leaders and the led will follow you." This has been Himmler's maxim, if not in words then certainly in deeds. As early as autumn 1933 Himmler intimated to Rauschning that in order to establish a firm hold on all classes of Germans, they must be deprived of their leaders (23). Leaders here means actually leading groups, élites in Pareto's sense, which may include officers, officials, clergymen, teachers as much as trade union officials and " underground " workers. To make oppositional groups leaderless needs a scale of methods available extending from winning them over to one's own group to the application of pressure and even in some cases to their direct annihilation. In 1933 Himmler regarded the first method as expedient, and apart from disposing of the Left Wing leaders and a few religious leaders by means of the concentration camp, maintained it up to 1939.*

" Winning over " in a democracy would mean an appeal to reason ; in the totalitarian state, however, it means finding the best means of paralysing the powers of independent judgment. Himmler recommended corruption and a skilful exploitation of

* The one great exception was of course the Purge of June 1934, which destroyed not only a rival group inside the Party, but also dangerous Conservatives such as General von Schleicher and von Papen's secretary Jung.

major human weaknesses such as " alcohol, gambling, debts, women, homosexuality " with " ambition, envy and greed " acting as auxiliary forces (23a).

This austere method is, of course, entirely dependent on an adequate system of index cards and personality files containing detailed information on the weak spots of the people concerned. It centres round what that great analyst Thackeray described as " the skeleton in the cupboard ", the dark spot lurking in the background of many lives. It is the subtle technique of the blackmailer, only this time used, not for individual profit, but for group profit. A band of clever gangsters might easily apply it too. " Keep registers ! Keep silence—and then at the critical moment, send a friendly invitation to the man : Look here, we know all about you. Will you do what we want with a good will, or shall we leave it to the Public Prosecutor ? " (24).

These words were spoken in the early days of 1933. The purge of June 1934 proved to the world that such subtle methods could be supplemented by a much more drastic procedure, including the annihilation of dangerous rivals, even when they had sprung from the Party itself. Whilst the elimination of potentially hostile leaders was carried through on rather a small scale inside Germany, between 1933 and 1939, it took on much larger dimensions after the outbreak of this war, when applied against the élites of " inferior nations " such as Poles, Czechs, Yugoslavs and others. In Poland and Czechoslovakia all classes were subjected to maltreatment and humiliation, but the concentrated destructive fury of the Nazis was directed against the members of the intelligentsia, particularly those of the professional classes. In Poland mass arrests of members of these classes very soon followed the occupation. In November 1939 about 1,000 people were put into prison and most of them perished later in concentration camps (25). It is true, professors and students of the Polish universities were amongst the most nationalistic elements and the Germans realized that unless they suppressed and destroyed the intellectual élite, they would always feel uneasy. This is the reason why the treatment meted out to Polish university professors was particularly gruesome, the tendency being to let all those die who might eventually provide a leadership for resistance to the German rule. The staff of Cracow University, one of the oldest in the world, was the first to experience this. On November 6, 1939, only ten days after the formal establishment of the German Civilian Régime in Cracow, the

professors and lecturers were ordered to attend a lecture on " the Attitude of National Socialism Towards Science ". This lecture, however, never took place because, when more than 180 Polish scholars had arrived, all of them were arrested and taken to the concentration camp at Oranienburg. There more than a score of the older men died, among them Professor Stanislaus Estreicher, a well known scholar in the History of Western European Law, who paid with his life for his refusal to head a puppet Polish Government (26).

A similar attitude was taken by the Germans in Czechoslovakia. In November 1941, when Heydrich replaced Freiherr von Neurath as Acting Reich Protector, he took pains to play off the Czech workers and peasants against the upper classes, particularly the intelligentsia. One of his scribes protested against the indifference shown by the Czech intellectuals to Heydrich's methods " in favour of the Czech people " in these words :

> The leading political functionaries and representatives of art and science, however, remain silent sphinxes. Several national cultural, scientific and professional corporations, who formerly issued manifestos on all occasions, now keep silent. The nation feels that it has no leading class and it desires one. The silent sphinxes should be removed to a museum. We need to find a new leading class for the nation (27).

The hunt of actual or potential élites in occupied territories has gone on ever since German troops set their foot on these unhappy countries. To mention only one further example, in Norway in 1941–2, 650 teachers who did not comply with German orders and regulations were arrested, exposed to " an appalling régime of terror " and then employed for many months on forced dock labour at Kirkenes on the Finnish frontier. A statement by the Norwegian Government in London, giving these facts, said : " It is feared that many of them will be permanent physical wrecks as the result of their experience " (28).

During the first part of this war the impressive German victories enabled the Gestapo and SS to concentrate on the suppression of oppositional elements in occupied territories.* It was only when the tide of military successes turned, that the old problems of the eradication of all potential opposition within the Greater Reich became again acute. As a result of the Allied

* The technique of the systematic removal of the intellectual élite has been also adopted by the satellite states within Hitler's orbit. By the end of 1942, the entire educated classes in the Hungarian-occupied region of Yugoslavia had been deported. (29)

landings in North Africa and of the German defeats in Russia at the end of 1942, a new drive took place against all those whose past experience, natural ability, or wide popularity might qualify them as possible leaders of revolt. During the first ten years of the régime the Gestapo continuously kept lists of persons whose latent opposition to the Nazis had been feared and whose removal was regarded as an imperative necessity, in case the régime should be imperilled. It is reliably reported that in Munich alone over 1,000 persons of higher social and intellectual standing were arrested during the last quarter of 1942. The Gestapo purge was directed particularly against aristocratic elements said to be in disagreement with the régime. These included Prince Ferdinand of Bavaria who was confined at Dachau, and two well-known German diplomats, Baron von Mumm and Baron von Scheliha, up to 1942 members of the German Foreign Office. Scheliha, who came of a wealthy, aristocratic Silesian landowning family, and was until the war began Counsellor of the German Embassy in Warsaw, was accused by the Gestapo of being " pro-Polish ", because he " helped " Polish families with whom he had long been acquainted (30). The ruthless elimination of all potential leaders of opposition was further increased when, in August 1943, the appointment of Himmler as Reich Minister of the Interior tightened the screw put on the German people. " Eliminate the leaders and the led will follow you ! " Has this Nazi maxim proved true ? An answer to the question was provided by a Swiss observer, who declared at the end of 1943 :

> One after another priests, clergymen, professors and intellectuals, all men whose education rendered them most capable of keeping alive their national traditions and what is called the European spirit, were systematically eliminated, as well as workers, the bourgeoisie and the peasants. The same harsh methods continually recurred : Mass arrests, the shooting of hostages without trial, the deportation of men and women under conditions of the greatest hardship and even without taking the trouble to prove their guilt. That is what happened to Poles, Czechs, Belgians, the students of Oslo University, and to many others, as well as to professors and students of Strasbourg University, who were attacked suddenly at the end of their lectures without anyone bothering to explain to them the crimes of which they were accused, while they became the object of brutalities by the police.
>
> Germans who continue to believe that the most pitiless suppression is the only way of bridling their tenacious opponents, show surprise at this situation. " Now Strasbourg University has

> ceased to exist ", cried a Gestapo agent on the evening of November 25, 1943. What more striking proof is needed to show up the inability of certain leaders of the Third Reich to comprehend the European spirit? (31).

A verdict strikingly similar to that uttered by Madame de Staël on the first Napoleon's attempt to gag the peoples of Europe.

CHAPTER II

LAWLESSNESS LEGALIZED

1. "RIGHT" *v.* LAW

At the inauguration meeting of the Committee for Police Questions set up by the Academy of German Law in October 1936, Himmler, with his dry cynicism, made the following statement on the relationship between the existing laws and the practice of the Gestapo. He said :

> We National Socialists have begun our work, not without Right (*Recht*) which we carried within us, but without Law (*Gesetz*). From the beginning I have taken the view that it does not matter a bit if a legal clause stands in the way of our actions ; for the fulfilment of my tasks I do, on principle, anything for which I can take responsibility in the course of my work for Leader and Nation and everything that corresponds to common sense. During these months and years, in which the life and death of the German nation has been at stake, it was a matter of complete indifference whether other people whined about " breaking the law ". People abroad, not least on the suggestion of numerous elements inside the Reich, of course talked of a state of lawlessness prevailing among our police and through them in our State. They called it lawless, because it did not correspond to their conception of Right. Actually through our work the foundations of a new Right, the Right of existence of the German Nation, were laid (1).

This statement characterizes the Gestapo attitude towards the " legal justification " of the arbitrary methods and actions it employs in a nutshell. Throughout its bloodstained history the Gestapo has lived up to the opposite of the Latin maxim " *Vivat justitia, pereat mundus* ". To them it does not matter if an action is " legal ", i.e. corresponding to the norms of the codified law, but if it is " expedient ", i.e. in agreement with the interest of the Party as interpreted by the Gestapo. The whole history of National Socialism in general and that of the Gestapo in particular provides a grim object lesson for the old saying : *sic volo, sic jubeo, stat pro ratione voluntas*—" this is my will, this is my command, and my Will is a good enough Reason ".

Nevertheless, the Gestapo has legal regulations in a purely technical sense. It rules, not by the power of any specific law, but by that of statutes, issued in April 1933, November 1933, and February 1936. These statutes applied at first to the

functions and tasks of the Prussian Secret Police only, but in practice the Prussian decrees set the pace for the whole field of the Third Reich. On May 2, 1933, the Prussian Administrative Court declared that the Secret Police was not subject to judicial control and the Prussian statute of February 1936 concurred with this by stating expressly that " the orders and the business of the Secret Police are not subject to review in the administrative courts. The Gestapo, as the exponent of a victorious political movement, does not worry much about the niceties of jurisdiction. Its powers derive from the power of the Party and are ' justified ' by the Nazi ideology without necessitating any specific legal foundation " (2).

In a way the attitude of the Gestapo and the ideology behind it is nothing but a new and crude version of traditional Machiavellism, plus the German trend of irrationalism which covers a bloody practice with the cloak of romantic theory.

> The work of the police [wrote a Nazi university lecturer in 1937] can no longer be defined rationally and be deduced from a general conception . . . there always remains an irrational nucleus which escapes any definition, interferes with all spheres and continuously changes its extent with different situations. This irrational nucleus of State sovereignty is formed by the police. Every general definition of their duties would mean a rationalisation of the State [*sic !*] (3).

The same writer also makes the vague and unprecise assertion that " the juridical basis of the police is nothing but the essence of State sovereignty and its shape is arranged by the *Führer* and Reich Chancellor " (4).

As far as the procedure of taking people into " protective custody " is concerned, the Nazis covered themselves by means of a decree issued by President Hindenburg in February 1933, " for the protection of Nation and State " and " for the prevention of acts of terror by the Communists imperilling the State " founded on article 48 of the Weimar Constitution. Hindenburg's decree suspended " until further notice " those articles of the Weimar Constitution which guaranteed the liberty of the individual, his right to express opinions, to form associations, and to hold meetings, the secrecy of letters, telegrams and other means of communication, the right to own property, etc. The most important article acknowledged the inviolable liberty of the individual, stating that " a reduction or suspension of personal liberty by the public powers is only permissible on the basis of

laws. Persons who are deprived of their liberty have to be informed at the latest on the following day, under what authority and for what reasons the suspension of their liberty has been ordered ; they shall be given an opportunity at once of putting forward arguments against the suspension of their liberty." The cancelling of this vital article made the institution of " protective custody " technically possible. The fact that this decree of February 1933 was expressly directed against Communists did not prevent the Gestapo from using it as a totalitarian handle for arresting other " enemies of the State ". It was used to legalize actions against Jews and Monarchists, Earnest Bible Students and members of the Confessional Church, and the courts liberally and cynically assisted the Gestapo by dubbing all these groups " Communists ". In November 1933 the Landgericht Berlin stated that " all attacks directed against public safety and order, i.e. against the existence of the State, must be interpreted as Communist *in the widest sense of the word* " (5).

As already mentioned, in May 1935 the Prussian Administrative Court declared that judicial control did not extend to the activities of the Gestapo. More than three years later, on November 10, 1938, the Prussian Supreme Administrative Court clarified the position by stating that the following police acts are not subject to State administrative review :

(*a*) All direct acts of the Gestapo.
(*b*) All acts of the ordinary police pursuant to special orders of the Gestapo.
(*c*) All acts of the ordinary police pursuant to general orders of the Gestapo.
(*d*) All acts of the ordinary police which fall within the jurisdiction of the Gestapo (6).

Nazi theorists have, of course, stressed with much zest the point that the administrative courts no longer possess any right of judicial review of actions taken by the Gestapo. Dr. Best declared, for instance, that " there was no legal basis for a decision by judges " and asserted that whenever the decision of the court was in disagreement with the attitude of the Political Police, the latter did not refrain from annulling the decision of the former in practice. The following comment of Dr. Best in 1938 throws a significant light on this practice :

> If the administrative courts repeatedly grant pedlar's licences to Jews, to former members of the French Foreign Legion, or to other undesirables, the Gestapo in executing its commission to

> protect the people and the state from the danger resident in such elements, will confiscate such licences. If this entails a loss of prestige to anyone, the Gestapo will not suffer the loss, since it always has the last word in such matters (7).

It is important to realize in this connection that, according to the National Socialist ideology, in political warfare every individual is the exponent and tool of a group, the collective cohesion of human beings and their collective responsibility being a fundamental belief of the SS " élite ", filled as it is by a strong *ésprit de corps*. As a leading SS lawyer said of Heydrich, he regarded his opponents " not as individuals, but as carriers of tendencies endangering the State and therefore beyond the pale of the National Community ". To him it did not " make the slightest difference if they carried out their destructive work illegally, breaking the law, of if they kept themselves inside the frame of the formal principles of law, camouflaging their activities ". In any case they impaired the lifeline of the nation and " there is no formal rule which could oppose the right of existence of the nation " (8).

2. The Gestapo " Justifies " its Deeds

In spite of this contempt for existing juridical rules of the game, the Nazis gradually learned to keep in mind the deep-rooted desire of most Germans for law and order, at least as far as form was concerned. The reason why many Germans were repelled by the sudden outburst of pogroms against the Jews in 1938 was often not so much a genuine humanitarian indignation, as the observation that these acts were arbitrary and not legalized by the existing law. Since then the Gestapo has developed a tendency to " justify " its deeds by referring to the letter of the law. Everything that is done must have a technical basis, and if it is in sharp contrast to the centuries-old juridical tradition, then a new code of law, a Germanic law, has to be created. This technique of technical justification was applied particularly to the occupied countries during the war. As a Swiss paper put it aptly :

> If the anti-German press sometimes speaks of " robbery " and " murder " (committed by the Nazis) it is argued that such illegalities are out of the question, the actions in occupied countries being nothing but " the transfer of foreign property to German ownership " and the carrying out of death sentences is promulgated legally, there not being one action which was not based on the application of newly formulated clauses (9).

It is indeed one of the paradoxes of the Third Reich, that the spirit of law has been renounced, but its letter retained. To illustrate this by only one example, when Hitler made Hacha come to Berlin, the evening before his troops marched into Prague at dawn on March 15, 1939, he forced him to sign a prepared document and thus to " legalize " a most illegal act. More than two years later, in September 1941, when Heydrich took over his duties as acting Reich Protector of Bohemia and Moravia, he visited State President Dr. Hacha and informed him of the arrest of the Prime Minister of the Protectorate, Dr. Elias, " on a charge of high treason ". Later he asked him for a formal written statement of consent, stating that he agreed with everything Heydrich had ordered and would order in future. . . . According to the official German version, Hacha complied with this request, assuring Heydrich, in the name of the Government of the Protectorate (whose Prime Minister had just been arrested !), " of its readiness to collaborate in the coming period, and requested his support for the work of the Protectorate Government " (10).

On the other hand, the arbitrariness of decisions coming from both the courts and the Gestapo has led to a marked crisis of German justice indicating the confusion created by a bottomless pit of subjective and ambiguous conceptions introduced by the Nazi ideology. Such phrases as " the right of the existence of the Nation ", " a healthy racial feeling " produce a state of uncertainty in the minds of both the judges and the general public. In spite of the docility of the courts which gradually adapted themselves to the requests of the Nazi system, the orthodox Nazis still showed dissatisfaction with the attitude of many judges. In 1942, nearly a decade after the Nazi system had been transferred from a sensational utopia into a Leviathan-like reality, Dr. Thierack, the new Reich Minister of Justice, expressed his marked disapproval of the lack of understanding shown by the German law officers towards the " recollection of ancient German values, forces and standards " as " embodied visibly in the unique personality of the *Führer* ". His verdict was stern : " On the whole the administration of justice has failed to recognize these dynamic forces of the National Socialist movement " (11).

The reason given for this astonishing fiasco is the alleged faulty training of the German judges, prosecutors, and lawyers, " on a purely intellectual basis ", a training " which taught them to have an exaggerated respect for the written law ". This

attitude went hand in hand with what Thierack labelled " the traditional conviction of objectivity " which, far from being objectivity, was only " a one-sided refusal to consider any of the problems arising out of the political and national life of the people ". In the totalitarian state, he went on, the judiciary must be an instrument of the state and not an institution of its own. In it " the judge is not the supervisor but the immediate assistant of the state leadership ". In other words he is nothing but a political sub-leader in disguise, an organ of the executive :

> Within his sphere of activities, he is responsible to the State leadership for the maintenance of the people's community. His rôle of protecting the national values and of eliminating all those who harm the people's community, makes him the champion of the self-preservation of the people and in this respect his work is similar to that of the political leader. It is this point of view that must be decisive for the judge (12).

The Reich Minister of Justice made a remarkably blunt distinction by declaring that " the independent judge " will " need a certain amount of guidance, a guidance which has not the least thing in common with direction ".

It is one of the grim ironies in the history of the Third Reich that thousands of Germans who backed Hitler before 1933 to obtain economic and political security paid for this illusion by the complete loss of legal security. In the name of " *Volksempfinden* " (feelings of the people) any arbitrary action or ruthless decision can be justified. The magic power behind this conception has not only degraded the judges to mere tools of the administrative machine, but has often given the layman a feeling of being lost in the wilderness. The deep urge for stability and order, particularly strong in the German make-up, is thwarted by the existing legal insecurity, and in spite of the mental barbed wire entanglements round the Nazi State, dissatisfaction sometimes finds a cautious outlet in the press. An article in one of the leading Rhineland papers stressed, in 1942, the necessity for legal security and criticized a decision of one of the lower courts in Saxony which had openly declared that " the healthy sentiments of the people (*Gesundes Volksempfinden*) must rank higher than the clauses of a lease". If one were to compile statistics, comments the writer, of the frequency with which certain words occur in the vocabulary of the law courts, the word *Volksempfinden* would certainly appear very high in the list if not at its head (13). The writer pleaded that " the necessity of the legal security,

which as everyone will admit is one of the most urgent requirements of community life, deserves to be taken into account to the greatest possible extent " (14).

The discrepancy between the spirit of true justice and the opportunism of court decisions, fed by Party requirements, eventually became too large to be entirely hidden. However much weight one might wish to attach to all the values included in the word *Volksempfinden*, this cautious critic continued to argue that one should always " remember that the course of true law and of a morally comprehensible and fair jurisdiction are far better served by guaranteeing the security of legal agreements ". In vain is his assertion that " reliability is the main quality which the people as well as the leadership must and do expect from the written law and from the decisions pronounced " ; for such a reliability can only materialize where there is a comparatively stable society, and no dictatorship is truly stable, as it is based on the superimposing of one power instead of the balancing of a number of social forces.

For the Nazis the judge is not concerned primarily with justice, but, as Dr. Thierack expressed it on another occasion, " with the fateful links existing between struggle and law " (*schicksalsmässige Verbundenheit von Kampf und Gesetz*). After ten years of Nazi struggle, a leading official in the Reich Ministry of Justice could state that the necessary basic changes of personnel in the leading positions of the administration of the law had been made and that soldiers held all the important positions in this field. He pointed out that the main object was " to revolutionize the corps of judges " adding the strangely naïve remark that " the regeneration of the judges was more important than the regeneration of the law " (15). The " regenerated " soldier-judge shares, by training and Party membership, the outlook and approach of the Gestapo.* To apply terror is, to him, a matter of routine and can easily be " explained ". Legal security in Germany will only again prevail when one day both the Gestapo and this " revolutionized corps of judges " have disappeared for ever into the Hades of history.

* For the routine of the German People's Court see Appendix B.

CHAPTER III

PROPAGANDA AND TERROR

1. The Totalitarian Monopoly of Propaganda

Modern dictatorships are states in which the masses are controlled by those in power with the help of propaganda and of concentrated force. There propaganda and terror present only two sides of the same medal, two channels of the same mechanism, through which the affairs of the home front are managed and directed. The common psychological denominator of propaganda and terror is the appeal to fear. Like all fear this is either fear *of* something or fear *for* something (1). In this case both are closely connected : the fear *of* losing social status, liberty and even life through being regarded as " unreliable ", being arrested by the Secret Police and perhaps tortured and killed, is fear not only *for* oneself, but also *for* one's family and relatives and friends.

Obviously, the general appeal to fear is not confined to totalitarian states alone. In democratic societies too, a good deal of propaganda in both the commercial and the political fields can be found based on it. Advertising posters exploit the fear of illness, urging people to buy a special brand of tooth paste. They contain sinister accounts of the damage done by insidious pyorrhœa ; remedies for indigestion give highly coloured descriptions of this trouble, sometimes even invoking the threat of cancer. Similarly, election posters and appeals exploit the fear of loss of property, underlining the possibility of inflation, said to be inevitable should victory go to the opponent. All this drives home the fear of a deterioration in the physical, economic or social well-being of the individual. Yet as there is, in times of peace, no monopoly of propaganda but a co-existence of various competitive forces, both commercially and politically, the various propaganda efforts limit and sometimes cancel out each other. It is possible to protest against or poke fun at this kind of fear propaganda, and nobody is actually forced to buy a special brand of soap or of tooth paste. In politics the very fact that several candidates and parties vie for the elector's vote means that, in principle, at any rate, each fear appeal by the one side can be overtrumped by the other, either by reassuring propaganda or through counter-fear propaganda. It seems that the dialectic of competition, whilst allowing much play to the

appeal by fear, prevents it from becoming excessive and assuming undue proportions.

Some competition of propaganda may be allowed in the economic sphere of a dictatorship—although groups branded by the régime as taboo are usually excluded—but there is none in the political sphere. The only carrier of propaganda, exercising an absolute monopoly, is the State, embodied and represented by the one Party. In this watertight vacuum the problem is thus not how to beat other competitors but how to rub in the message of a privileged system most effectively and completely. Whilst, in a democratic society, the " customer " has the choice of selection however slight—the choice of approval or disapproval of the propaganda effort, the citizen of a dictatorship is without any alternative. He is not permitted to express his disapproval of the official propaganda line nor can he criticize part of it. He can only react in one of two ways : by registering his approval, however hypocritical, or by remaining apathetic, a state of mind frequently to be met with in totalitarian states.

The one characteristic feature of the propaganda system in a dictatorship is its monopolistic basis, the other its continuous backing and supplementing by force. To use an expression coined by the Nazis, it is essentially *Machtpropaganda*, propaganda based on the display of power. The double link between propaganda and power is formed on the one hand by the exclusive government propagandists who are busy with directing the minds of the people in a manner suitable to the requirements of the Government, on the other hand by the authoritative mass-organization which keeps the masses in the political lime-light, without allowing them any influence. The propagandist combines the function of " public-relations man of the police " with that of " celebrator of governmental accomplishments " (2).

His job is not only to eliminate dissent in the political community, but also to create a maximum of confidence of the masses in the Government. In this he is amply supported by the existence of a privileged mass-organization such as the National Socialist Party, the SS, the SA and the Hitler Youth in Germany, the Fascist Party and its youth organization in Italy. In peace time the state power talks by means of mass meetings and mass demonstrations, whereas in times of war it finds its most drastic and impressive expression in the organization of the mass army. All these are instruments for mass suggestibility.

Successful political propagandists are showmen; men out-

standing in the show of power; they act on the conviction that, more than money, power talks, and they endeavour to make this language of power as impressive and direct as possible. It is little known that the men behind Nazi propaganda have admitted their careful study of American showmanship and Russian mass organization; actually they have adapted both in developing their own methods of propaganda. Soon after the establishing of the Third Reich, Hadamovsky, one of Goebbels' chief lieutenants in the Ministry of Propaganda, published a fairly frank pamphlet on the subject of "Propaganda and National Power", addressed to the then reluctant German intelligentsia. In this unemotional, rather Machiavellian account ridicule and fear are valued as "two factors of propaganda indispensable for its success". It is clearly realized that propaganda and force can co-operate in varying degrees.

> Propaganda and force are never absolutely opposed to each other. The use of force can be part of the propaganda. Between them lie different grades of effective influence over people and masses: from the sudden exciting of attention or the friendly persuasion of the individual to incessant mass propaganda; from the loose organization of the proselytes to the creation of semi-state or state institutions, from individual terror to mass terror; from the authorized use of the might of the stronger to the military enforcement of obedience and discipline by means of the death penalty (3).

The importance of the display of power as an intermediate link between persuasion by propaganda and pressure through fear is fully recognized:

> The most effective form of mass demonstration is the visible exhibition of power; for example, the number of participants, the size of the meeting and further everything which demonstrates power: armed people, people in uniform, the display of weapons of all kinds (4).

The cult of power is not a novelty in Germany or in many other states, but a new feature introduced by the totalitarian régime is the development of a deliberate technique in the display of power. According to the National Socialist theory of control, it is not sufficient to have power, one must also show it.

> All the power one has, even more than one has [*sic!*], has to be displayed and demonstrated. One hundred speeches, five hundred newspaper articles, radio talks, films and plays are unable to produce the same effect as a procession of gigantic masses of people taking place with discipline and active participation or as

> a demonstration of the means of power and weapons of the state as embodied in its military, its police and its political cadres (5).

In this point the National Socialist writer has acknowledged the model function of both Bolshevism and Fascism for the political technique of the Third Reich. Hadamovsky regarded it " as their strongest propaganda trump " that the two earlier totalitarian systems again and again took the masses of their followers into the street, impressing upon them and on their opponents " the military means of power, of which they are disposing " (6).

The psychological devices behind totalitarian propaganda are not difficult to recognize and have frequently been described in recent years. The usage of clichés and of what in America has been called " political imagery " is extensive (7).

The propagandist aims at the creation of images in the minds of his public and sees to it that they remain part of its mental ration. To take enemy statesmen, for instance, what is offered is not factual information about them, but images picturing their alleged sinister character and ridiculous behaviour. The image of Mr. Churchill in German propaganda is that of " a fat, old, doddering, but evil-looking man, with a plutocratic cigar and a glass of whisky, a drunkard who lies in inebriation, a criminal who sadistically enjoys the war " (8).

Altogether totalitarian propaganda is based on the threefold technique of simplification, of repetition and of personification. Complex internal or foreign issues of politics are simplified and made " understandable ", explaining anything and everything by singling out one cause and by making one social group responsible for it. In Nazi propaganda, for instance, the Versailles Treaty was such a cause, another was and still is Bolshevism. The social group made responsible for both is the Jews who, in addition, are blamed for many other events, including such foreign issues as the drafting of the Beveridge Plan in England, as well as for the alleged prevention of its adoption. Whilst in this way events are simplified by reducing them to the same *prima causa* of evil, continuous repetition makes simplification more possible and perhaps also more plausible. Abstract treaties and complicated financial transactions thus suddenly become transparent to the man in the street. For most Germans who lived through the sudden landslide of inflation in 1922 it was difficult to understand why, over night, a thousand marks were

worth twopence; but it was easy for German nationalism to lay the blame for this highly unpleasant experience on one social group then living in their midst. Totalitarian propaganda reckons that (*a*) most people are unable to realize the complex causation of most events and so easily fall for simple explanations, particularly if (*b*) this explanation meets their desire to find a scapegoat for negative experiences or for personal inefficiency. As Karl Mannheim has pointed out, " the scapegoat system not only helps to relieve the community of guilt, but prevents hostility being turned against the leader when dissatisfaction is aroused " (9). Totalitarian propaganda has fully exploited this tendency by abusing individuals and races. It has not only provided a convenient target for the negative feelings of hatred and resentment, it has also furnished an " explanation " of all social and political difficulties by attributing them, rightly or wrongly, to the Public Enemy No. 1. A powerful part of the German scapegoat system is the " stab in the back " legend. After the German collapse of 1918 it was the German Home Front, particularly Socialists and Jews, who were accused of having stabbed the " heroic " German Army in the back. In the present war first the Italian " traitors " (Badoglio) and later the revolting German generals have been branded as responsible for all setbacks and defeats of the heroic German nations.

Apart from this exploitation of the scapegoat system there is—and this has been too often overlooked—a direct propaganda appeal based on fear of the might of the régime, hidden behind eulogies of its power and splendour, its present grandeur and its eternal glory (10). The elaborate power-organization of the State is constantly advertised, not only to fill the citizens with much pride and even more arrogance, but also to convey to them the impression that it would be futile ever to dream of sabotaging the régime. In addition to making a frequent show of its organized police force and to demonstrating that " power talks ", National Socialism has, through its propaganda salesmen, uttered many drastic hints that the supervising organization at its disposal can easily check all unfriendly and dissatisfied elements. We have seen in the last chapter how thoroughly organized are the supervision of and the spying on the population in Germany and in the occupied countries. On the whole Nazi propaganda says little about them, but occasionally the cat is let out of the bag by a member of Hitler's " Inner Circle " who fans the fear of the innumerable tentacles and ramifications of the

Führer's own controlling system. This was what Dr. Ley, the leader of the German Labour Front, had in mind on the occasion of the ninth anniversary of the coming to power of the Third Reich in 1942. In a newspaper article, he boosted the Party's achievements as follows :

> Finally an organization, complete down to the last detail, will make absolutely sure that this confidence will never waver. The Party stretches out its tentacles to every *Volksgenosse* (racial comrade) across the *Gaue* districts, local branches, cells and blocks. The multitude of its organizations makes it possible to get at every racial comrade. Nobody can escape us, and nobody can escape the irresistible influence of National Socialism. The Party penetrates into every house, every factory, every office, every farm and every workshop. Again and again the Party takes care of waverers and weaklings, gives them new strength, educates one and has infinite patience with the other. And whenever it becomes necessary, every canker is burnt out before it gains a hold, and criminals against the community are held to account (11).

2. Some Aspects of the Relationship between Propaganda and Terror

A study of totalitarian methods employed by National Socialism leads to the conclusion that there are three main types in the relationship between propaganda and terror. I propose to call them :

(*a*) *Propaganda for terror.*
(*b*) *Terror without propaganda.*
(*c*) *Propaganda through terror.*

(*a*) *Propaganda for Terror*

A permanent task of the propagandist is to anticipate events and to prepare his public for them. These coming events can be of a military or a political nature or they can simply mean acts of terror against a specific social group. In the last case propaganda has to justify the drastic steps to be taken and to " explain " them to the masses. It has to make the latter receptive of the most unusual and perhaps abnormal action ; it has to inflame them in order to elicit from them approval active or, at least, passive. This type of propaganda may not only precede but also accompany the well calculated outbursts of terror. Here are two significant examples. The first is furnished by one of Goebbels' weekly articles in his periodical *Das Reich* (12). Its background was provided by the wave of Gestapo arrests amongst

German upper class Conservatives at the end of 1942, described in the last chapter. These arrests had been kept secret, but at about the same time the venomous Doctor directed one of his diatribes against the group in question. First of all he declared that those " who call themselves Conservatives, are far removed from being so " ; on the contrary they are " the most unsuitable element in the community " without any understanding for the national struggle. They must be exposed as a " small proportion of our people who still persist in living apart from the tasks and worries of the war ". These self-indulgent parasites " overcrowd the railways, lounge about in winter resorts, gossip about the latest rumours, regret that they are unable to dance and consume the peasant's butter and sausages ". Their hearts and brains are equally empty and useless, a fact which makes them a national danger. For their " vices are infectious "—gradually they spoil the good spirit of their industrious fellow-citizens by their bad example. Strong hints are thrown out that they are even connected with the Black Market. " God knows from where they still get their butter and eggs, their material, shoes and clothes—but they do get them. They live almost as in times of peace, while we are waging war—and are doing so also for them." Therefore every good German must despise these thoroughly bad citizens, who are justly subject to safeguarding measures by the Government which they alone have provoked. * No details of counter-actions are given, but a threatening note is struck : " All who obstruct or even merely try to evade the issue must be recognized as prolonging the war and be branded as such."

During the last quarter of 1942 thousands of unreliable persons had been arrested by the Gestapo, probably over a thousand people of " higher social and intellectual standing " in Munich alone (13). Whilst no mention was made of these happenings, rumours were undoubtedly rife and the more skilled members of the public would easily co-ordinate such an article with the rumours. The art of reading between the lines is highly developed when direct evidence is not accessible.

The second example of propaganda for terror is provided by the co-operation between Goebbels's propaganda machine and the SS terror directed against the Jews in Poland between September 1939 and summer 1942. The tragedy of the Polish

* The broadcast by Dr. Ley, delivered two days after the attempt on the life of Hitler (July 20, 1944), shows a similar pattern.

Jews during this time unfolded itself in four stark acts. Acts 1 to 3 were preceded by the sinister symphony orchestra of anti-Jewish propaganda, but before and during Act 4, comprising the annihilation of hundreds of Jews, the devilish music was silent.

Act 1. When, in 18 days, the Nazis made themselves the masters of Poland, one of their first intentions was to sow distrust and dissension between Poles and Jews. The Poles were given to understand that they were the first but not the last and lowest pariahs ; though the Germans looked down on them, they were entitled in their turn to look down on the Jews. The pattern of a new caste system was thus imposed. From the beginning, anti-Jewish propaganda in Poland showed itself to be highly practical. It ran on lines pursued by Hitler as early as 1922, when he described the Jews as parasites, unwilling to do manual labour and demoralizing the Gentiles. In Poland, this slogan was the prelude to street hunts : the victims had to do forced labour in barracks, streets, and even sometimes in German homes. An order was issued making Jews of both sexes between the ages of sixteen and sixty liable to work in labour camps (14). The aim of this action was to obtain industrial man-power, workers both qualified and unqualified. The measure was a suitable opportunity for German propagandists to pose as " educators "; only the Germans, it was claimed, were able to teach these parasites how to do useful work. In practice, however, the measure was carried out on a comparatively small scale and only a tiny fraction of Jews conscripted were deported to labour camps in 1940.

Act 2. The propaganda scribes then changed their tune : they described the Jews not so much as parasites, but as carriers of dangerous bacilli : the disease they spread was not idleness, but much more dangerous : it was typhus. As social pests they must be kept away from others, locked up in huge isolation barracks. The concern for the preservation of the health of Germans and Poles furnished the pretext for the flood of isolation orders. Jews were successively excluded from cafés, cinemas, restaurants, parks ; they were segregated from all Aryans by separate jobs, separate departments in trams, buses and railway carriages. It began with separate queues at the post office and it ended with separate living quarters, the ghettoes of the twentieth century (15). A second propaganda line was added to the first by exploiting the unduly high percentage of the Jews in some sections of Polish economic life, amongst the univer-

sity students and as property holders. According to official Polish sources (16) this type of propaganda found but a feeble echo in Polish public opinion, yet it served as an excuse for the Germans when they increased their terroristic orders against the Jews. Another motive behind it was the justification of the existence of a great number of German civilians (clerks, administrative officials, etc.) who wanted to secure positions and to avoid military service.

Act 3. The Jews as universal scapegoats were now made responsible for the war against Russia as well as for that against the U.S.A. This device was used at a moment when the Eastern campaign did not go according to plan. It was not by accident that the new wave of engineered hatred originated in the eastern parts of Poland, and spread like a wild forest fire until it filled the whole of Occupied Poland with its blackening smoke and destructive fury. Jews were depicted as sinister wire-pullers behind the gigantic conflagration of the second world war. Their share in leading positions of the U.S.S.R., in the GPU, as political commissars, etc., was greatly exaggerated and much capital was made of converts to Communism amongst Polish Jews in the parts of the country that had been occupied by Russia in autumn 1939. The Jews were the enemies, not only of Poland, but of the entire world, the evil magicians against whose spell every means is allowed. "Expropriate the exploiters", this was the advice given, and the practice soon followed. Now Jews were segregated in the worst possible parts of the town, under the worst possible conditions. A mass requisition of furs and warm clothing was carried out for the benefit of the German army; aimed at not only the shops and manufacturers, but also the private property of all Jewish individuals.

(*b*) *Terror without Propaganda*

Act 4. Silent terror. After the successive exposure of the Jews as parasites, as carriers of disease, as a daemonic power behind the present world conflict, as a sinister source from which the ugly twins Plutocracy and Bolshevism had sprung, one would logically suppose that this denunciation would culminate in a frantic appeal to dispose of the pernicious vermin once and for all. This, one might argue, would have been the final synthesis of propaganda and terror.

What actually happened, however, was a reign of silent terror, unaccompanied by bloodthirsty propaganda. No out-

bursts in press or wireless, no sinister threats or malicious hints preceded one of the best organized mass-slaughters in modern history. It was to be a terror on such an unprecedented scale that it needed no propaganda, that it, so to speak, advertised itself. Moreover, as has been shown in the last chapter, one of the Gestapo principles of terroristic action is the silence in which it is carried out. Too much publicity may give the satanic show away and paralyse the methods of a Blitz-like coup. There is another reason for this lack of advance propaganda. In Poland, then, the German army did not see eye to eye with the SS and the Gestapo, and hardly approved of the systematic liquidation, first of the ghettoes and then of their inhabitants. According to an official Polish report based on eye-witnesses, " the position of the *Wehrmacht* in this matter was rather negative, as it may be generally said that the military authorities of the Government-General were never interested in the anti-Jewish movement. The movement was only furthered by the Party, the Administration and the Political Authorities " (17). The military had not treated inhumanly Jews engaged in work connected with the army. In any case " this persecution of Jews began without warning and was carried out with comparative secrecy " (18).

Yet, if closely scrutinized, the facts show that even in this case there was some connection between propaganda and terror. It is true the masses of onlookers round the social group chosen for annihilation were not subjected to preliminary inciting propaganda covering and justifying the terror that would follow, but on the other hand the human tools picked by the SS wire-pullers to carry out this wholesale destruction were continuously inoculated with ardent anti-Jewish propaganda. The interlocking of propaganda and terror merely changed its target from the passive Polish public whose approval could hardly be won, to the small group of prospective actors, whose moral scruples and repressions, if any, had to be removed. The aim was no longer explanation and justification, but explanation as an incentive to terroristic deeds springing spontaneously from fanatic conviction.

By the end of July 1942, the Polish guards, who had previously been in charge of the walls of the Warsaw ghetto, were replaced, first by special Ukrainians and afterwards by formations of young and ruthless Latvians and Lithuanians, boys between 16 and 20 under the leadership of equally young non-com-

missioned officers. The fact that the actual command lay in German hands was carefully hidden. All these boys were very primitive and illiterate, many of them prisoners captured on the Russian front and unable to speak any of the major European languages. "All of them were extremely keen in carrying out their duties and all of them were continually being excited by German propaganda" (19). Goebbels's propaganda machine found appropriate subjects for this slow-witted public by telling them that Jews and Bolsheviks were identical and that the parents of these very youngsters had been murdered in cold blood by Jewish agents of the GPU. The training which these detachments received from German "specialists" apparently covered the ground of both propaganda and the technique of killing. It helped to make the various methods of extermination plausible and desirable.

(c) Propaganda through Terror

In this case propaganda had transformed ignorant primitives into tools and perpetrators of terror. Propaganda had incited to terror. The opposite type of interrelation materializes when terror, or the threat of it, forces people against their will to become tools of propaganda. Terror, making propagandists against their will, manifests itself every time when writers or journalists in occupied countries are forced to lend their pens for the defence of National Socialism and for attacks on its enemies. It needs a more subtle brand of sadism to enforce this unnatural act. It seems that Herr von Gregory, the German controller of the Czech press in Prague in the earlier days of this war, did not lack it. From time to time he ordered several of the best known journalists of Prague to sign and to publish abusive articles against President Beneš. With the threat of the concentration camp looming dark in the background, the victims had little alternative but to do as they were told. For refusal exposed not only the individual journalist but the entire staff of his paper to the risks of the concentration camp. One Czech paper was punished for omitting the following sentence from an article against Dr. Beneš originating from Dr. von Gregory: "The crook Beneš recalls to mind the Negus who sells stolen silver spoons in London in order to satisfy his extravagant requirements" (20). If a paper omitted such obscene remarks, it was forced to print an even more abusive article; thus it became practically impossible to oppose this propaganda enforced by terror. During the first

three years of German occupation, at least half of all Czech journalists were subjected to house searches, arrests and imprisonment by the Gestapo.

It is propaganda which gives terror its full scope. Terror without propaganda would lose most of its psychological effect, whereas propaganda without terror does not contain its full punch. The following example, again taken from occupied Czechoslovakia, illustrates the technique of the Nazis of making power talk ten years after they had formed a government in the Reich. Secretary of State Frank, in a broadcast in German over the Czech Home Service in February 1943, introduced total mobilization without mincing his words. To mobilize the necessary additional labour, he declared that " measures of closing down and restrictions which greatly interfered with civilian life " had to be taken. " From now on, the Czech bourgeoisie as a whole, and the so-called better classes will be . . . harnessed to their full capacity." Warning the Czechs against " the enemy radio " and against marking the date " 1918 " on their walls, he exposed the forgetfulness of those who still believed in the return of Dr. Beneš. To quote Frank's words, they forgot, that " it is we who hold the power in Bohemia, and that our power is very great ". The National Socialists had always been able to liquidate their enemies. He would see who could go on longest, " Beneš with his inciting slogans from London ", or himself, " with a good card-index of all the enemies of the Reich and the friends of Beneš. . . ." The Nazi functionary apparently believed that this display of successful power would be sufficient to keep the Czechs down. " Now go to your jobs and think it over," he concluded. " I think most of the Czechs in the Protectorate will . . . understand me " (21). This statement is typical of a vicious circle : past terror accentuates present propaganda and present propaganda prepares for future terror. The subjected masses are defenceless against both and can only hope, by putting on a good face towards the propaganda of their conqueror, to escape the terror which is intrinsically bound up with it.

CHAPTER IV

THE IMPACT OF THE SECRET POLICE ON THE PEOPLE

1. The Myth of the Secret Police

The expressive aim of any secret police in a modern dictatorship is to track down and incapacitate what are usually dubbed the " enemies of the State ". These are constantly portrayed as a small but sinister group in the hunting down of whom the public are occasionally asked to co-operate. Actually this term presents only a convenient cover for a wider and more ambitious goal : the control and intimidation of an entire people with comparatively little distinction between Party and non-Party members ; supervision of all and sundry, terrorization of all forces potentially a danger, must be the chief aim of any secret police which is unrestricted and under a law of its own. To strike fear into hearts and brains, to paralyse criticism and independent thought, to break the will of all who do not see eye to eye with the régime, to coerce everyone into conformity—this is its utility-catechism. Powerful as it is, it often denies publicly that it wants to spread fear, a fear which like an odious spray penetrates into the utmost corners of the human personality. Nevertheless it is of necessity interested in building up its own myth as an invisible, ubiquitous and all-effective agency striking with precision and swiftness. In measuring the effect of the secret police on the attitude of the people, a distinction should be drawn between the effect of its actual deeds and the effect of its myth. The question arises : How do the masses learn of these deeds ? For the most part in a roundabout way, by the tales and letters of the victims, by personal observations when unhappy neighbours are carried away under cover of night, by ominous rumours and occasionally through a laconic police statement to the effect that the criminal X.Y. or the woman Z.Z. has been taken to a concentration camp because his or her behaviour has been detrimental to the national interest. The rest is silence, and silence of a threatening nature.

Whether admitted or not, the secret police is as profoundly interested in hiding most of its actions as it is in maintaining the myth of itself, presenting an appearance even more dreadful and sadistic than its actual deeds warrant. It deliberately fosters a

thriller-complex in the population, intensified by the feeling amongst the people that what happened to a fellow national to-day may happen to oneself to-morrow. It is one of the paradoxes of dictatorship that whilst it sends many citizens to prison for what is labelled " rumour-mongering and gossiping ", the police themselves sponsor the circulation of stories apt to increase the fear of its striking power. Of Fascist Italy it has been said, " a whisper may lead to five years' imprisonment ; a mere spontaneous expression of doubt may result in ruin by a crushing fine. The cases which are known are swollen by rumours of those about which there is no accurate information, and the Fascist officials by excusable hints, grimaces and gesticulations suggest untold revenge " (1). It is in this twilight of rumours and guesses that the secret police prospers.

Both Himmler and Heydrich made significant statements on the reactions of the German public to the activities of the Gestapo. This is what Himmler said in 1936 :

> I know that there are some people in Germany who feel sick at the sight of this black coat (the SS uniform). We can understand that and do not suppose that we are loved by too many people. All who have Germany at heart will and must respect us, but those shall fear us who have a bad conscience towards the *Führer* and the Nation, somewhere and sometime. . . . Mercilessly we shall be a merciless sword of judgment against all those forces, of whose existence and machinations we are aware, on the day of even the smallest attempt, no matter if it takes place to-day or in decades or in centuries (2).

Five years later, in 1941, Heydrich was even more frank than his chief :

> The Gestapo and Security Police are still woven about with the whispering mystery of the political thriller. In a mixture of fear and shuddering . . . malicious circles abroad like to talk about our brutality, our inhumanity and heartlessness, bordering on sadism. At home they esteem and support our tasks with understanding, but prefer, as far as possible, to have little to do with us (3).

Thus, on the whole, the public is deliberately left in the dark about the activities of the Gestapo. Occasionally the threat of the concentration camp is waved by a vigorous or hysterical Party speaker for the benefit of what he calls unreliable or timid elements. But otherwise a veil of secrecy is woven around the places of torture and of annihilation of fellow-countrymen.

Whilst any society is under the impact of taboos, of acts which must not be committed, of thoughts which must not be publicly expressed, there are additional strong taboos in a totalitarian society. Criticism of the leaders, great and small, is forbidden, and the people are well advised to keep in mind but not to discuss the deeds of the Secret Police.

It belongs to the paradoxical contradictions of a dictatorship that this imposing of additional taboos on the public does not exclude a certain amount of self-advertisement and eulogizing of its leading men by the SS and Gestapo hierarchy. The cruel deeds of ruthless, unscupulous shock-troopers are not only ignored, but these very men are presented as selfless and dutiful heroes, in order to lead the public astray and to make it docile and acquiescent. To quote only one example of many: at the beginning of March 1943, the German press and wireless announced the death on the Eastern Front of the *SS Obergruppenführer* and *General der Waffen SS* Theodor Eicke who, before the war, had been for years commander of the notorious *SS* Death's Head Formation and had earlier made an ugly name for himself as Commandant of the Dachau Camp. In the highly romantic account of his career given in the press, one looks in vain for these facts. The same man, whom Himmler, it is said, once characterized as a "sadist, not by nature, but by conviction", was praised as "a political leader-type of great calibre", whom his soldiers adored and nicknamed "Papa Eicke". One paper made much of his maxim "To do more than one's duty", without perhaps realizing the irony in it. Exactly the same eulogy was given to Heydrich after his violent death in Prague in June 1942.

As has been shown in the earlier chapters, the general atmosphere resulting from the operations of the secret police is pregnant with uncertainty, fear, suspicion and readiness to pin the onus for all troubles on one's neighbours. This atmosphere can be summed up in the formula: "No private life permitted." As Dr. Ley once said: "There is no such thing as a private individual in National Socialist Germany. The only person who is still a private individual in Germany is somebody who is asleep" (4). In the sense of Freud this system is a superego which imposes itself on the thoughts and feelings of the individual. (As "they" might walk in any night, produce a warrant and put an automatic stop to the actions and plans of the individual, a feeling of extreme powerlessness, perhaps of frustration, is bound to develop in him (5). Said Dr. Goebbels sneeringly: "Who are the people to criticize?

Party members? No. The rest of the German people? they should consider themselves lucky to be still alive. It would be too much of a good thing altogether, if those who live at our mercy should be allowed to criticize" (6). The Secret Police could not go far with intimidation were it not amply backed by the Party, by the courts and by other official institutions. For instance, the Supreme Court of the Reich ruled in September 1937 that criticism of the régime is not permissible, even in the most intimate family circle, even if passed from husband to wife, or from parent to child, and even if the person to whom the criticism is conveyed pledges secrecy. From this rule, which cancels the sanctity of the ties of blood-kinship, only two exceptions were conceded: firstly, when criticism is made in a soliloquy and the critic honestly believes he is not overheard; and secondly, when it is confined to a diary which no one else is supposed to see (7).

The Gestapo is unlikely to lose time over such subtle distinctions. Himmler expressed its attitude much less ambiguously when he said at the beginning of the war: "Carping and criticism are permitted only to those who are not afraid of the concentration camp" (8). As a logical consequence in nearly all fields individualization is heavily frowned upon and standardization, according to the official pattern, is both favoured and demanded. The individual citizen is given to understand by all possible means that "his personal attitude is no more important than is that of a trained seal to the manager of a circus" (9). In assessing the severely curtailed individual liberty of a dictatorship, one should not measure it wholly by the standards of Western democracy. The fact remains that, at least in Germany, freedom means to many, not freedom of thought and action, but freedom of sacrifice, freedom to offer one's entire existence to the community, to something that is greater and more all-embracing than oneself. In other countries the will to sacrifice one's own self for the whole of the community gathers strength in times of emergency. In Germany the romantic trend of thought has always flirted with the idea of free sacrifice closely connected with the complex of a mission which the Germanic race is supposed to have still in front of itself. Thus the suppression of "private life", though repellent to the average Anglo-Saxon, may sound less sinister to many Germans, and the Gestapo may sometimes be looked upon as an ugly but necessary evil, necessary for the breaking-in of those who are blind to the

individual's beautiful freedom of sacrifice for the nation and for the *Führer*.

It is difficult to estimate how far this idea of " sacrifice ", so much favoured by German ideology, from the days of Langemark in 1914 to those of Stalingrad in 1942, has carried the masses with it, but it is easy to realize that since 1933 it has often been a convenient cover of protection and mimicry for people who are watched and shadowed. Freedom of sacrifice may be a slogan intended to egg on romantic souls to follow it up by deeds, but it can be and has, indeed, been used as a convenient camouflage to escape all too close enquiries by the Secret Police. As one *Gauleiter* put it in May 1942 : " Everybody knows that he is being watched and feels that this observation very often leads to his conviction. Therefore he speaks of his sacrifices . . . and wants to acquit himself by showing what sacrifices he is making " (10).

2. Suspicion and Denunciation

The very existence of a secret police in plain clothes breeds a suspicion which is universal, neurotic and based on a pronounced feeling of insecurity. You can never tell who it is to whom you are talking. Your best friends, your children and relatives may inform against you, the man at the next table in the restaurant may take notes,the *Hausmeister* in your block of flats may endeavour to trap you—thus a strong sense of uncertainty and of distrust eats its way through you until you are completely dominated by it. " *Trau schau wem* "—" Beware whom you trust ", in the twentieth century this old German proverb has acquired a new significance. Under any totalitarian régime friends and acquaintances learned to avoid each other when this seemed expedient. Avoidance was the outcome of self-preservation ; for how could anyone know who was under surveillance at a time when husbands were denounced to the police by their wives and parents by their children ? In Germany suspicion and its offspring denunciation became so frequent after 1933 that leading Party officials had to protest more than once against the flood which they themselves had provoked. For instance, the introduction in 1942 of " At Homes " by various *Gauleiters* who expressed their readiness to receive members of the public and to lend an ear to their grievances led to a swelling of this flood. A local paper in Carinthia had to warn : " If anyone thinks of coming with a complaint, he should consider well whether the complaint

is justified, because nothing is worse for a German than to suspect another without reason, and denunciation has only short legs" (11).

We must consider for a moment the motives which make denunciation a common feature of any police-ridden régime. The motives are mixed, including fanaticism, conformity to the pressure imposed by the powers that be, covetousness, and last, but not least, the urge to divert possible disaster from oneself to others. In a few cases fanaticism might lead those who have swallowed the official ideology lock, stock and barrel, to denounce others without any direct or indirect advantages to themselves, though it seems probable if not certain that sadistic instincts are gratified by it. These instincts can easily find expression under the cloak of complying with the official doctrine of National Socialism. According to Nazi laws, intimate relationships between Germans and foreign prisoners or workers are forbidden and thus subject to severe punishment. Since the beginning of this war, denunciations of and sentences on German girls and women for alleged sexual intimacy with these foreigners have been reported in the Press. The following case must perhaps be regarded as extreme, but it throws a significant light on the inter-relation between individual and collective behaviour under a fanatical system. In the German village of Oberndorf, on a Sunday in 1944, a peculiar meeting took place. Days before posters had invited the population to witness a "public judgment" against a Pole and his German sweetheart. On the village green, before a large crowd of curious, fanatic onlookers the Pole was hanged and the young girl, forced to witness this procedure, was insulted and maltreated by members of the Hitler Youth. Her hair was cut off and she was "sentenced" to two years hard labour. Taken to her cell more dead than alive, she committed suicide the following night . . . Three weeks afterwards a local woman, who had acted as informer, confessed that no intimacy had taken place between the Pole and the girl. She had denounced them for revenge and hostility towards the mother of the girl. No legal steps were taken against the informer (12). It is impossible to give statistics for the number of business firms and well-paid positions which changed hands owing to the former owner or holder having been denounced by a Party member anxious to supersede him. The process of Aryanization of Jewish property which was carried out in three forms, i.e. "contractually, illegally, and by statute", has been

well described by F. Neumann and need not be discussed in detail here (13). There can be little doubt that Aryanization chiefly served the interests of powerful Aryan industrialists and bankers whilst the German middle classes benefited little from it. Whereas the Jews were branded as such, in cases of non-Jews a special technique had to be used against them. It runs like this : the victim is arrested and detained in prison. In most cases no charge is ever preferred against him. If he is a business man he is held for investigation for months or even for years, and meanwhile " his business goes to rack and ruin, so that the Nazi price-control commissar or some other Party functionary is obliged to step in and appoint a trustee to manage things ". This trustee is, more often than not, the very man who had inaugurated the arrest, and an American observer in Berlin declared that he had " never heard of a trustee stepping aside and turning a business back into the hands of a released owner " (14). These are typical totalitarian excrescences of the economic cut-throat rivalry which in less drastic forms even exists in capitalistic democracies. But the traps and ambushes laid in the spheres of family life and of education are typical of totalitarian states only. Relative denouncing relative, children reporting on their parents, servants planted on their mistresses, these are phenomena which, even though the number of instances may be limited, stamp the whole system.* It has been repeatedly confirmed that German parents have been afraid to express themselves openly in front of their young children and of their friends from the Hitler Youth ; they feared that their own friends might talk too freely in front of the younger generation. (15) During the early years of the Third Reich a doctor intimated to Anna Rauschning, the wife of the former President of the Senate in Danzig, that he had encountered many parents who were near a nervous breakdown owing to the revolt of the Hitler Youth-ridden children. They had to face " insolence and open disobedience " ; they were threatened with denunciation to the Gestapo. German children must have often experienced a conflict between their loyalty to the small group of the family and that to the larger group of the Hitler Youth symbolizing the myth and the power of the *Führer*. By a new system of group-integration the Nazi régime has attempted to make young people put the prestige of group membership before the ties of blood-kinship. Often this betrayal of the family may not be

* See also Appendix B.

deliberate on the part of the children. The emotional pressure resulting from the set-up and the symbols of the Fascist youth organizations gradually overcomes the primary family ties. Not only do children take parents to account, but they themselves have to suffer a good deal if the political past of their parents is not regarded as satisfactory by the authorities. Ziemer describes the case of a heartbroken father whose boy had been refused promotion from the ranks of the *Pimpfe* (boys under 10 years) to the *Jungvolk* (boys between 10 and 14 years) because his father was not considered a good Nazi. This ban barred any prospects in life for the boy, for it meant that he would be excluded from the Hitler Youth and later from the SA and therefore could expect no decent position, job, or rank in adult life. After the youngster had nearly succeeded in gassing himself from sheer despair, the father signed a paper to the effect that he would join the Labour Front and would become active in the Party. The boy was then promoted. Under immense pressure the father had " conformed " to give his son a chance, perhaps *the* chance in life. (16) This is the doctrine hammered into the heads of the young generation : " Obey the State. Your parents' wishes are no concern of yours. Look to your Group-leader. If your father or mother does not comply with the goals of the Party, report them." (17)

National Socialist education not only aims at blind worship of *the Führer*, but also at creating thousands of pocket-edition *Führer*, with informing as one of their noblest tasks. To give one example only. In the summer of 1942, in every form of the Bavarian schools an official class-leader was appointed, chosen of course from among the leaders of the Hitler Youth. According to the German press he had a clearly political function. Above all he must keep an eye on the ruffians, shirkers and trouble-makers, and he had to " oppose gossip and criticism of National Socialist institutions inside the class ". Though he must keep on the best of terms with his companions, his task was, nevertheless, to inform " the teacher or, where necessary, the headmaster, of any disturbances in the form " (18). Conflicts between two emotional ties or loyalties are not always confined to the relationship of children and parents. Anna Rauschning relates too how the governess of her children, an educated woman of aristocratic birth, who had been planted on her by the local Gestapo, was split between her genuine fondness for her mistress and her duty to spy on her. She was forced to make correct reports for fear

of the cook, another Party informer, who would quickly have exposed any attempts at evasion or embellishment. (19)

3. Other Reactions

There is the immediate, emotional, often hysterical attempt on the part of friends or relatives to prevent an arrest or deportation. During the spring of 1943, when the deportation of Jews reached its climax, a Swedish journalist saw a " Black Maria " standing outside a police station, where he was about to report his departure. Suddenly a very old woman, half paralysed with fright, was brought out of the station and put into the van :

> As the car started an elderly German woman rushed up to it and tried to open the door, but was hustled off. She was shouting all the time hysterically, " But she is no Jewess—I've known her for thirty years, and I know that she is no Jewess ! " The car disappeared, and finally she went in to the officer I was on my way to see and beseeched him to save her friend, with whom she had been living for half a lifetime. " I know that she is no Jewess," she sobbed. " You must help me " (20).

Disquietened because this drastic scene had happened in the presence of a foreigner, the policeman took her by the arm and led her out, adding that " she was lucky to have been spared from accompanying her friend ". The reaction of the policeman to the incident shows a mixture of a desire to enforce official order at any cost with a marked feeling of guilt :

> We stood there silent, the policeman and I, while he noted down my departure. When I was about to leave, he said half to himself, " *We* can't help it, you know . . ." (21).

As to the active attempts to get one's arrested relatives or friends released, the difference of attitude is striking between a society with normal jurisdiction and without a secret police as in Great Britain and a society in which the secret police have unlimited power, as in Germany. In a democratic society after an arrest a lawyer is likely to be called in by the relatives of the accused to ascertain the legal position and to appeal against the arrest, if possible. In the Third Reich the priority of Might over Right is a truism and recourse to law or justice meaningless in the case of a political arrest. Therefore the relatives will rack their brains to find the best methods of obtaining release by means of social connections and political pull. Whilst the first step is concentrated on finding out who is behind the punitive action, the second step is " to win the ear of as much political power as possible " hoping it will prove stronger than that of

the person who has engineered the arrest. Political pull reaches upwards from the next local Party leader to the Regional leaders and finally to a member of the Government and the Inner Circle round Hitler and Göring. Besides influence, bribery might prove helpful. The important Nazi who arranged the arrest might be softened by a few thousand marks or by a regular increase of his salary, or by a cushy job. Sometimes influential members of the " Old Guard " of the Party " denounce a manager or relative of a proprietor for something that may or may not be true, and then let it be known that in return for a little favour they can arrange the release " (22). This state of affairs shows the power-monopoly held by owners of the Party Book with a low number [indicating membership at an " early date ", i.e. before 1933] : it also reveals cynicism as a basic attitude prevalent among the more sophisticated Party functionaries. Power to them is primarily a means of self-enrichment and self-aggrandizement ; even the pretence of correlating it with justice, of exercising it in the national interest is entirely dropped. The weak position of the victim, who cannot expect any redress from the courts, but must fear further victimization by the secret police, is exploited to the maximum, and full advantage is taken of the privileged position of the influential party member who is practically out of the reach of the ordinary jurisdiction, at least as far as his interference with alleged " enemies of the state " is concerned.

4. Outlets and Escape-Valves

As long as a modern dictatorship is not threatened by defeat from without, systematic resistance to the régime is hardly possible for the masses who live apathetically, spoon-fed but not inspired by the propaganda, feeling that to conform to the work, the rules and privations imposed on them, is an inevitable " must " to which there seems to be no alternative. Systematic resistance is thus confined to small courageous circles, to the unnamed élites of the few who combine skill, ingenuity and daring, aware that they might have to pay for it with the sinister coin of torture and death. The masses are too much wrapped up in their personal and occupational worries, too paralysed by the size and the grip of the machinery of state power to be able to run the gauntlet of the secret police. They confine their semi-conscious urge to oppose the great Leviathan to a number of escape-valves which the state machinery cannot stop or destroy altogether.

Such escape-valves are rumours and grumbles, furtively circulating from mouth to mouth and only appearing in print when the official press receives orders to denounce and to expose them. While they crop up in all social strata, allusion and hints are usually the outlet of the more educated classes. These weapons of disapproval remain hidden behind the veneer of historical paradigms and comparisons. Whereas they have a rather esoteric character and are often understood only by the enlightened, the device of the political joke reaches a much wider public again.

(*a*) *Rumours.* In spite of the severe pressure exercised by the secret police, even criticism of the régime expressed in conversations cannot be stopped altogether. An American correspondent who went to Berlin in November 1940 was amazed to find that there was more outspoken criticism of the Nazi Government than he had thought possible in the land of the Gestapo. People he talked to in the Adlon, in restaurants and beerhouses, did not conceal their aversion for the Nazis. It is true they suddenly changed the subject when the waiter passed by, or when someone at the next table attempted to listen, but otherwise they talked freely about the government and its leaders (23). Though some of these critics may not have been genuine and may have included both *agents provocateurs* and weathercocks who thought it profitable to talk with different tongues, others undoubtedly gave vent to genuine resentment. Others again have indulged in what the press calls "rumour-mongering": that means, complaints against specific features and abuses of the régime. Rumour-mongering forms an escape valve for muzzled public opinion and appears in various shades and forms. There are pessimistic rumours charged with ominous reminiscences, that evil befell the nation at the end of the last war, and with sinister forebodings that it will befall it again at the end of this war. There are debunking rumours which have as targets the local Party hierarchy and often throw a nasty light on the powerful little Hitlers, the leaders on the lower plane. On the other hand, purely gossiping rumours about the mighty Paladins of the *Führer's* Inner Circle are more or less harmless, as they even reveal a certain popularity of those exposed.

Pessimistic rumours originate from people who find it difficult to readjust themselves to the curtailment of their liberty and to the growing pressure of the régime. As one German paper put it, "they don't curse loudly—they murmur quietly" (24), and in their murmurs they are haunted by dark reminiscences of the

last war. They fatalistically realize stark parallels between then and now. " When we were asked to save gas, they said : ' Soon it will be cut off altogether as it was during the world war. Precautions have not been taken in time ! ' " Depressed as the originators of these " rumours " are, their attitude is barren from the point of view of resistance ; they release their qualms and misgivings by criticism and grumbling, but there their quietist behaviour ends. " Debunking rumours " finally express dissatisfaction of the ruled with the negative qualities of their rulers, such as extravagance, arrogance, corruption. Here is a characteristic example from a Party paper :

> Rumour-mongers are one of the despicable types of the present day. They are akin to poisoners. Rumours always exist, but especially so in wartime. An inhabitant of Bergisch Gladbach had a quarrel with the mayor of the town, and for revenge he spread a story that the latter ate sandwiches filled with thick ham. Next day the rumour grew, and the ham became a fat pig which the mayor had slaughtered illicitly and eaten. The man was sentenced by a special court (*Schnellgericht*) to six months' imprisonment. In Cologne a rumour was spread that the *Kreisleiter* was ill. It was entirely untrue, but the rumour grew steadily. Some people hope to undermine German unity by this practice. They try to blackmail individuals and thus strike the organization in which their victims work (25).

(*b*) *Allusions and Hints.* History has many functions ; it may or may not teach lessons, it may serve as a warning or inspiration ; under the pressure of a dictatorship, it is called upon to provide for oppositional elements, an arsenal for hints and allusions, a veneer under which resentment of the present and hope for a better future can alike be smuggled in. Political history as well as literary history can do this job for the unhappy " nonconformists ". Two examples may prove this, one from the circles of the older liberal university intellectuals, the other from the camp of the young Communist opposition. Among the few German historians of standing who did not pretend to be in agreement with the Nazi régime was Professor Hermann Oncken. In November 1934, in celebration of his sixty-fifth birthday, he gave a party which included the American ambassador, Dodd, himself a historian by training and career. The gathering consisted mainly of scholars and of former high officials from pre-Nazi days. As Dodd tells us in his diary, after dinner a number of speeches were made which praised the achievements of the host :

> The speaker read a marvellous poem which paid appropriate tribute to Oncken, but satirically warned Oncken of the terrible misfortune which might hang over him if there was a possibility that one of his ancestors was of non-Aryan blood. The author gave a seemingly solemn admonition to all present in a language as witty and clever as I have ever heard. Although the present Nazi philosophy was ridiculed in every word, no quotation could have been found that the Nazis could use to convict the author before a German court. A second speaker, Dr. Friedrich Schmidt-Ott, paraphrased Schiller's poetry in a similar vein, showing the greatness of the famous poet of Goethe's time and the distressing liberality of the one German poet whom Nazi Germany claims to be its model. Still another speaker spoke in a like strain for ten minutes. . . . From the beginning to the end there was sharp fun-making of the Hitler-Rosenberg philosophy and conduct, and everybody seemed to enjoy all that was said (26).

There was an epilogue to this witty assembly. Early in 1935 Professor Oncken rather abruptly gave up his chair at the University of Berlin. Had he received a warning from the ubiquitous Gestapo or did he regard it unsafe to continue his lectures after semi-official comments had attacked " the curse of objectivity " ?

Our second example was provided by an Austrian actor, who after the defeat of the Austrian labour movement by the Dollfuss régime in 1934 had turned from Socialist to Communist. Under the Nazis, Karl Drews continued to co-operate with the illegal opposition even after he had been under Gestapo arrest in Graz for some time. In 1938 Drews was requested by the Reich Theatre Chamber to submit a literary proof of his conformity to the régime. He chose as theme the scene of the revolutionary tribunal in Büchner's play " The Death of Danton ", and his essay, whilst ridiculing Danton, really aimed at Hitler. This is how he described Danton/Hitler : " Fundamentally he despises the national community, the masses bore him. He is a disturbing influence in his age, a forerunner of Nietzsche's superman."

The discussion of Danton's violent end particularly furnished an opportunity for a veiled gibe at the autocrat of the day : " Thus ends this mighty play, a flaming reminder that the individual is only foam of the ocean, greatness only an incident and the rule of the genius only a puppet-show " (27). *

(*c*) *Political Jokes.* What is the function of political jokes in a society under the shadow of a secret police ? In any social system political witticism has both a characterizing and a debunking function. In a democratic society all parties may make

* Drews was executed in summer 1942, for illegal activities in Graz.

use of it, a fact which can even occasionally ease the tension of political antagonism. In a dictatorship the political joke serves above all as an escape-valve and is simultaneously a weapon of self-preservation and of cautious opposition. When it is impossible to speak directly and openly, the political joke opens the road to gentle allusions and even to marked pointers. Official speeches and declarations under an authoritarian system are often full of crude hints and veiled suggestions to which the masses feel unable to answer back except by witticisms. Such jokes are stories which throw a daring light either on the strength or on the weakness of the ruling clique. The strength of the Gestapo comes out well in the following two stories. A German asked an American journalist if he had heard about Hitler's parrot.

"This was an unusual parrot," he said. "One day, as the *Führer* was sitting in the Chancellery, the parrot awoke from a doze and cried :

" ' Hermann Göring, Chancellor of the Reich ! '

"Göring then strode in. A few minutes later the parrot makes another announcement :

" ' Joseph Goebbels, Minister of Propaganda ! '

"Dr. Goebbels then appeared. All three of them talked about the parrot.

" ' You may think I'm signalling the parrot what to say,' said Hitler. ' I'll prove to you that I don't help the parrot in any way. We'll all get behind the curtain, where the bird can't even see me, and wait until the next person comes in.' Hitler, Göring and Goebbels hid. A moment later the parrot began to flap its wings, ruffled its feathers, and cowered to one side of its perch. In a low, frightened tone, it merely squawked. Heinrich Himmler, Chief of the Gestapo, came in, looked round, saw no one, and left.

"As he went out the parrot stood on its perch again and cried, ' You can come out now, men ; the secret police has gone ' " (28).

The Munich comedian Valentin, in the earlier years of the Nazi régime, made many pointed remarks during his cabaret turns. One day he said to his partner, Liesl Karstadt : " ' We are really lucky that we do not live in the *Schlaraffenland*.' *

" ' Why ? ' asked Liesl.

* *Schlaraffenland* means in German a fairyland where everyone can have the most delicious food without effort, a "land of Cockaigne."

" ' Well, how could the roasted pigeons fly into our mouths, if we are not allowed to open them? '

" Liesl : ' Ssh ! Don't say too much ! '

" Valentin (hurt) : ' I say nothing ! That at least one is allowed to say ! ' " (29).

Weak spots of leading personalities or of the régime as such are the target of a different type of political joke. Goebbels' ability for lying, Göring's craving for uniforms and medals, the discomfort felt by the ruling clique over Hess's flight to Scotland, are favourite subjects :

(*a*) On Goebbels : " When visiting Berlin the King and Queen of Thailand were particularly impressed by the personality of Dr. Goebbels. They very much wanted to take him with them to Thailand, for as they pointed out ' such a brilliant fairy-story-teller we have not had in the Orient for a long time ! ' " (30).

(*b*) On Göring : " The other day an SA man was taken to a concentration camp on account of the spreading of atrocity stories. Amongst other things he had the cheek to allege that he had once seen Göring in mufti " (31).

(*c*) On Hess's escape : (Austrian joke) : " For years we have sung : ' We sail against England ', and when one day someone really sailed against her—then they say he is a fool ! " (32)

There is a comparative dearth of jokes about Hitler himself, which is perhaps evidence of the superhuman power attributed to the bearer of a myth—yet witticisms on the Hitler salute (as being often enforced) and on Hitler pictures are quite frequent. The cooling effect of successful enemy action on the people's admiration for the *Führer*, for instance, is well expressed in this German war-time conversation :

" Do you know how strong the effect of British bombing on Blank was? Even eight days afterwards Hitler pictures were still flying out of the windows ! " (33)

The function of both these types of joke is primarily one of relief—whilst nothing can be done to move the pressure and weight imposed on the masses by the ruling hierarchy, the joke lends itself as a welcome means of escaping from it mentally, at least for a few minutes. The jokes about the parrot and the Gestapo and the conversation between the comedian and his partner are of a characterizing nature, describing a state of affairs bitterly felt by many, but seldom officially admitted. The jokes about Goebbels, Hess and the Hitler pictures, on the other hand, exceed the mere characterization of the existing régime, for they

also expose it, particularly its cunning propaganda. Correlations are revealed for which one seeks in vain in the controlled press, such as that between the anti-England song and the flight of Hess or that between the RAF raids on Germany and the declining worship of the *Führer*. Small wonder that the Party hierarchy, at least in wartime, is not much in favour of political jokes, although Germany, under the Nazi régime, has a number of satirical magazines mainly devoted to crude abuse of enemy statesmen. A Carinthian paper in March 1942 issued the following solemn warning :

> Jokes dealing with German home affairs no longer deal with political parties, but with the philistine who keeps himself back from the great events, the grumbler who sees only the black side, and the unsocial person who stands aside. The State can abolish clubs but to influence the opinion of individuals is the work of a lifetime. *The political joke must stop where there is power, for power is without humour.* It follows that power must be insufficient where jokes appear. Therefore they lose their right to existence as victory proceeds. . . . The political joke has its limits just as the joke about the boss has. If you make fun of him too frequently then everyone will notice that you have an inferiority complex. If we devote too much attention to the enemy, then the friend and the enemy may think that we have no other means of dealing with him, which of course we have !

" Power is without humour," but humour is an effective instrument with which to challenge the overwhelming impact of totalitarian power on the mind of the individual. In Spring 1942 an exhibition called " The Soviet Paradise " was staged in Berlin. According to the official label it was a " guaranteed genuine " collection of Russian homes which had been fetched directly from Minsk. Round these appallingly dirty outhouses, crammed with rags, there was an intolerable stench and many of the thousands of visitors withdrew as quickly as they had arrived. Many recognized it as a propaganda trick. When in May an attempt was made to destroy the exhibition, the culprit was not found, but, according to Arvid Fredborg, as a retaliation " some hundreds of Jews and Communists were executed." These facts became commonly known and were resented. After the closing of the exhibition a story could be heard all over Berlin :

> " Why was the Soviet Paradise closed ? "
>
> " Because the people of North Berlin wanted to get their belongings back " (34).

CHAPTER V

HITTING BACK

Resistance in Germany (1933–9)

A study of the various forms of opposition and resistance against the Fascist régimes should begin by drawing a double distinction: between opposition during peace and opposition during war on the one hand, and between opposition in the mother-countries of the régime and that in the various territories conquered by it on the other. The first division is historical, the second regional. Yet the two overlap, for resistance in peace is of necessity confined to the cradle of the régime with oppositional contacts abroad, whilst in war-time it flourishes particularly in the wide areas which have come under the heel of the conqueror. On the one hand, in war many of the illegal fighters, in the Reich or in Italy, must be called up, and they are thus unable to continue their resistance and to influence the morale of the civilians, whereas others, under the impact of the bloody conflict, may have temporarily given way to patriotic appeals and instincts and become less hostile towards the régime. The very fact that resistance and opposition grow amongst the population in conquered territories possibly tunes down opposition at home as long as the régime can claim military successes.

In Germany between 1933 and 1939 there were, roughly speaking, two main centres of resistance; one of them was resistant in the passive sense of defying the ideology of the régime, the other resistant in an active sense, aiming at attacking and undermining the structure of State and Party. The one was spiritual, the other political; the one was personified by the Confessional Church round Niemöller and by part of the Catholic clergy, the other by the illegal workers' cadres.

1. Resisting Workers

(*a*) *Socialist Readjustment after 1933*

The decisive question for any analysis cannot be the effectiveness of the opposition, which should not be overrated, but its forms of organization and the types which prevailed in it. Until the various archives of both sides, Gestapo and opposition, are available (some of them, in the nature of things, never will be),

it is abortive to rely on romantic tales from outsiders or on lofty speculations based on slender evidence. Fortunately, one of the leading Austrian Socialists, Otto Bauer, wrote shortly before his untimely death a very penetrating account of the structure and psychological background of the " illegal front ". Published in German in Paris in 1939, it is practically unknown in the Anglo-Saxon world. The following pages owe much to the masterly observations of this courageous Socialist leader who, between 1933 and 1939, was one of the key-men of the underground movement outside the Reich (1). Bauer had many contacts in the underground front and possessed also the historic perspective of the trained Marxist theoretician. When the Nazis took over the trade unions, they transformed them from a weapon of the organized proletariat into a weapon against it. Even social achievements, such as unemployment relief and old age pensions, were turned against them and became an instrument of power in the hands of the State. The workers were kept down by means of fear : the fear of losing a job, of losing a pension or the cottage owned by the entrepreneur. All this gave the Fascist state a hold which many could not resist. Economic pressure added to physical threats is a powerful instrument and the Nazi leaders knew how to handle it skilfully and brutally, all the more since the active organizations of the former Socialist parties were in the hands of National Socialism ; the trade unions, the workers' youth organizations, the organizations for culture and sport, all of them were either converted to or absorbed by National Socialist organizations. Alluring baits were thrown out as, for instance, the " Strength through Joy " organization, which seemed to offer a chance of seeing the world cheaply. To all intents and purposes it " depolitized " the masses, opened a way of escape for many from their unfavourable economic status and attracted the more hedonistic type of worker who was intent on enjoying himself in his free time as much as possible.

At present, unfortunately, no detailed evidence is available which could, in a scientifically reliable manner, show the gradual impact of the Fascist power and propaganda monopoly on the formerly organized workers. During the first years of the Nazi régime many anticipated the rapid collapse of the Hitler rule. But as the years passed by, exterior readjustment to and conformity with the new régime was often followed by inner conformity and semi-conscious agreement. Only strong and well-trained people could stave off the continuous influence of an

overpowering press and radio propaganda. Only daring, undaunted men and women would take the risk of connection with anti-Fascist channels of information. Vacillating, weak characters soon repeated the slogans and formulas of Fascist propaganda. Unprincipled natures did good trade as renegades anxious to build a niche for themselves. In Germany more than elsewhere nothing succeeds like success and nothing deters the common man more than failure. The majority of workers thus fell back into a state of political lethargy ; in Germany no less than in Italy, Fascism was able to win over large parts of the working classes. Physical pressure, economic pressure and the glamour of a well-directed cunning propaganda had proved irresistible in the long run (2).

(b) Two Types of Underground Organization

After the dissolution of the Socialist party in Germany, two different types of adherents to the Socialist ideals and of defiance to the Fascist political order emerged. The one believed in the continuity of the old party even when it was ostracised. In spite of its diminished numbers, it should carry on its activities with the old leadership directing it from abroad, and remain based on the nucleus of old stewards (*Vertrauensmänner*) and on the old members.

The opposite view, however, maintained that a new situation demanded an entirely new form of organization on a much smaller scale, combining compactness with speed of action. In other words, what was wanted was a set-up of " Cadres " on the model of the Bolsheviks since 1903, cadres formed by highly qualified, strictly disciplined revolutionaries with the courage of their convictions. At a time when any illegal organization of the masses had become impossible, what was above all needed was an élite. Both types of resistance, that of " the continuing party remnants " and that of " the illegal cadres " co-existed between 1933 and 1939, though not without some resentment between them. The illegal cadres, under the pressure of Nazi persecution, soon underwent a selective process. During the first months of the Nazi régime, which the masses then expected to be short-lived, many were keen to dabble in illegal work. But they were soon disillusioned. After the purge in the summer of 1934 the hope of a quick downfall of this dictatorship vanished. Then many withdrew from the dangerous front of illegal opposition. The reason was obvious : " The illegal worker, continuously wanted

and hunted by the police, daily threatened with arrest, lives under constant nervous strain ; it needs infinitely more fortitude and tenacity to bear this nervous strain when one knows that it will last for years than when one believes that victory will be achieved shortly" (3). Finally, only people with ardent faith and strong nerves remained, people who combined political idealism with a sober estimate of the real situation. At first, many had joined the illegal ranks from love of adventure. Two qualities above all proved to be indispensable : the one was courage and the other a rational mind, rational in the choice of means and in the appreciation of situations. Once, when the Party had been powerful and influential, people had become members mainly from a personal point of view, to obtain an increase in wages or some political post. Now, belonging to the cadres definitely meant disadvantage instead of advantage, great insecurity and danger instead of some small security and prosperity.

These illegalists first distinguished themselves from the masses by their moral qualities, but later also by their better knowledge and information. They became an oppositional élite. Under the Fascist monopoly of propaganda the masses either do not learn at all of certain events at home and abroad, or they do so in a distorted fashion. The members of the cadres, on the other hand, received more information and their training enabled them to interpret this news in the " proper " light, i.e. in the Socialist perspective connecting past, present and future. This meant that gradually the intellectual distance, though not necessarily the social distance, between masses and oppositional élite grew. The latter acquired an esoteric tinge, its members were " initiated " into an underground struggle and had to keep their secret as closely as possible if they did not want to undermine their own existence and that of their circle.

Very different in their social structure and mental attitude were the " remnants of the Party ". After the dissolution of the two Socialist parties a good many contacts between former comrades and co-workers remained in the loose form of social intercourse. The former Party stewards met from time to time in a pub, played cards and exchanged their political opinions, hardly favourable to the régime. A circle of friends who knew each other from the days of the " Workers' Youth " went for rambles together, whilst former members of the " Workers' Sport Organization " joined one of the officially authorized sports clubs in order to keep together and to maintain their community tie.

These loose groups may not have lasted very long, they may not have been a focus point of illegal work, but they had a double liaison function, the vertical liaison between a better past and a hoped-for better future, the horizontal liaison between people under the spell of the same tradition. The members remained immune to Fascist propaganda longer than the rest of the population ; at the same time they were seeds of whisper propaganda and hot-beds of criticism and rumour-mongering. Even more important were the former shop-stewards and trade union functionaries in the big and medium-sized factories. They still enjoyed a considerable prestige among the workers and were consulted on matters of labour and similar questions. Their influence continued, if not directly, then indirectly. As Bauer had remarked, the chances and conditions at that time for both the whispering campaigns by " Party remnants " and the work of some illegal groups varied considerably in the different regions of the Reich. After 1935, when, by a rather odd correlation, the intense rearmament work helped to strengthen the self-assertiveness of the workers and to diminish their fear of unemployment, the chances of the underground activities largely depended on whether the industries in the region concerned were engaged in rearmament work or not. These chances were also further strongly influenced by the skill and thoroughness with which the Gestapo had succeeded in destroying all fragments of the former party organization ; this too varied from town to town, from province to province (*3a*).

Bauer has described two main types of underground organization which we shall call type *A* and type *B*. (They are " maximum types "—*Idealtypen*—in the sense of Max Weber). In the large town *A* there existed before this war three illegal Socialist organizations, of which each had up to three dozen members. One was composed mainly of Socialist party and trade union officials, the second of ex-members of the former Republican organization *Reichsbanner*, and the third of former members of the Socialist Workers' Youth. The three underground cells did not know of each other's existence and thus were not connected with each other. On the other hand, all of them had well camouflaged contacts with a functionary of the Social Democratic Party (S.P.D.) in exile abroad. The isolation of each group was, of course, a deliberate protective measure. Should one of them be found out, the two others would not be affected. Torture can sometimes make people confess what they know, but not

what they have never learned, a special technique of preventive insurance acquired after bitter experience (4). Round the small nucleus of each group there was a larger circle of people who were under its influence without knowing it. Every member of the three organizations contacted a number of former comrades who remained ignorant of the background of the information conveyed to them. These small clandestine organizations were channels for the reception as well as for the despatch of political information, outposts of a two-way subterranean traffic. They received informative letters, periodicals, pamphlets, etc., regularly from a Party functionary abroad. One copy only of each item reaches each group, an indispensable precaution. At the same time the groups were sending information abroad about events and developments in the factories, offices, etc. The three groups were, however, not mainly concerned with propaganda ; they confined themselves to the spreading of certain news-items and slogans to the comrades on the " periphery " who, in their turn, circulated them in factories and pubs.

The structure of type *B* in an industrial district like the Ruhr, for instance, was very different. There, you had a number of well-organized little cells connected with each other by way of a common directing centre. These cells partly consisted of former stewards in the factories and partly of former trade union officials, and their work began with economic propaganda to be soon followed by political propaganda.

According to Bauer their propaganda activities confined themselves largely to the oral influencing of the workers. They were the hand behind anti-Fascist slogans written in chalk or paint on walls, railway wagons, etc., behind the circulation in factories of little notes with mock poems against the régime ; behind the spreading of all kinds of illegal literature. They smuggled books banned in Germany over the frontier and had them passed on from hand to hand. This group also possessed a well-developed information service. " Compared with organization *A* less attention is paid by organization *B* to the oral training of its members ; its cadre training is less strongly developed, its secret character as a group of conspirators is less reliable, but it has a greater influence on the masses " (5).

In addition, the German Social Democratic Party (S.P.D.) also received regular reports from individual comrades fulfilling important functions in the Fascist State and Party machine or in large factories. The Party abroad, with headquarters first in

Prague then in Paris, gradually realized that mass propaganda by the circulation of illegal material amongst their former members was impossible or possible only on a very small scale under the terror of the Gestapo. It therefore based its work mainly on reports from the Reich made by selected ex-members in close contact with the Party remnants. It would be a mistake to imagine that the various oppositional Socialist groups were directed by this exiled Party executive from abroad. "Some of the local underground organizations refused to accept the authority of the old Party Executive Committee for political reasons. Others had been unable to make connections with the committee abroad." It has been alleged, not without good reason, that "most of the members of the exiled bureau had no understanding of the changes that had taken place in the remnants of the party that remained underground in Germany" (6). They were therefore often unable to distribute their money effectively among the various groups. This was all the more unfortunate as these underground centres had to rely mainly on financial help from abroad. In this respect the Communist underground centres were in a more favourable position as their leaders "had considerable sums of money at their disposal". This did not exclude real financial sacrifices made for the Party by ordinary members in Germany, but in any case it facilitated underground activities (7). No details are, of course, available of the amount of money received by Socialist underground groups from the labour organizations in democratic countries. It must suffice to state that without it the underground work in Germany before the war "could hardly have gone on" (8). The war stopped this help largely, though not entirely, for at least during the first two years some American trade unions and some progressive Americans (organized in the "American Friends of German Freedom") "rendered direct technical and material help to the underground movement", partly by money contributions and partly by the fact that its members "when travelling in Europe served as couriers to underground centres" (9). Little can be said at present about the work of the small Socialist underground units during the war. Their structure has apparently not greatly changed, for an American observer who stayed in Berlin in 1940–1 received the impression that the well-concealed underground organization consisted of small groups operating independently of one another. He found that the organization had a subtle and progressive influence on the great

mass of German people because of its secrecy and its continued ability to survive (10). The scope of resistance and sabotage has, however, been very limited, partly owing to the general call-up also affecting oppositional elements, partly to the skilful countermeasures of the Gestapo. An engineer from a neutral country, who visited Berlin at the end of 1942, was told by old friends that any larger and visible action of resistance had been so far prevented by the fact that " all people who have, e.g., carried out sabotage, simply vanished ". Even people only suspected of sabotage have been done away with. " The people say : we just learn that this or that man has disappeared without trace ; we don't know where he is, whether he is dead or imprisoned." (11) Harsch speaks of many thousands who have disappeared in this way each year, in addition to an average of 40–50 executions publicly announced.

One of the many difficulties encountered by any organized opposition in a totalitarian state is the impossibility of hiding individuals from the scientific surveillance of the secret police. There is very little romanticism to be found in the modern technique of resistance. The aim must be to mislead the police with the help of a camouflaged routine existence, to live a life on conventional lines and as openly as possible. In order not to attract the attention of the police one has to conform largely to average conduct, to be one among many. One has to have an ordinary job, ordinary family ties, ordinary habits and hobbies. But there is one big difference between the real routine life and the assumed one. The latter has to be planned carefully, every step scrutinized in advance and taken with iron self-control. Underground existence is actually overground existence with a purpose and entails a high state of rationality both in thought and in action (12).

2. Religious Opposition

Socialist opposition and the Protestant Confessional Church were both antagonistic to the totalitarian state and were both regarded by it as enemies. But the reasons for this antagonism were very different in each case. The Socialist opposition is political opposition, hoping to wrest the political power from the National Socialists to whom it has lost it. In the totalitarian state religious opposition does not fight for political power, but aims at spiritual liberty. It claims the right to exercise its rites and rituals without the interference of the state. The subject in dispute is an

ancient one, the demarcation line between the realm of the State and that of the Church, between the claim of Caesar and that of God. Socialist opposition is total opposition, whilst religious opposition is partial only. But from the totalitarian point of view both are a menace, for they endanger the total rule of the régime.

Resistance against the totalitarian claim of the Nazi régime in the spiritual and religious field has been offered by both Christian churches. Both have been continuously watched and interfered with by the Gestapo. The correspondence of many Catholic and Protestant priests has been opened, their telephones have been tapped, their houses searched, microphones surreptitiously installed in their rooms. " In innumerable cases pastors have been arrested, imprisoned, misused, without trial, and indeed without the preferment of any charge " (13). It is outside the scope of this book to give a detailed account of the persecution of the two Christian churches, especially as this has already been done in a competent manner (14). We must confine ourselves to discussing the technique which the Gestapo employed in their drive against the clergy. The case of the Protestant Confessional Church deserves particular consideration, as the Gestapo closed in systematically on this body and its leaders.

(*a*) *The Gestapo Persecutes Catholic Priests*

The methods applied against Catholic priests were different in so far as they culminated in public trials deliberately staged by the authorities. Most Catholic priests were sentenced by courts, ordinary or special, though prior to the trials the Gestapo had taken a large hand in building up the case. This became particularly evident in the notorious trials against Catholic monks and nuns for Currency Smuggling in 1935 and against Catholic priests and laymen for " immorality " in 1936. In the Currency Trials numerous monks and nuns were accused of having smuggled out considerable sums of money to Belgium and Holland to pay back debts to religious organizations abroad. Though the currency laws at that time were very complicated and difficult for the layman to understand, it has been admitted by Catholic authorities that the Orders had sometimes been guilty of technical evasion of the regulations (15). Yet the same had happened in the case of Party members and big business houses, only with the difference that then the affair was settled quietly and without any publicity, whereas, in the case of the

Catholic Church, Nazi propaganda staged a violent attack to " expose " its alleged vileness and corruption. In the course of investigations, the Gestapo showed its remarkable gift for unearthing suitable documents detrimental to the prestige of the Church. This enabled them to start another hare and to follow up the trial of the Catholic *Devisenschieber* with the so-called " morality " trials. When the papers of the convents and the diocesan offices were searched in order to obtain evidence on currency smuggling, the Gestapo discovered reports on certain cases of immorality which had mostly happened long ago and been dealt with by the Church authorities. As usual, the Gestapo thereupon acted very methodically by carrying out investigations in almost all monasteries " in order to record the names of candidates, novices and former members who had left the Order concerned, either of their own free will or because they had been dismissed " (16). The interrogation particularly tried to establish instances of sexual misconduct which might have taken place in such houses. It all became a grand example of the close co-operation between Himmler and Goebbels, between inquisition and propaganda. Both used their specific weapons. The Gestapo interrogated children, " framing " them as witnesses, applying both the sugar-plum and the cane in order to get suitable evidence from them. Some " were bribed with sweets to speak against members of the clergy . . . others were threatened with the concentration camp and, when they held to their own accounts, were made to sign a form which was said to consist of a committal to the concentration camp " (17). Here again the wearing-down methods were used and frequently the accused and even witnesses were interrogated night after night until they broke down under the strain. Whilst the general public naturally knew nothing of these methods the Nazi press did its utmost with screaming headlines and acrimonious articles to brand immorality, established by the trials, as being rife in the ranks of the Catholic clergy. The *Schwarze Korps* openly denounced " the natural effect of a system which has exalted the unnatural to the level of a general principle of an organization which has freed itself from public control " (18).

How did the Catholic Church react to these and other defamations ? It must be said that the official attitude of Rome has not been free from ambiguity and a marked desire for compromise. On the other hand, a number of Catholic bishops and priests have stood up to the threats of the Gestapo with virile determina-

tion. Cardinal Faulhaber in Munich and Bishop von Galen in Münster have been the most prominent amongst them. The dialectical skill with which Cardinal Faulhaber replied in a sermon in July 1937 to the arrest of the Jesuit priest Fr. Rupert Mayer is remarkable and the dauntless courage shown by Count von Galen in his Münster sermons in 1942 against sinister Nazi practices is impressive.

(b) Pastor Niemöller and the Confessional Church

Nevertheless, whereas the Gestapo did not dare to lay hands on any of these leading Catholic dignitaries, it has ruthlessly interfered with the leaders of the Protestant Confessional Church. This church was not part of a spiritual world-power nor a limb of a universal institution. Its only weapon was the Gospel and its proclamation a live wire in the struggle for the liberty of conscience and the right to worship not the State, but God. This struggle had been imposed on the Confessional Church, for most of its members had not by any means belonged to the political Left before 1933; Pastor Niemöller, its most outstanding preacher, had rendered conspicuous service to the régime of Potsdam as a U-boat commander in the last war and had afterwards never refused as a clergyman to give to the State what he thought due to it. According to his own words in 1924 he had voted for National Socialism (19). When the State, however, tried to usurp more—nay, everything—when it claimed a spiritual monopoly, replacing the Christian creed and the Ten Commandments by the claim "I am the Lord thy God. Thou shalt have no other Gods but Me," * then, of necessity, a conflict arose in the brains and hearts of positive Christians. It has been often criticized that the Protestant Church in Germany, by reason of its doctrine as well as by its social function, had from the time of Luther preached the theory of obedience to worldly authorities. In the old Prussian monarchy it had indeed been closely interlinked with the State, as the monarch had been its supreme head and supreme worldly authority, living up to the famous slogan of the seventeenth century: "*Cuius regio eius religio*,"—"He who rules the land also determines its religion." Nevertheless the old Prussian monarchy, since the days of Frederick the Great, seldom claimed the last say in purely religious matters; where this was attempted, it soon lost the battle. The dualism between

* According to Pastor Niemöller this claim was made in 1936 by "a high representative of the ruling power in a student training camp" (20).

the realm of God and that of Caesar was silently acknowledged. For instance when, after the war of liberation, King Frederick William III brought about the union of the Lutheran and the Reformed churches in Prussia, a pastor of the latter in Elberfeld refused to introduce the new order of divine service. Ordered by a high State official to obey under pain of royal displeasure, he gave the following classic answer: "Tell His Majesty that, as his most humble servant, I am at all times ready to lay my head upon the block at his command; but when His Royal Majesty makes himself lord over the Gospel, I despise His Royal Majesty" (21). The monarch did not dare to challenge the priest any further. In the National Socialist State the supreme lord of its pagan gospel behaved very differently. For weeks in 1936–7 Gestapo agents had taken notes during the sermons of Pastor Niemöller at his church in Berlin-Dahlem, thus carefully building up a case against him. At the same time several dozens of his colleagues had been arrested or forbidden to preach. When Niemöller protested against this, when, in June 1937, he declared from the pulpit that, like the Apostles, "as long as the world shall last, one must obey God rather than men" (22), the secret police arrested him; he was charged with abuse of the pulpit for political agitation and with treason against both the State and the people, after he had spent more than eight months in prison. Even the People's Court, composed as it was entirely of National Socialist functionaries and judges, acquitted him of the charge of underhand attacks on State and Party and, apart from a nominal fine, had him discharged. Obviously they were reluctant to sentence a man who had once been an outstanding soldier and who had now many followers in the army. A feeling that trouble would follow with the many admirers of Niemöller in the army and civil service if he were punished, may have swayed them and influenced their decision. But the Gestapo had not taken notes in his church and tapped his telephone for nothing. It simply re-arrested the exonerated man when he left the court and took him to a concentration camp to linger there for good. In doing so it acted upon the special and personal order of the *Führer*. The military prestige of the ex-soldier had been overruled by the personal prestige of the dictator himself and his most powerful instrument had once more had its way.

A voice had been silenced that had spoken with directness and depth, above all with sincere courage which was as rare as

it was devoid of any frills. The protest of this great Protestant had been non-political and yet political at the same time ; for by its frankness it had challenged the system which acknowledged nothing but force. For a short time and to a limited circle it had publicly exposed the unscrupulous control by spying and entrapping which otherwise could only be mentioned in frightened whispers. This priest could not hit back, but he could speak out before his mouth was stopped, perhaps for ever.

This was what Niemöller said in his last sermon in June 1937 :

> And anyone who has the experience I had the night before last at an evening Communion service and sees beside him nothing less than three young members of the Secret Police who have come in their official capacity to spy upon the community of Jesus Christ in their praying, singing and preaching—three young men who were also assuredly baptized once upon a time in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and who also assuredly vowed loyalty to their Saviour at the confirmation altar, and whose office and duty it now is to set traps for the community of Jesus Christ—anyone who sees that, cannot escape so easily from the shame of the Church ; he cannot pass the matter off with a pious phrase and an inspired protest : such a sight may cost him a sleepless and most certainly a restless night, and he may even cry from the depths of his despair : " Lord, have mercy upon me ! ' " (23).

CHAPTER VI

HITTING BACK (*continued*)

Resistance in Occupied Countries, 1940–4

1. Three Attitudes of Reaction to the Occupation

In most of the European countries overrun and held down by Germany, the fact of occupation has, as the years have gone by, produced three attitudes of reaction: (*a*) the vast majority remain hostile or unfriendly and, whenever able to do so without too big a risk, take to passive resistance; (*b*) a small minority form pro-Fascist and pro-German associations and collaborate actively with the enemy; (*c*) another minority form underground organizations, planning and carrying out acts of sabotage and reprisals against German officials, troops and Nazi sympathizers. The majority resent the foreign invader but see little possibility of active resistance. Whilst they often manage to keep alive the spirit of independence by listening to Allied broadcasts or by learning the undiluted news from clandestine news-sheets, they find themselves hindered by overwhelming German pressure on all sides. The local press is conspicuous by its emptiness, the cinemas run only German news-reels, the learned societies invite German or pro-German lecturers—all this is depressing when added to the insufficient food rations. There is also stark fear that one's son or husband might suddenly be taken away for enforced labour abroad. Thus insecurity is the paramount feeling, resulting in an emotional instability in which hope and fear, longing and depression, alternate with *blitz*-like rapidity. One has to be constantly on the *qui vive*; Gestapo agents, either German or fellow-countrymen, might be anywhere; the only thing one can do is *not* to co-operate with the enemy, *not* to encourage him, but to let him feel that he is unwanted and despised. Passive resistance reaches its maximum in psychological sabotage which is unlikely to remain entirely ineffective, as in the long run it creates insecurity in the enemy. Whilst the native suffers from the insecurity of the present, the conqueror is made to suffer from the insecurity of the future. He may feel his present security and might to be but an illusion, like a big, splendid apple, the core of which is slowly disintegrated by the worm within.

Without rash generalizations it may be said that the following description of the attitude of the bulk of the Dutch population can be applied to most occupied countries in varying degrees :

> The large majority of the people have never been won over by the Nazi propaganda barrage—the total membership claimed by the Dutch Nazis themselves does not exceed 1½ per cent. of the population—but to a certain extent they have undoubtedly been intimidated by the German terror. They feel isolated from each other. People in Amsterdam do not know what is happening in other towns 10 miles distant. They feel lost. While, generally speaking, the young people are showing tremendous courage and zeal, many older ones feel themselves overburdened by the responsibilities for their families.

Though intimidation and isolation have cut down public life, they have, on the other hand, enlarged the sphere of privacy to include church and school :

> Democratic free Holland lives on in the privacy of home and—thanks to the spiritual courage of teachers and clergy—in the comparative privacy of school and church. The church, in particular, has never wavered in its attitude. Public life, however, is dominated by the Nazis. The streets resound to the jackboots of Nazi hooligans (1).

2. The Problem of Readjustment (the Dutch Case)

It is obvious that the Nazi occupation of a country has made necessary a good deal of continuous readjustment on the part of the people ; this, not only in the sense that old values were questioned and quickly faded away, that old habits were broken up and others had to be developed. Even more important was the indispensable change in the methods and technique of opposition. The quickness and skill with which this change was carried out varied in different countries according to their inner structure and history. Belgium and Holland furnish two appropriate examples. Belgium had been invaded only a quarter of a century before by the same foe—the Belgians had lively reminiscences of adroit opposition in the dark and even of the workings of an underground press. The experiences of the last war, perhaps also the tension of internal discord afterwards, had formed a grim lesson and made it comparatively easy to readjust oneself to a second occupation. The case of Holland was very different. For more than a century this highly urbanized country had not seen war and had no idea of the effectiveness of a dictatorship with a highly trained secret police. Therefore, at

the beginning of the occupation, some organizations of resistance were run more on the lines of a sports club than on those of a tightly knit underground movement. In summer 1940 one Dutch underground organization issued orange-coloured membership cards which some members showed each other even in crowded tramcars. The leader of another unit for a long time kept a card-index of members, which he had compiled with the love of order so characteristic of the Dutch civil servant. As a result seventy-two members of a third organization were arrested and shot in May 1942 for careless talk (2). The Germans, who had at first hoped for eventual readiness to co-operate on the part of the Dutch, were soon disappointed. Gradually the tide of persecutions, arrests and executions rose, regardless of whether the victims had taken part in active resistance or were unpolitical people taken as hostages. During the first year of occupation, the number of Dutchmen who were, officially or unofficially, shot or done to death in concentration camps remained under one hundred, in the second year it was less than a thousand, while in the third year it ran into thousands. People only realized gradually that a switch-over was imperative from the peace-time middle-class virtues of love of order, frankness and public opposition, to the war-time qualities of conspiracy, secretiveness and mimicry. The worthy Dutch citizen had to change into the sly, split personality of a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. In May, 1943, the German commissioner Seyss-Inquart, in a speech, tried to ridicule three Dutch secret organizations, the "*Ordedienst*", the "Committee of Liberation" and a Communist unit. Thus he had to admit their organization and "the fact that he knew little more about them than the names" (3). The following are some extracts from the German and the German-controlled Dutch press and radio throwing a significant light both on the attitude of the majority of Dutchmen and on that of a determined minority who actively prepared for the day of liberation. On October 6, 1940, five months after the Germans had overrun Holland, Goebbels' weekly *Das Reich* wrote:

> Holland waits. It is an impatient and peevish waiting for a new decision. A decision of what? Has Holland's fate not been sealed long ago? One would think so. But the stubborn, slow Dutchmen still refuse to face reality. Unaccustomed to wars, they reason that a merely military change is not a positive proof of total defeat. . . . The wide-spread stubbornness of the Dutch sticks till this day to the saying: The Germans have invaded our country but have not conquered it.

The bulk of the Dutch population could on the whole express their anti-German attitude only in two ways: positively by expressing its sympathy and interest for the symbols and torch-bearers of the Allied cause, negatively by showing indignation towards members of the Dutch Nazi Party. The positive attitude was demonstrated by listening to the B.B.C., by wearing the colours of the House of Orange, even by christening the babies with the Christian names of Allied leaders. A senior Nazi official declared indignantly:

> Many Dutchmen look unhealthy, which can be ascribed to unhygienic living conditions, including the fact that they stay up late at night listening to the forbidden radio (4).

When in October, 1941, a notice in a Bussum paper announced the birth of a boy christened Winston, the official *Deutsche Zeitung in den Niederlanden* commented sneeringly:

> Three cheers for true Dutchmen! We still have heroes in our midst. Hail, young Winston! The nation honours him, while the old clique of Wilhelmina's court rejoices. A Winston is born unto us; now all will be well again. Doubtless Bussum's good people will have real Scotch whisky at the christening, giving them enough Dutch courage to sing "*Oranje Boven*". They will listen more than ever to Radio Orange to see if their courageous act is duly appreciated and if little Winston's big godfather will thank them.

Ostracism

The negative attitude finds an outlet in ostracizing pro-German sympathizers and Dutch Nazis, amongst whom the number of misfits and psychopaths was high (4*a*). On March 18, 1943, Radio Hilversum lamented:

> Frequently National Socialists are being assaulted and wounded, sometimes even murdered. They have been subjected to terror without precedent: terror in Government, Provincial and Municipal offices; terror in industry at the hands of small and big bosses; terror in banks and business offices, in schools and in universities and in homes.

Sometimes the boycott assumed very drastic forms. For instance: on October 11, 1942, a Dutch broadcaster of Radio Hilversum said with bitterness:

> I have spoken of our young heroes, hundreds of whom have fallen on the Eastern front. Their families, parents, wives and children are clothed in mourning. But what happens? I feel I have to apologize for the fact that the writers of the letters I am

going to quote are Netherlanders. This is what they have to say to the bereaved families :

" Our sincerest congratulations on the death of your Fascist son. Good thing the b..... is dead. He has come to a sorry end, the wretch, but it was too early. He should have lived a little longer to see the Huns lose the war ; then he should have been hanged."

Here is an excerpt from another letter :

" Our people and country may be glad this villain is done for ; once more, our hearty congratulations on his demise."

On the other hand, the official weekly of the Dutch Nazi Party, *Volk en Vaderland*, confessed in April, 1942, that :

The Dutch Nazis serving in Russia are left utterly without news because their families will have nothing to do with them.

Sabotage

The determined efforts of an anti-German minority to sabotage and destroy the German war effort are clearly reflected in the following report in a Dutch Nazi paper (5) which, though the details given may have been coloured, shows undoubtedly the existence of organized underground resistance which gives the German authorities a headache.

A court trial of members of a terror, sabotage and espionage organization was begun on February 24, before a German military tribunal at the Hague and, on March 4, pronounced sentence. Eighteen of the defendants were given the death sentence, six were acquitted, the others sentenced to imprisonment with hard labour. The majority of the accused did not belong to a political party. . . . Among the leaders of the organization were a professor, trade-school teachers, former school teachers and a college student. The rest comprised labourers and young men. Plans of the organization included the following : to point out to the British targets for bombing ; poisoning members of the German army by specially prepared pencils and thumbtacks, as well as the mixing of the so-called " Molotov cocktail " and " Hun champagne " which when thrown at a person immediately set him on fire. Furthermore, they planned to post large canvas signboards in the streets with arrows marking the wrong directions, in the hope that motor-cars driven by the Germans would leave the road and land in the canals. They also hoped to create unrest among the German soldiers, to which end they had, for example, distributed little leaflets reading : *Fahrt nicht nach England !* (Do not sail for England).

Likewise it had been planned to destroy a U-boat by means of explosives and to blow up a torpedo boat with time bombs. In order to execute these plans, the leaders asked members to provide 400 pounds of explosives.

One of the members had proposed to have rubber truncheons made which would hold a small bottle of sulphuric acid. When a person was struck with such a weapon the bottle would break and the victim would be blinded by the burning fluid. Another member, who evidently thought such methods too cruel, suggested ammonia instead of acid.

A great number of these plans were described in detail in the organization's little journal, edited by one of the leaders, which, apart from such instigations as " sabotage on the assembly line ", contained the bitterest and meanest remarks against National Socialism and Germany. For two months the German police kept a sharp watch over several of these organizers with the result that a great number of active members were eventually arrested and have now been tried.

From the court session it was apparent that many of the sabotage plans had already been executed. For example, a telephone cable in Vlaardingen had been cut and an ammunition train derailed near the Belgian frontier. The purpose was to cause as much damage as possible to the German army of occupation and to hinder the retreat " when the English should land with expeditionary forces " (6).

3. Do's and Don'ts, Guidance to Proper Behaviour

The two main functions of any underground movement in occupied territory are : (*a*) organization of acts of sabotage and aggressive resistance ; and (*b*) spreading of forbidden news and stiffening the will to resist amongst the broad masses. The second task is largely carried out by means of underground publications (books, pamphlets, periodicals, news-sheets) and by secret wireless stations. This includes the instructing of the people as to their behaviour towards the occupying power. Special codes of Do's and Don'ts are developed, which all emphasize the necessity of avoiding contact with the Germans and of making life for them as little comfortable and homely as possible. The following three examples, taken at random from Poland, France and Norway, may illustrate this. The first is from a Polish underground paper, which issued these directions for the conduct of the people :

1. You should not voluntarily render any services to the occupying army. The business man, the shopkeeper, the man in the street, should not be polite, should even avoid giving information or guidance. You can always pretend that you don't understand German. Treat everything officially and let the Germans feel how strong is the gulf of hatred that divides us from them.

2. The duty of boycott in various forms. Do not go to the movies. Every ticket you buy includes a contribution to the war

effort. You thus help to destroy your freedom and the freedom of other nations.

3. Boycott as much as possible the purchase and consumption of all goods from which the occupants draw profits. Boycott their papers, their vodka and their tobacco.

4. Harm the oppressor. It is our sacred duty, whenever possible, to harm the oppressor in executing his orders, in industrial production everywhere and always.

5. Austerity rule. Never go to places of amusement such as music halls, night clubs, gambling casinos. It is not fitting that we amuse ourselves while the Germans destroy our country or torture hundreds of thousands of our brethren in concentration camps and in prisons (7).

It is perhaps easier to tell people in an occupied country what not to do than what to do. The negative advice aims at erecting a mental barbed-wire fence between conqueror and conquered, a barrier that can hardly be penetrated. Take for instance these hard and fast rules issued shortly after the occupation of Norway :

1. Never stop to look at German troops on parade ; never listen to German bands.

2. Never look at Germans ; never show them any friendliness, if you must have dealings with them.

3. Speak not a single word ; perform no act that may be useful to the Germans (8).

Positive advice on the other hand tells people how to do harm to the life and set-up of the hated intruder. Simple slogans are used for this purpose ; for instance, Radio Syndicaliste, one of France's underground stations, spread these slogans :

Make the Boche fall off trains.
Make him fall off buses.
Make him miss his train.
Don't deliver his letters.
If you are taking care of his car, ruin it (9).

4. The Clandestine Press

(*a*) *Some Polish Instructions*

For the ordinary citizen in Britain or America, who reads his daily paper in comfort, the clandestine press in occupied countries is surrounded by an atmosphere of romantic adventure which too often hides from him the two decisive criteria of this work, i.e. its technical difficulties and the extreme danger connected with it. The difficulties are manifold ; they lie in the obtaining

of presses, newsprint, ink and paper, which are all rationed and controlled by the Germans. The dangers involved in the writing, editing and distributing of the copies need no explanation. In Poland, for instance, the Germans have introduced various control measures to fix the destination of every scrap of paper and every drop of printing ink. In addition, Gestapo searches are thorough and frequent. Circulation presents a specially thorny problem, for it may invite disaster if copies fall into the hands of unreliable or unintelligent readers. In Poland, therefore, a favoured system of distribution is based on each member of the editorial staff handing copies to some trustworthy friend, who in his turn would pass his copy on to other well-tried friends. It can well be imagined what it means to distribute a thousand copies in this way. The elaborate, scientific technique developed by the Gestapo has rapidly forced the leading brains of the underground movements to think and act no less systematically. A method of procedure as well as rules of what to do and what to avoid, gradually emerged under the iron hand of necessity. One of the illegal papers in Poland published these instructions on the choice of distributors and readers, which speak for themselves (10).

> (*a*) *Selection of distributors:* A careful and intelligent choice of distributors is a fundamental duty of the editorial organizers of this journal. The basic requisite is that they should be men with character. They must be patriots who have mastered all common ordinary fear, unruffled in their behaviour and not subject to caprices but prudent in action and words. It is not permissible to entrust the distribution to people who are little known, garrulous and frivolous. A careless choice of distributors means sentencing several Polish families to a daily uncertainty of life.
>
> (*b*) *The choice of readers:* Not everybody should receive this paper. It is sufficient if one out of a dozen or so persons in the habit of frequently meeting one another receive a copy of the journal. The regular readers must be well known and reliable people. It is foolish and criminal to distribute the . . . left and right to everyone who comes.
>
> (*c*) *The reader as agent:* Every recipient of a single number of the . . . should regard himself as an agent of the Polish information and propaganda service. He ceases to be a private person, he is in the national service. He should not fearfully destroy the copy of the journal, but cautiously and prudently put it in circulation among absolutely reliable people. Every copy should be circulated among several Polish homes. In addition, the regular recipient of the . . . should on more important occasions prudently pass on information to others and correct false enemy propaganda.

(*d*) *A warning to distributors :* The distributor must not let anyone take his place in the receiving or passing on of this journal. He must do this himself. The confidence of the organizers of distribution is placed in the distributor himself and not in others whom he might desire to take his place.

(*e*) *Caution and silence :* The distributor must rely on his memory in carrying out his work and *not* make any lists, and he must especially refrain from making notes of any addresses. Only so many as must know should know about the work organization. If you happen to know more than others, keep it to yourself, for, by speaking, you betray the cause. If you happen to know the name of an active worker, never say it aloud, for you will betray a human being. All talkativeness in regard to questions of organization is stupid and criminal.

(*b*) *Some Belgian Instructions*

This table of admonitions might be valid with slight changes in any occupied country. *La Voix des Belges*, a clandestine paper, in enumerating the rules to be observed by its distributors, drove home the guiding principle that safety is more important than speed and that the greatest caution should be exercised at all times. This general rule was then specified in the following ten commandments :

1. *First Contacts.* When approaching anybody for the first time make sure of his sentiments, if necessary in some rather absurd way. Note his reaction, for instance, to the remark that the Germans may win the war.

2. *Importance of Alibis.* Make sure of an alibi wherever you go. When you are meeting someone, prepare a subject of conversation in case you are questioned separately, and agree on something to be worn to indicate that it would be dangerous to talk in public, and which would mean " We will not talk business to-day ".

3. *Pre-arranged Signs.* If a meeting is to be held in a private house, arrange that an open window, a blind drawn down, or some easily recognized other sign will mean : " Do not come in."

4. *Examine your meeting-place* before any appointment.

5. *Timing of Appointments.* Avoid fixing appointments exactly at the hour. Choose times like 5.10, 7.20, etc. Always arrive punctually for all appointments.

6. *Meeting in Public Places.* If you see the same person often, leave separately after meeting in public places, and if necessary meet again in another place after making sure you have not been followed.

7. *Behaviour if followed.* If you suspect that you are being followed, make certain by walking away to some isolated spot. Always appear quite natural.

8. *Selection of Clothes.* See that your clothes correspond to the

people among whom you live. Do not pretend to be a workman, for instance, if you have very white hands.

9. *Limit Organization Contacts.* Each contributor should know only his chief and his deputy-chief.

10. *Blackmail.* Do not hesitate to report any blackmail immediately to whoever may be concerned.

After a warning to beware of the dangers of telephone-tapping and of postal censorship, the paper strongly emphasizes that " the distributor is perhaps the most important element in the clandestine press organization, which is only of use if the papers can be effectively, intelligently, and regularly distributed " (11).

(*c*) *National and Political Variety*

In each country a number of underground papers has sprung up, mostly connected with a specific group or party, but by no means rejecting members of other parties or groups as readers. On the whole, the sectarian character of this type of journal is not very marked. Though there has been a good deal of liaison between various secret papers of the same country, co-operation has often proved inexpedient as by " centralizing their organizations, they increased the dangers enormously " (12).

In France the clandestine press became the first medium of resistance after the collapse in 1940. It was through the channel of these sheets that people learnt that there were compatriots who did not accept the German victory and ventured to defy the Government of Vichy. This was how the underground press in France gradually developed : In 1940 there existed only four sheets, which were typewritten, one of which, called *Résistance*, circulated in Paris. In 1941 there appeared *Libération* and *Les Petites Ailes*, which together had a circulation of 20,000 ; further *Combat* (formed by an amalgamation of two earlier papers), *Franc Tireur* and *Valmy*. 1942 saw several new papers in circulation : *Le Populaire*, *L'Humanité*, *Le Coq Enchainé*, *Libérer et Fédérer*, *Résistance* and *Défense de la France*. In 1943 they were joined by *M.O.F.* (Mouvement Ouvrier de la France), *Rénaissance* and *Le Palais Libre* ; by April 1944 " there were 80 clandestine papers, mostly published fortnightly and printing a total of 1,500,000 copies in 30 secret printing works " (13).

In Holland and Belgium too a number of papers sprang up, mainly devoted to national and local news. For instance, in Belgium the famous *Le Libre Belgique*—which carried on a tradition established in the last war—*Sous la Botte*, *La Brabanconne* (regional) and *Feux de Barrage* ; in Holland *Vrij Nederland* (at present issued in London) and *De Oranje Krant*. Each of these

countries had special Socialist papers, *Le Populaire* in France, *L'Espoir*, *Le Monde du Travail* in Belgium, *Het Parool* in Holland. Whilst France issued one Communist paper, *L'Humanité*, Belgium had a whole crop of them : *Les Temps Nouveaux*, *Clarté*, *Le Drapeau Rouge* and *La Jeunesse Nouvelle*, the last named for the youth. Belgium, with her wealth of linguistic and party divisions, also printed underground papers in Flemish such as *De Roode Vaanen*, *De Vrije Schutter*, *Ons Vaterland* and even a special organ for free women, *La Voix des Femmes*, and again one entirely given to satire, *Le Coups de Queue du Doudou Montois*. In France several major clandestine papers issued regional editions such as : *Libération de Lyons*, *La Renaissance de Bordeaux et du Sud-Ouest*, *Libération du Zone Nord*.

Very different from the type of the underground papers in Western Europe is that in the much harder pressed East European countries. In Poland there are no party divisions, but some papers serve the towns only, whilst others speak for the rural population. There were also, up to 1942, some Jewish papers, and papers appealing only to youthful readers or containing aggressive humour only. The resolute determination to resist can be traced from many titles translated here, such as *Poland Lives*, *The Fight Goes On*, *The Bastion*, *Réveille*, *Our Cause*, or, in the case of military journals, *Army and Independence*, *The Arms*, etc. In Yugoslavia, on the other hand, the three different nationalities of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, came out with papers in their various languages ; some of them were organs of the Chetniks under General Mihailovitch and others of the Communist partisans. Here again the translated titles of some Slovene papers are indicative : *Free Slovenia*, *Slovenia and Europe*, *Dawn of Freedom*, *Slovene Bond*, and the satirical paper *Fifth Columnist*.

(*d*) *Technical Problems*

Much as circumstances and general background vary, all underground papers seem to have to tackle the following problems :

Paper and ink supply. The main task is to obtain paper without the knowledge of the German authorities and, in countries like France, also without that of the collaborating French authorities. In France, incidentally, it seems that not a few paper companies have contributed to underground papers by means of casual slight adjustments in their books, so causing the disappearance of a roll of paper from the records. It passed through

the hands of a number of intermediaries, from the workers who collected it under cover of darkness to the railway employees who saw it safely through to Paris, addressed to someone entitled to buy paper for printing purposes. This man in his turn had it taken, again by night, to an obscure basement, known only to a few as a centre of an underground movement (14).

Circulation. Most of the underground papers started on a small scale and have gradually reached a bigger circulation. For instance *Libération*, a leading French clandestine paper, with which M. André Philip was connected before he escaped to England, gradually increased its circulation to 50,000 copies (15). It was a small pocket-size paper which could be concealed between the pages of a book. By 1944 *Combat* alone printed 300,000 copies, and an estimate coming from official French circles in London gave the number of readers of the entire underground press in France as about 8 millions (16). *La Libre Belgique* had in summer 1941 a circulation of 40,000, while *Het Parool*, the illegal organ of the Dutch Socialists, came out as an issue of 20,000 copies and was read by about 100,000 people. Its Belgian opposite number *L'Espoir* has appeared with 20,000 copies and *Le Monde du Travail*, the illegal paper of the Belgian Trade Unions, with 15,000 copies. An increasing circulation means a big risk, every extra copy intensifying the gamble, as it might fall into wrong hands. It is thus far wiser to extend the number of readers of the existing copies. (In the case of *Het Parool* the proportion between copies and readers for some time was 1 : 5.) The editor of the Czech underground paper *V Boj* realized this when his paper had reached the 5,000 mark. Although his distribution agents urged him to have extra copies printed, he refused to do so (17). According to a Swiss estimate, published in March 1943, the number of secret papers and periodicals which arose in Poland during $3\frac{1}{2}$ years of occupation varied between 250 and 300. The greater number of them have not appeared regularly, as often they have to stop for lack of the necessary means. However, it happens that a paper long believed dead suddenly reappears. In spring, 1943, there were in Poland 70–80 clandestine periodicals coming out " with astonishing regularity ". Most of them were weeklies, but there also existed some monthlies mostly devoted to technical purposes and numerous Daily Bulletins given to the disseminating of news. In times of important events at home or abroad such Bulletins have appeared four times in one day (18). According

to the same source, the Polish secret press " appears in editions which in many cases reach 12,000 copies, but mostly run to a few thousands " (19). Usually periodicals come out in the form of brochures with as many as sixteen pages, whilst others are almost newspaper size and others again not bigger than post cards.

A Helpful Reading Public

The financial foundation of many papers has, of course, to remain a secret for the time being. It seems that this press is often financed through contributions, in money and in kind, in a manner similar to that in this country where some non-conformist clergy are financed by their parishioners. Certain Polish papers even acknowledge contributions received from their readers by referring to the donors by pseudonyms. For instance, one may well find contributions from " Avenger ", from " Impatient ", " Stubborn ", " Daring ", together with the number of zloty given. Other contributors mark their gift for a specific purpose or in memory of someone. Thus : " In honour of my sister Janina, who fell at her post " (20). Gifts in kind are frequent, and include loaves, sausages, butter, eggs. Someone may make a contribution of forty sheets of Egyptian paper, whilst others give pencils, rubber, ink and similar precious articles. The gifts in kind are the outcome of the hunted, mobile existence of the underground journalists who have the police on their track and so cannot even receive their scanty rations. The tenacity with which the underground press fights, the support which it receives from the public, are particularly evident in the following statement published by the Belgian underground paper *Le Coq Victorieux* (21).

> Since its first number, which appeared in March 1941, our paper has expanded, thanks to the support and the devoted help of our contributors and our readers. At the end of a year we were producing more than 2,000 copies and we had used 252,000 sheets of paper, 408 stencils and 25 litres of ink. To-day, our *Coq*, which runs into 2,500 copies, is more alive than ever. So far we have used more than 595,000 sheets of paper, i.e. over 1,390 reams, 596 stencils, 140 bottles or tins of ink of 500 grammes each.
>
> We express our deepest gratitude to all who support us in our work. Our activity never slowed down for one moment, in spite of threats and warnings, and though we have had to cut down our issues to one a fortnight and then one every three weeks, this is due purely to material reasons, i.e. the shortage of paper.

> We would like to make it clear that the publication of this paper is guaranteed for the future. We are an organized force and the enemy can *never* prevent our *Coq* from crowing at regular intervals. More than ever before, ours is a cry of confidence and hope in a speedy victory.

Underground papers have indeed become a rallying point for hope and confidence. In this connection it is interesting to learn that in France the groups formed round several clandestine papers became the nuclei for the campaign of active resistance. Round the newspapers *Combat*, *Libération* and *Franc Tireur* gradually developed the three most important resistance movements, bearing the same names. In the middle of 1943 these three movements united as the *Mouvement Unie de la Résistance*, which later allied itself with various other resistance groups, forming a joint federation called the *Mouvement de la Libération Nationale* (22).

(e) Tricks of Camouflage

The necessary mimicry of the underground press often manifests itself in very ingenious methods. Everything is done to mislead the German authorities and to lull them into false security by turning out issues modelled on the Nazi pattern. In spring, 1943, for instance, the Polish underground press printed a special edition of the German propaganda paper *New Warsaw Courier* with screaming headlines that a neutral state had joined the Axis camp and that its military forces had already attacked the British. This was sufficient to gain the approval of the censors. The first sentences of various articles, all written on pro-German lines, were followed by a sudden switch over to violent attacks on the Axis and to reports on the work of anti-Nazi groups inside and outside Poland. Special prominence was given to the deeds of the Polish army in the various theatres of war abroad. Thousands of copies were sold and after this edition had been sold out and the Germans had realized their blunder, the existing copies circulated widely underground (23).

A similar trick was employed by members of the Resistance Movement in France. On the last day of 1943 a special number of the *Nouvelliste de Lyon*, written and published by the *Résistance*, was substituted for the day's issue of this collaborationist paper. Five minutes after the regular vans of the Lyons paper had distributed the regular copies, cars of the Resistance Movement made the round of the news stands of Lyons, and under the

pretext that the issue had been withdrawn by the censors, replaced the supplies by a special edition of the *Nouvelliste,* written on the lines of resistance (24).

Not less daring was an anti-German paper published in Czechoslovakia. It simply called itself *Collaboration.* The leading article coldly surveyed the stories of dictators past and present, dwelling on Messrs. Genghis Khan and Napoleon and continuing the line up to Hitler. Collaboration and compromise were recommended. But again suddenly, in the middle of a sentence, the tenor changed and became violently anti-Nazi. Only three editions of *Collaboration* came out, all of them eight pages of pocket-size and full of exclusively pro-German cartoons. "At the foot of the page appeared the name of a well-known German printer and publisher in Prague, but when the Nazis raided his works and examined his type, they found nothing that resembled the type used for *Collaboration*" (25). It had been a clever trick to shelter behind the name of a man notedly in favour of Germany and so to make the camouflage more convincing. In similar cases a German-Czech grammar (called *Richtig Deutsch*) or a detective story provided skilful cover. Interesting also is the technique used by the Yugoslav secret papers in their early days. They carried the official censorship stamp appropriate to the region in which they appeared, even imitating precisely the stamp of the Quisling Croat Government. It was a hide-and-seek game, for the official censors changed their stamps from time to time, whereupon the clandestine press retaliated by carrying an exact replica of the new seals (26). All this shows that emergency situations develop man's inventive gifts, particularly when hatred of the oppressor is an additional incentive.*

(*f*) *Heavy Odds*

The nerve-racking dangers to which the editors and distributors are exposed need no particular emphasis. The following facts relating to the French underground press speak for

* It is interesting that similar camouflage methods were already applied before the war by the German anti-Nazi opposition inside the Reich. Then, too, advertisements and trade pamphlets served as a cover for anti-Nazi propaganda and fake issues of the *Völkischer Beobachter* were turned out, with inside pages full of democratic views. In September 1937, a pamphlet appeared pretending to advertise a German Natural History magazine, but actually vigorously exposing Nazi intervention in Spain (27).

In France, early in 1944, the Nazis, in their turn, spread faked R.A.F. leaflets, and a forged underground paper *Bir Hakeim,* which began on the lines of the French Resistance Movement, but later indulged in anti-Anglo-American and anti-Semitic propaganda (27*a*).

themselves. The paper *Le Patriote* has been compiled in camps for those condemned to death and has been written entirely by hand, each copy being in a different handwriting. The staff of *Pantagruel* were all arrested and executed and the editors of *Lettres Françaises*, the staff and editor of *Petites Ailes* and of *Libération* have also been annihilated. The editorial staff of *L'Humanité* have been executed and their places taken by others three times in two years. In spite of this suppression all these papers came out again and again (28). In other countries the position was no less grim.

An account taken from the secret Polish paper *Glos Polski* is only one example of many :

> On July 4, the Gestapo surrounded a country house in ..... A heavily armed SS formation (*Abteilung*) was used. In this country house there was a printing press that had recently been brought from Mokotow where things were getting too hot for it. When the SS received no answer to their knocks, they threw hand grenades in at the window and fired a machine-gun from outside into one of the rooms. Two of us were killed and two others died of wounds in hospital. The owner of the villa, Michael Kruk, and his wife and two sons of 15 and 17 were shot, as were all the inhabitants of neighbouring houses. In all 83 persons died (29).

As usual in the dialectics of warfare, both sides learn from mistakes and blunders made, although, of course, the Gestapo is in a much more favourable position for doing so. Amongst the underground journalists and printers in Poland " the German counter-measures have resulted in the survival of the fittest, for in many cases the conspirators were the victims of carelessness . . ." (30). Those who are left are eager to learn from the mistakes of others and to intensify the subtlety of methods and means. Strangely enough this life and death struggle is conducted under cover of normal life. Only occasionally is the deadly silence interrupted when the German Press announces measures, utters threats or publishes death sentences.

It is a tribute to human idealism and to human tenacity that " even the greatest dangers and the greatest sacrifices do not act as a deterrent on the producers, the writers and the distributors of these papers. With their editorial offices on wheels they move from village to village, from forest to forest, never losing contact with the outside world from which they get their news and to which they pass it on " (31).

5. Passive Resistance (The Norwegian Case)

To the Nazi régime passive resistance in an occupied country is more dangerous and disheartening than it is at home in the motherland. For at home passive resistance, confined mostly to small circles, can be easily interpreted as just another form of active resistance and be smashed accordingly. Abroad, however, even brute force can hardly change the basic attitude of the vast majority of the population. The conqueror, with his belief in power for power's sake, soon experiences a mental barrier between himself and the natives. This results gradually in disappointment and resentment amongst the German troops and officials sent to control and administer the occupied districts. The indifference of the natives irritates them, their cold and distant attitude evokes uneasiness, their lack of sympathy and conformity results in gloom and doubts. Gradually, the truth dawns on the invaders, that terror can perhaps break wills but cannot force inner conformity, let alone any approval or sympathy. This has become strikingly evident in the case of the Norwegians who, according to the Nazi ideology, are a " Germanic brother nation ".

Perhaps one of the most characteristic examples of the determined resistance in Norway has been the continuous refusal of 30,000 sportsmen to have anything to do with German-controlled sport in the frame of the " New Order ". There has been a considerable amount of underground activity in this field and Norwegian sportsmen have gathered together in remote country districts and held their own contests. At the beginning of 1943, the Gestapo swooped down on an " illegal " ski-jumping and ski-running national championship ; twenty-five of Norway's best known sportsmen, who were among the hundred or so competitors present, were arrested and taken to a concentration camp (32). After the fall of Stalingrad, the official German paper in Norway published an article which clearly revealed the helpless resentment of the occupying authorities who have been unable to force the people to switch over to values and ideologies foreign to them :

> During the days of the fall of Stalingrad [the writer declared] we see here striking posters—posters which announce lessons in the latest dances. While the best blood is being shed on the snowfields of the East, a certain stratum of society is very anxious not to lag behind in the progress of Anglo-American " culture " . . .

In the market-place of a small town on the south coast every day around noon you can see about a hundred strong young men lounging about with their hands in their pockets. They do nothing ; they do not even speak to one another. They just stare in front of them. That was their labour contribution on the day that Stalingrad fell.

These are only a few examples taken from daily life in Norway, which every attentive observer can multiply a thousand-fold. We point out these facts without passing any judgment. We accept these people as they are and follow the German proverb " other countries, other customs ". We abstain from criticism of the many people in Norway who still refuse to learn, who simply put all their difficulties down to the Germans while the latter defend the life of even the most uncompromising Joessing (serf of the Jews) with the heaviest of blood sacrifices. . . . The peril is so grave and so significant for all time that it is immaterial to us whether other nations show love, hatred or indifference (the last of these being the worst of all sins) just now. Germany will master fate and be victorious, if necessary, quite alone. . . .

No people can be forced into salvation. Even the most superior leader-personality is powerless without the consent of the nation. What would Germany and Italy be without Adolf Hitler and the Duce ? But what would these two men be without their peoples ? Only from the unity of people and leader can come that strength which conquers everything. Norway has not yet recognized this fact. Self-righteously she thinks that her own point of view is the only right one (33).

The Limits of Compulsion

In this way the Nazi writer tried to brand the Norwegians as an unpolitical nation of selfish, over-reflecting Peer Gynts. He declared that " logic is not a Norwegian virtue, at least not yet ", as hundreds of thousands of them are trying to avoid what is euphemistically called " recognition of the truth ". To him the Norwegians present an incoherent mass of human beings having only one thing in common : " the desire to extract from every situation the greatest possible self-advantage ". But, added the writer with resignation : " *You cannot alter this by compulsion. Any genuine achievement arises only from free will* " (34).

The Norwegians, therefore, cannot be forced, but perhaps they can be cajoled, flattered, persuaded by sweet reasoning. In any case some optimism is necessary to counteract the gloom of the German soldiers :

None of us can look forward to an easy time. Only toughness of will and increased work can bring relief. The Norwegian people, to be sure, will not turn a deaf ear to this truth. *Of its*

own free will it will do what no compulsion can achieve. This gives us every reason to believe in the essential goodness of the Norwegian people, and we are convinced the day will come when this freedom-loving and self-assured people will no longer " beat about " the burning questions of the day, but tackle them with a determined " Up and at it ! " (35).

What are the implications of this significant article ? It clearly proves that, unless a dictatorial clique equipped with all the instruments of modern warfare and terror strategy has set its course towards the elimination of an entire race or national group, as in the case of the Jews and to a lesser degree of the Poles and Slovenes, the psychological effect of sheer force towards an overrun nation is limited, and unable to achieve by itself the conversion of the conquered to the standards and values of the conquerors. Though it can destroy, keep down, confine and threaten, it cannot in itself construct and reconstruct, nor can it overcome the sulky reserve of silent inner resistance. The threat of brute force often enhances the prestige of those against whom it is applied in the eyes of the group or nation to whom they belong. Pastor Niemöller is one example, Benedetto Croce, who upheld the flag of Liberalism and intellectual independence during the Fascist régime in Italy, is another. The *Joes-singers* in Norway are a third example. The term *Joes-singers* was coined by the Quislings, in order to stigmatize anti-Nazis as " servants of the Jews ". As this " stigma " is not considered a stigma at all amongst the bulk of the Norwegians, the patriots have seized upon the expression and bear it with the same pride as the *Geux* (meaning " beggars ") once did in the days of the fight for Netherlands independence nearly four centuries ago. Both cases have in common the positive re-interpretation of negative slogans by a determined oppositional élite. In the case of Norway the limited psychological effect of force has resulted in a strange uncertainty and uneasiness marking the attitude of the German garrisons towards their Germanic " blood-brothers ". A German Socialist, who lived for some time in hiding amongst the Norwegians and finally escaped to Sweden, described it as follows :

> All refugees who were still in Norway and had preserved their moral integrity enjoyed the sympathy of the Norwegians and were assisted everywhere. I was able to verify this myself. . . . The German soldiers, i.e. the rank and file, wish to be on good terms with the Norwegian population. Yet the sadism of the Gestapo and of some officers makes this impossible. I could not find out

whether the Germans fear the Norwegians or respect them. When a Nazi is alone with ten Norwegians, he is a gentleman, but if the ratio is the reverse he behaves atrociously (36).

This ambiguous attitude of the invader shows (*a*) a considerable uncertainty in himself, when he finds that the invaded do not react as imagined and desired ; it reveals also (*b*) a clash of divergent tendencies in the mentality of the Nazi abroad : he has been indoctrinated with the theory that Power alone is decisive and that powerless beings deserve only to be trampled upon. This he practises as a social animal in his group-collective. But somehow he realizes that the proclaimed " immense gap " between the *Herrenvolk* and the conquered is artificial and does not hold good as soon as he, as an individual, comes in direct contact with a Norwegian (Dutchman or Frenchman). The cool reserve of the non-Germans matches the barbarous pride of the *Herrenvolk* member and throws him back to his simple existence as an individual. As a result there seems to be a good deal of fear and also a feeling of collective guilt at the root of the gentleman-like attitude with which he faces the Norwegians alone !

There is safety in numbers, but the individual feels lost when contacting members of the Germanic brotherfolk alone, and this forlorn state makes for serious reflection, which in its turn must give the lie to a good deal of home-made propaganda. To act collectively is one thing, to stand alone and be responsible for the acts of the collective is quite another !

CONCLUSION

ON THE ROAD TO THE FUTURE: LEGACIES AND LESSONS

This book is not intended to be academic. The study of the Secret Police, past and present, though interesting and instructive, can be neither complete nor an aim in itself. The last word on this topic should be with the sociologist and the politician rather than with the historian. The political police in the dictatorship is a symptom of a diseased body politic and its diagnosis must be followed by an attempt at therapy. In this connection therapy means both cure of the old disease and prevention of its recurrence. It must apply to a society which became both the breeding ground and the victim of total control through the frightful arm of the Secret Police. At the time of writing, the Italian OVRA has already been broken up and now only a fragment remains; the Gestapo, at the climax of its power, is bound to follow suit and be eventually thrown down the drain of history. But even when these institutions have gone, their impact on the mentality of the people will remain. The régime of the OVRA lasted nearly a score of years, that of the Gestapo inside the Reich for more than eleven, and in the conquered countries from four to five years—a time never ending to the unhappy victims. The impact has been heavy and deep, and no Allied victory will be able to eradicate it once and for all. Thus the post-war era will face some thorny problems: there is first the legacy left behind all over Europe by the activities of the Secret Police, and secondly, several lessons emerge from the experience of a technique which endeavoured to control by fear. The last two decades have given mankind a grim object lesson in the possibilities as well as the limitations of terror. If history is something other than the eternal repetition of the same events, then mankind should be able to learn from its painful and ghastly experiences.

* The Conclusion was written in the summer of 1944. Political developments up to the spring of 1945 seem rather to have confirmed its basic ideas. The serious crises in some liberated countries, such as Belgium and Greece, have brought the "psychological time-bombs" of internal feud and instability to explosion; the dangers of a post-war Nazi underground movement have become more evident with the boosting of the *Werwolf* Maquis. Finally, the dynamic force of former resistance movements gives additional weight to the importance of Social Integration, discussed in the following pages.

1. Neurosis from Total Control and the Chances of Neo-Fascism

Fascism as a police system in its original form will soon be dead, but it will leave behind it a legacy of a two-fold nature ; there will be its innumerable victims as well as its heirs and successors. The mentality of both might easily endanger and disturb the society of to-morrow. Let us speak first of the victims. Many of them are bound to suffer from a neurosis of instability and distrust. It has often been observed of former inmates of concentration camps that the imprints of their terrible experience are deeply embedded in their sub-conscious sphere, leaving behind a nightmare of sinister reminiscences, unsettling repressions and illogical fears. These phenomena do not always present themselves with the same force. Perhaps a man who managed to save his skin from the clutches of the Gestapo has to outward appearances forgotten all about it, has become a "normal" member in a less terror-stricken society, when suddenly a slight gesture or a casual word from another person brings back the sinister memories with the power of a tornado. It is hard to retain a balanced mind after a long spell of being watched, persecuted, arrested and tortured. It makes for unbounded suspicion, for spasms of groundless fear, for erratic reactions to outside events.* Occupied Europe has been one vast Concentration Camp ; when it is unlocked, the jailers will disappear but the ghost of the camp will long hover over whole countries. Our analysis of life in the concentration camp has shown † that many of its inmates reacted with increased irritability, even pettiness, against their fellow-sufferers and that beastly treatment is apt to weaken the social behaviour of the victim. Whilst life in the army, in spite of its fetters, makes for discipline and co-operation, life in a concentration camp results in humiliation and neurosis. Life under the shadow of the Gestapo might have sharpened the wits of the controlled population and have bred cunning and audacity, but it has created, at its best, a partisan mentality, which remains full of hatred, resentment, instability, long after its originators have disappeared. The German Gestapo has not only destroyed many families, but has separated the various members of others, and its grip has divided many that were otherwise united. So the German terror machinery leaves behind various psychological time-bombs,

* Cf. Appendix E. † See above, pp. 133–4.

which are bound to explode if they are not speedily removed. Rivalry between political factions, resentment against racial minorities, the search for scapegoats, even persecution mania from a longing for revenge or from a fear of renewed persecution, all these phenomena will be strong in regions where terror and total control have held sway.

It was Aristotle who said that the end of tyranny is war; but if the old tyranny ends in war, war might equally well result in a new tyranny. The old Fascism has caused defeat and humiliation to nations alien to it, but defeat and humiliation in their turn are fruitful soil for a new Fascism with different sponsors but with similar dangers. The old Fascism of to-day and the Neo-Fascism of to-morrow exploit the same mass emotions and hunt down their enemies by the same ruthless terror. Former opposition can easily become the future inquisition and the liberated citizen might prefer simply to turn the tables and to exchange the rôle of the oppressed for that of the oppressor. The recognition of Neo-Fascism might be more difficult, for it may hide under a democratic cloak. This danger will be particularly acute in the liberated countries which will probably be in a state of psychological emergency for a considerable time to come.

In the occupied countries the underground movement of yesterday will be the openly ruling forces of to-morrow, whereas in Germany the ruling forces of to-day might well be the underground movement of to-morrow. After all the Nazis had to fight all kinds of "subversive" organizations and some of their survivors could easily take a leaf out of the book of their erstwhile enemies. After the disappearance of the Gestapo, many of the ex-soldiers will remain. The spirit of the Free Corps, as it displayed itself after the last war, is fundamentally a Gestapo spirit, a mentality of camouflaged plotting and silent killing. The Nazis after 1933 were so sure of the stability of their régime, that they themselves revealed the interrelations between the former Free Corps and the rise of the Nazi movement. From the beginning of the Republic, its police force was permeated by secret Nationalist cells nurturing the Gestapo spirit. These secret cells showed much skill and impertinence in leading the authorities astray—they were past masters of adaptability and camouflage (1). What happened after 1919 might easily happen again in 1946, presumably on a much larger scale, as the technical achievements of the last twenty-five years, such as trans-

portable radio transmitters and mobile printing presses, lend themselves to new methods of underground sabotage. The result of this situation is paradoxical ; you need partial control to prevent total control from once more establishing itself ! But what partial control means cannot be formulated in general abstract terms, but must be decided specifically in each concrete case out of a given situation.

2. Two Major Lessons

There are a number of lessons that emerge from the power of the secret police in past and present. It remains to be seen if mankind is willing to learn them. Here only the two most significant lessons can be discussed which refer to (*a*) the possibilities and (*b*) the limitations of secret police institutions.

(*a*) Viewed in general terms, the secret police is only one of the many instruments for applying force to human beings. Its success depends largely on co-operation with and backing by either a strong army, as was the case under the régimes of Napoleon I and Napoleon III, or by a strong monopolistic party as in the case of early Bolshevik Russia, of Mussolini's Italy and of Hitler's Third Reich. All the test cases reviewed in this book show quite clearly that it is possible and not even very difficult to terrorize and keep in check a given society by means of an army and secret police. Army and secret police together are the strongest symbols of the potentialities of Force. These two factors usually accomplish a division of functions between themselves. In peace-time the army has the positive function of illustrating the strength and the splendour of the dictatorial régime and can also act as a bridge between it and the people. There is little evidence to show that the army was unpopular under any of the régimes reviewed. Compared with its rôle the secret police has largely a negative function. It will deter, intimidate and eliminate all possible opposition. Whereas the army (as well as the ordinary police) act more or less in the open, the secret police acts preferably under cover of silence and invisibility. The first grim object-lesson of current history is that force can go a long way towards the establishment and maintenance of a dictatorship. If carefully instilled and supplemented by other factors, fear in the many, deliberately provoked by the few, can prove a most effective instrument of control. This fear, as has been demonstrated, has a composite face ; it might mean fear of economic security or fear of loss of social status, or,

most primitive but most powerful, fear of physical suffering, injury or death. At all times under the sway of dictatorship, conformity means security and safety, non-conformity a thousand fateful possibilities of insecurity, of a shadowed future or of complete annihilation.

(*b*) The pressure of force by means of army and secret police *alone* cannot hold a nation down indefinitely. The twenty-one years of Fascist rule in Italy, the eleven years of the Nazi régime in Germany have confirmed Napoleon's admission that force is unable to organize anything—in the long run at least, it should be added. Every dictatorship that managed to survive for any length of time owed its success to the interplay of fear-producing force with some other factors such as mass-hypnosis, propaganda, diverting shows or a temporary improvement in living conditions. The secret of dictatorship is not terror by itself, but terror plus a balancing factor. It can be said, for instance, that inside the Reich, for many years the National Socialist régime succeeded in finding an equation between Force and some balancing counterpart, whilst it failed completely to achieve this balance in the Occupied Countries. Though the story of dictatorships shows again and again how easily human beings can be trapped in a cleverly laid net, it also proves that in due course this net can be evaded even if it is woven from the strongest threads of force. The disappointment of the German soldiers in Norway over the recalcitrant attitude of the natives, analysed above,* has well illustrated the impossibility of making people conform through ruthless pressure only. The futility of this method becomes even clearer when compared with a different technique of treating foreign nationals, such as applied, for instance, by British Colonial officials abroad. A leading Belgian " quisling " and editor of a Brussels evening paper, Raymond de Becker, drove home such a comparison in a speech delivered in autumn 1943 to his staff, half of whom had threatened to resign. In this speech, De Becker, anxious to recant his former support of the Germans, told a fable showing that the German masters were " completely lacking in psychology ". What he meant was that they had utterly failed to realize the limitations of Force in general, and of Terror in particular :

> You know [De Becker said], that before the first World War the Germans were universally hated in their colonies, though they

* See above, pp. 222–4.

did some remarkable work for the natives, particularly in the domain of hygiene. Now in one colony it was the custom for the natives to wear feathers in their noses. The Germans were very shocked by this. The competent local *Stelle* sent numerous reports to Berlin about it. Berlin then discovered that a professor of the University of Bonn had published a remarkable work of 350 pages proving irrefutably that it was unhygienic to wear feathers in the nose. He was then appointed *Referent* on this question to the Militärverwaltung (military administration) of the district, and in that capacity issued an order forbidding the natives to wear feathers in their noses and asking them for the good of their own community to denounce their compatriots who refused to give up such a deplorable custom. As soon as they learnt of this Order the natives showed a lively dissatisfaction. "What," they cried, "are our traditional liberties and ancestral traditions no longer respected? These Germans are barbarians." And numbers of them went off to the neighbouring colony governed by the British. The latter did not fail to congratulate the natives on their conduct, and solemnly declared that they would never interfere with their wearing feathers in their noses. What is more, they immediately built a large factory for the production of these indispensable ornaments. The Governor, having secured 80 per cent. of the shares, rapidly made his fortune, at the same time making the natives perfectly content.

3. Social Integration in War and in Peace

The day will come when the actual blackout all over Europe will be lifted, when the nights will be no longer nightmares; but less easy to move will be the psychological blackout, the residue of fear and hatred, of confusion and anxiety. With the end of hostilities there will emerge a desire for unbridled freedom, for liberation from spies and interference, for the suspension of checks and control. The man in the street will want to be his own master, at least within the four walls of his cottage, instead of being a cog in a wheel, the rotations of which are beyond his control and often beyond his understanding. Freedom from fear will loom large on the horizon of the post-war European and will perhaps only be equalled by his desire for Freedom from Want. President Roosevelt's famous Four Freedoms, which form the background of the Atlantic Charter of August 1941, can easily be reduced to the two major freedoms, explicitly mentioned in the Charter, i.e. Freedom from Fear and Freedom from Want. Once freedom from fear is established, freedom of religion and freedom of information can easily materialize. On the other hand, without the removal of all fear of oppression, persecution and silent control, the "freedom of speech and

expression, freedom of every sort to worship God " remain largely fictitious.

The implications of " freedom from fear " cannot be understood without taking into account both freedom from want and what Dr. Fromm recently called the " fear of freedom ". It is outside the scope of this book to discuss the economic and social policy necessary to implement freedom from want. It must suffice to point once more to the close correlation which could be observed in the 1930's between economic insecurity and an attitude of acquiescence and even of support of the Fascist dictatorships. The men ready to undertake the nasty work of the SS and Gestapo were not only motivated by sadistic lust for power, but also by a good deal of feeling of insecurity both economic and social. There was fear of freedom, for freedom meant isolation, atomization, to be unemployed and an impotent reed in the cyclone of an economic crisis ; these people preferred the security and drive of an iron organization to the self-help of the unattached individual who gets nowhere and feels betrayed in the incessant struggle between cartels and trade unions.

During the next few years " fear of freedom " will mean fear of chaos, of lack of direction, of lack of guidance. After the strain of a lengthy war it will become more and more evident that man—for good or evil—is a social animal, easily lost and bewildered in a highly technical society without a chance for integration and co-operation. Recent experiences in this war show that in the battle zone with its atmosphere of danger and death, men became so engulfed in their soldier unit that they frequently preferred its comradeship to the safety and comfort of life in the hinterland. As L. Solon, one of the shrewdest war correspondents in Italy, observed :

> Perhaps the strangest fact about war is that the man who leaves the front for the rear, for reasons of rest, health, change of assignment, wishes to return. The back areas in Italy and North Africa are full of men who want to get back to their units. Their unit may be in the thick of death and discomfort, yet they wish to go back. Formal patriotism and sense of duty are only part of the reason. The real reason, I have learned, is that the front offers a way of life, a sense of unity with one's fellows, a meaning which for most men exists nowhere else in life (2).

This way of life offers identification with others under the pressure of a common situation and a breakdown of the limits of individualization without loss of dignity. " It is strange but

true," the war reporter goes on, " that in the welter of mud and destruction the dignity of man becomes the last imperishable reality which no man dare deny." At the front, man is not sheltered at all physically, but he is sheltered socially as a comrade-in-arms—as a member of a brotherhood which fades away when he goes back to " civilization ". But in peace-time this desire for " social shelter ", for true social recognition exists no less, and any serious attempt at social reconstruction has to reckon with it. The fact that Fascism and the one-Party system have unduly profited from this urge for social integration does not justify the overlooking of its significance as a basic demand of human nature by the post-war planners. On the contrary, they will have to strike a balance between the rights of the individual and the necessity of its integration.

Morale versus Discipline

In this connection it is worth while to ponder for a moment on the difference between " discipline " and " morale " as moulding forces in human society. Our thesis is that the urge for social integration should not be pressed into the narrow channels of collective discipline, but should find a more natural outlet in a high, collective morale. To make this point clear I should like to refer to an interesting analysis of army behaviour carried out by an English psychologist after the last war. Professor F. C. Bartlett, in confronting " discipline " with " morale ", explained that the former was the basic principle of soldiering and the latter a possible attitude of civilians including children (3). According to Bartlett an army is entirely built upon " discipline " which he defines as " enforced obedience to external authority " based on " control exercised from outside ". This control is carried out mainly, though not exclusively, by the use of punishment, which in its turn is fundamentally " an appeal to fear and the group of danger-reactions ". It is an attempt at controlling all conduct by the creation of " a state of affairs in which one overmastering fear or dread swept away everything ". Morale on the other hand is defined as " Obedience to authority under external circumstances which imposes great strain, the source of authority being within the man or group that is obedient ". Whilst discipline is the deliberate attempt to produce a system of conditioned reflexes in individuals or groups, morale brings about a " steadier, more persistent, less fluctuating type of conduct ". Although it would be absurd to deny that to-day

discipline continues to play a big part in any army, events of this war have shown that an army is only completely effective if it is imbued with a high morale. No exterior pressure can obtain what the authority of the community spirit from within achieves. Many reports on the deeds of the Russian and British armies lead to the conclusion that the strong desire for and the gratification caused by a successful group integration was spontaneous. In this context even the " morale " of the German army is instructive. It is true that the dictatorship of the Third Reich is mainly based on " discipline " and forced from without by the actual or potential appeal to fear. People obey mainly because they are afraid and are living under the Damocles sword of uncertainty. On the other hand as Shirer, in his *Berlin Diary*, has shown, the German army, at least in the first half of this war, was possessed of a high morale in the sense of a strong, often romantic adherence to an *esprit de corps*, to a community with a pattern and expressions of its own (4). General Montgomery's immense popularity in the British army seems to be the result of his stressing army morale more than army discipline. The general does not address his soldiers from outside but talks from within them. He identifies himself with the group spirit and thus by means of a straight publicity strengthens that " unity with one's fellows " described so vividly by Solon. Whereas army discipline is based on the attitude of " I command you to do this ", army morale is expressed in terms of " We feel strongly and therefore will act (or react) accordingly ".

Morale, a social phenomenon, difficult to define, is mainly a readiness to resist, to endure danger, to be undaunted in adversity and adventure, to hold out and carry through in spite of difficulties and disillusion. A recent analysis has stressed five basic factors (5) :

(*a*) A positive goal.
(*b*) Togetherness.
(*c*) Knowledge of common danger.
(*d*) The conviction that we can do something to improve matters.
(*e*) A sense of advance, the feeling that some progress is being made towards the goal.

Of these factors, each is equally important, but the phenomenon of " togetherness " is indispensable. Under the pressure of a common danger and with a positive goal, " togetherness " can reduce fear and replace it by a quiet but strong collective confi-

dence. This war has proved that a development from discipline to morale is possible, transforming compulsion into inner liberty and a social group formed on the basis of coercion into a true community of men inwardly moving into the same direction. One of the foremost psychological problems of the post-war period in all countries presents itself in these terms : How can discipline be replaced by morale ? How is the maintenance and strengthening of collective morale possible without the existence of a common danger, so acute in war-time? How can a strong sense of " togetherness " and of social responsibility prosper under the changed conditions of peace-time ? How is a co-ordination possible between the personal and political liberties regained by the individual and new forms of social integration without which society remains stagnant and inarticulate ? So long as personal liberty and the chance of the individual to develop and use his faculties and talents are impeded, social integration will remain lifeless and inadequate ; on the other hand without the possibility of true social integration, the individual will easily feel lost and regard freedom more as a liability than an asset. Whilst this problem will have to be solved in every post-war society, it will have a different accentuation in countries with a democratic tradition and in those with a broken dictatorship. Before touching upon these specific differences, it might be more helpful to outline briefly the two agencies through which a solution can be attempted : the medium of education and the medium of politics, the former aiming at the welfare of the next generation, the latter at the improvement of present political institutions by change or new creation. There will always be those ready to contend that it is better to attempt the reform of human nature than to modify laws and political codes ; there will also be others who claim that a change in political structure is an indispensable condition for any possible change in human behaviour. In actual life, the two functions are inter-dependent, for on the one hand the task of the educationalist is, largely, favoured or crippled by existing social or political conditions ; on the other hand the last twenty-five years have shown that political life can be paralysed and political institutions be perverted if a country's youth is systematically imbued with an arrogant spirit of aggressiveness and war-worship. Though the way of the educationalist is very different from the way of the political reformer, both are as necessary as day and night or breathing in and breathing out.

Social Morale and Community Centres

Political reform, based on social necessities, has to face this question. How can a sense of " togetherness " and of mutual social responsibility be developed amongst adults in times of peace? Some may be inclined to answer by referring to the maintenance, revival or development of the usual political institutions such as local, regional and national parliaments. But such an answer means begging the question, for, if it is true that a democratic parliament can foster the development of social criticism and social responsibility, it can hardly promote that feeling of " togetherness " which imbibes a company under battle fire, an A.R.P. post in action or an anti-aircraft battery in full blast at the enemy. The reason for this failure is that a parliament at its best is based on highly technical usages and methods of procedure which in the nature of things seldom strike the imagination of the man-in-the-street. The problem that has to be solved, however, is " to find democratic ways of living for little men in big societies ". Everyone who has seriously pondered over the mistakes of the democracies and the techniques of the dictatorships must agree with this sober formulation of G. D. H. Cole who adds that : " Men are little and their capacity cannot transcend their experience, or grow except by continuous building up on their historic past " (6). Not only charity but democracy begins at home ; the formation of community centres and small neighbourhood associations could form a concrete link between the individual and the larger structures of local or regional government, so enabling man to obtain social pride from a feeling of belonging. Fortunately this suggestion has a practical background, as the post-war period is certain to offer a great opportunity for such community centres through the necessary building on a large scale, a chance which should be well kept in mind in all serious attempts at planning, both here and on the continent. Old towns will have to be rebuilt, new towns will rise from the ashes of destruction, and satellite towns and suburbs, formerly often nothing but a drab appendix of overcrowded mother-towns, will gain a structure and a face of their own. A healthy competition may arise between these newly built social units. The activities of such community centres or neighbourly associations could cover a smaller or wider field including : local building, sport of all kinds, health centres, allotments and flower shows, artistic activities, such as

amateur theatricals, and above all local " brain trusts " for the discussion of political, cultural and educational matters on a local background. Here parents and teachers could exchange opinions informally. Provided that the right persons take a lead and that no pressure whatever is exercised, such a development might encourage men and women to transfer their wartime allegiances and psychological ties to these new focal points of social life.

The objection may be raised that community centres would be too limited and therefore might not appeal to the more intelligent and individual type of citizen, who is less strongly possessed by the gregarious urge. A critic could argue that such an enterprise might localize and provincialize energies which need a wider field for development. The answer is that these community centres are not intended to take the place of wider associations, nor need they confine themselves to a parochial horizon. A centre could easily enter into friendly contacts with others, either in its own country or abroad. Thus friendly relations might unite people in Slough and Aberdeen, Wallasey and Llandudno, Preston and Stalingrad, Amiens or Dallas, Texas. From these contacts radio exchanges might arise or even annual visits with friendly competitions. This could at the same time furnish a small but practical contribution towards a better understanding between the nations. There are plenty of local possibilities which only await exploration and exploitation. The more modern aviation lessens distances between the various countries, the more will the necessity arise for both local centres and inter-regional exchange. The exclusive brand of nationalism has played a sinister rôle long enough ; now a determined effort should be made to replace it by a sense of community feeling which is both local and super-local, making a man or woman a citizen of the world through being a local citizen and a local citizen by being a citizen of the world.

The making of good citizens is an eternal concern of education. However sceptical one may be towards the efforts of individual teachers and parents, it can hardly be denied that times of unrest and revolution like ours give a strong impetus to the exploration of new educational fields and possibilities. Since the last war educationalists have stressed the importance of a method which discards the traditional device of mere discipline achieved by pressure from without. It is argued that the appeal to fear and prohibition cannot achieve the object, but rather

a system of *laissez-aller, laissez-faire*, a providing of opportunities and stimuli for the pupils instead of the rod and the command. This, however, is a truly individualistic and not a democratic conception of education and therefore at the present time as misleading as the out-of-date autocratic conception. Neither the mere drilling and appeal to fear, nor the simple letting things take charge of themselves with full rein given to the child can yield satisfactory results. If morale is to take the place of discipline, then there must be an active interchange between the child and the educator as well as between the child and his fellows. The aim must be to organize integration in a group and, to use a phrase of Mr. Herbert Read, " the spontaneous emergence of co-operation and self-government within the group " (7). This is not the place to discuss how this " spontaneous emergence " can be promoted ; but one point should at least be mentioned, the relative importance of leadership. It is true that in the dictatorships leadership was made absolute, the leader being the strongest personification of the collective super-ego and with its pressure crippled more than helped to develop the faculties of the individuals. But whilst absolute leadership is soul-destroying, relative leadership is indispensable and constructive. The need for leadership should be answered not by the domineering, but by the sympathetic type who relies on insight and persuasion, not on force and coercion. Instead of one leader in over-life-size and a host of sub-leaders in pocket-edition size (even in the shape of parents and teachers) there should be a leadership of the *primus inter pares*, the man or woman who is first amongst equals. This democratic leadership should graduate in steps with, of course, due modifications from the relationship between adult and child to that of political representative to voter, and finally of responsible élites forming a government to the masses which they represent and on the close contact with whom their significance depends. I would not agree with the statement by Herbert Read that " a democratic education is the only guarantee of a democratic revolution ", but I would submit that the first is an indispensable pre-condition for the success of the second.

4. The Problem of Germany

Both education and a new community life in the sense outlined will be of particular importance in the countries at present ridden by dictatorships. Their legacies of neurotic behaviour and memories of uncanny control will make the full play of

normal social activities more difficult. Nevertheless community centres and education can play an important part in helping to restore the mental and moral health of the population. Here a word must be said about the possible development in Germany. Undoubtedly many Germans will long for individual liberty, for the right to think aloud and to criticize without the threat of death and of the concentration camp. But however important the satisfaction of this urge to freedom is, it will be accompanied by a contrary urge towards order, community life and social integration. When at last the iron clamp of National Socialism has broken and the pressure both from above and below has ceased, the individual German may easily fall into an anarchic state, into a trance of irresponsible chaos. Probably after the disappearance of a huge organized army, thousands of Germans will be filled with fear of freedom and responsibility and with the craving for a community *Ersatz*. It has been often pointed out how, in Germany after the last war, ex-soldiers found a fruitful playground for their militaristic instincts in various Free Corps, which were called in by the Republican Government to stave off the ghost of a pure socialist state. Many former officers and soldiers joined them, not only because they wanted to continue the habit of shooting and killing, but because they loved comradeship and a spirit which, primitive and brutal though it was, guaranteed them a feeling of belonging and an emotional home. After this war the emerging of such Free Corps must be made impossible by Allied control bodies, but if the soldiers are to be prevented from becoming a social menace and a political danger there must be new and healthier channels for social readjustment and for the development of a positive, unaggressive community life. To the better type of German " community " has always had an almost romantic attraction, and it is very unlikely that this will change in the future. What is badly needed is to " detotalize " this conception and to couple it with freedom instead of force. The urge for " Community " only becomes dangerous when it is all-embracing and universal, but it can be healthy and constructive if controlled by and confined to specific religious, educational or artistic purposes.

At present this urge has found its outlet in an over-heated, aggressive and neurotic nationalism. This nationalism is in many ways different from, say, any Nationalist feeling in the Anglo-Saxon countries ; there it means a deep-rooted feeling of " belonging " to a home-country, the knowledge that the

individual is part and parcel of a social organism which gives him strength and colour. With many a German, however, the nation is a demi-god, a super-personal power, which he worships as long as it is strong and mighty (as under Bismarck and for some time under Hitler), but which means little to him in days of weakness and struggle. The German Reich, after all, is a very recent growth, the exaggerated centralism of which remains rather artificial and dictated more by reasons of political competition with other great powers than by a vital sense of " belonging ". The latter is indeed much more connected with the local region, in which the individual German lives, with its landscapes, dialect, special tradition, etc. After the wild daydreams of German Nationalism have come to nought and the egocentric mania of the Third Reich has become nothing but a perverted showpiece in the hall of history, the German urge for " community " should find its target in the more limited but more real sphere of regionalism. It is much easier for a human being, who is first and foremost a member of a free Hanse town or a citizen of democratic Württemberg, to feel and act as a good European than for a totalitarian Nazi who can only think in terms of " Reich ", of " Herrenvolk ", and of racial conquest. Both from a political and a psychological point of view, German regionalism, pushed back and muzzled for fifteen years, should be encouraged and made a live force. To reduce the power of Prussia can only mean putting Germany on a federal basis. To ban the evil spirit of inflated nationalism, local and regional communal life should once more be given a place of honour and prestige, so enabling all who participate in it to gain a healthier mental and emotional balance.

In the field of education too it should be possible to revive valuable, genuinely liberal German traditions which were obliterated by the Nazis, but are to-day not entirely forgotten. The educational ideas of Goethe and Pestalozzi are still of profound significance, whilst a penetrating educational thinker, such as Professor Litt, whom the Nazis forced to retire, might be able to reformulate the values of tradition in the light of recent experiences. The danger with genuine German educators in the days of the Republic was not that they were individualists, but that they were somewhere unreal, living too much in an isolated " pedagogic province " far away from the turmoil of the social and political scene. Their slogan of " the autonomy of education " was hardly less one-sided and abortive than the Nazi slogan

of " education for the nation " which makes the pedagogic process only a vehicle for Nationalism and war-mongering. The aim of education can neither be " l'art pour l'art " nor " education for society ", but the development of valuable dispositions of the individual in a spontaneous co-operating community. There was much in the German education movement in the 'twenties which was valuable and sound, though its leaders were not free from exaggerated theorizing and an uncalled-for sentimentality. In future such a movement should aim less at being based on political neutrality than on progressive organizations (Liberal, Socialist, Communist or Catholic), avoiding alike a narrow parochialism and an extensive craving for metaphysical speculations.

APPENDICES

A. THE MENTALITY OF HEINRICH HIMMLER

The following are some significant extracts from a speech delivered by Himmler at a conference of Commanding Officers of the Wehrmacht in Bad Schachen on October 14, 1943 :

The Treatment of Defeatists

" Another question is that of defeatism, particularly among the educated and well-to-do classes. Let me recall to you the time when a big wave of defeatism was undoubtedly sweeping over Germany. It was the time when we got the news that the Duce had been deposed, that Fascism was finished and that Italy had dropped out or would shortly drop out. It was the time when we got the news that there was heavy fighting on the eastern front. Then there were people who said : How interesting, how very interesting ; it is possible to arrest a Duce : Fascism is finished, gone in a flash. At that time I said to myself : These foolish people who say such things have never understood that Fascism and National Socialism are two fundamentally different things. Admittedly Fascism was the first movement which in 1919–20 banished Communism from Italy. This achievement is the great historic merit of the Duce and of Fascism. But the people who light-heartedly said those things fail to understand even to-day that there is absolutely no comparison between Fascism and National Socialism as spiritual, ideological movements.

" You will have read in the announcements of the Reich Minister of Justice that Herr Regierungsrat X, the waiter Y and the factory owner Z who had made defeatist remarks were sentenced to death by the People's Court and that the sentence had already been carried out. I deliberately advocate the publication of such sentences. You see, it is no wish of ours to sentence as many people as possible to death. It is sad enough to have to do this. It is sad enough when a human life which might be used advantageously for the nation and for the German homeland has to end in war-time in this manner. But if this is necessary we must not show any false mercy to ourselves, giving the famous—or rather infamous—German excuse : But he was such a nice chap otherwise, he cannot have meant it like that. Imagine the effect of a *Herr Regierungsrat* saying : ' We must make peace, we cannot possibly win the war ; besides, the *Führer* made this mistake and that mistake '. What would be the effect of this being said by a man who is expected and assumed to be an educated man, and to whom the little man of the people looks for guidance ? When such a man starts to destroy the faith, trust, loyalty and obedience of the good peaceable ordinary German, the damage done is incalculable. If a twenty-year-old says such things it does not matter. He may in other ways be a good boy who only needs educating. But if a man in an important position or office and of mature years acts in this manner he must expect the ruthless application of the law of

war : he will lose his head. And it is essential that this should be made public, for the only way in which such a bungled life can still be of use to the nation is by its teaching a lesson to thousands of other stupid gossipers. That is why I am always in favour of punishing severely and mercilessly whenever necessary. The penalty, however, must not be carried out in secret or hushed up, but—and this must become our habit all over Germany—whenever we punish a man we must announce the fact to the circle whence he comes. Only thus can we exert an educational influence. . . ."

Slavs and Germans

" Here I must briefly touch upon the following question : What sort of a person is the Slav, this Slav whom we have come to know as a Pole, as a Russian, as a Great Russian, as a Ukrainian, as a Slovene, as a tough Serb, and as the pliable but intriguing Czech ? What sort of person is he ? The answer to this question varies with the individual according to the experience he has had with particular samples. Some good German who has never before given a thought to this question and who happens to find himself in the Ukraine—say in the neighbourhood of Zaporozhe—may think : ' They are people like ourselves, fair, with blue eyes—wonderful ! ' Another gets quite enthusiastic : ' They are all ancient Goths ! ' Yet another may find himself in a different district, for instance in the Lysa-Góra, that small mountain range in Poland, and he will say : ' But they look like Huns.'

" The Lysa-Góra mountains are wild and wooded, and wooded mountains have always been the districts to which national remnants have withdrawn. Thus you find a large range of races, from Mongols to Germanic types. Sometimes the different races are clearly divided locally, so that we can say : Here the population is of good race ; at other places it is of decidedly bad race and alien to us. In most cases —and that is why the question is so difficult—you will find in districts like Upper Silesia or the Warthegau a population which shows every sign of being intermixed. You may meet a man of solid, heavy, typically eastern, one may almost say Mongol build, who has blue eyes. You may come across another who is tall but has a typically Mongol face with heavy cheek-bones and slanting eyes. Let me assure you, just as their physical features and characteristics are mixed, so are their mental and spiritual characteristics. They are the unfortunate products of the mixture of two races. The following fact explains how this came about. The broad basis is formed by a lower stratum of masses who during and after the time of the Migration of the Peoples streamed into the eastern space for the first time. On top of these masses of Mongols and eastern Balts there was then laid a Germanic master class ; this upper layer may have called itself Vikings or Varangians or, like the original Germanic master class in Poland, Szlachta (Slachtizen). That is how the Slav nations came into existence, as can be proved historically. Then in the course of the centuries the process of mixing began. That is how these partly dangerous types came into being and then entered the field as our enemies. Then emerges nationalism, a Polish nationalism or a Russian nationalism.

Woe to us if at the head of such a nation or such a continent there stands a man of our blood. Then things become dangerous, for then Asiatic-Mongol brutality and Germanic creative power, intelligence and qualities of leadership are combined in one and the same person.

" Let me remind you of an example which you have probably all observed for yourselves. In the Polish campaign which lasted eighteen days and ended rather sadly for the Poles the names of a few men are to be noted on the Polish side who held out a little while longer. There was a General Rommel in Warsaw and an Admiral Unruh in Hela. Unruh, whom we all know, used to be in the Imperial Navy. He had a Polish mother and a German father. In him Polish blood and love for that Polish blood and for Polish nationality won the upper hand. Another example is a General Thomé in Modlin. Thomé naturally is not a Pole, but—as is often the case with the best blood in Germany—a French emigrant, a Huguenot, that is, a descendant of one who in the France of olden days had dared to raise his voice in protest and emigrated for that reason. . . .

" I would ask you to reflect on the following : As is generally known, after the Thirty Years' War we were a people of barely three to four million souls. It is one of the most inexplicable miracles of world-history that this poor people of three to four million souls, surrounded by all-powerful neighbours on the north, south, east and west, did not go under. We did not go under, but were able to work our way up once more, to develop once more into a nation and a Reich, though numerically we were in a minority as against Europe, and especially compared with Eastern Europe. The only explanation is the asset of our blood, the asset of our race. Woe to us if we tamper with this asset. Woe to us if we let too much foreign blood enter into this blood organism—even too many single drops would suffice in the long run. If we were to do this we should for the future be sapping those qualities which have enabled and still enable us to lead, to invent, to create, to create new values and—one of the chief assets of the Aryan, of Germanic man—to think organically, to create order and to organize. Too much Mongol-Eastern (*Ostisch*) blood makes all organic thinking, all invention and all creation anew impossible in the long run. In reply you may perhaps point to the Russians. My answer to that is as follows : I know that there are very able engineers and very able specialists among the Russians. And with this answer I have also given you the explanation. They are specialists. One specializes in this and another in that. They are diligent researchers, but even more diligent thieves of the ideas of the whole world. I have inspected their factories in Krivoi Rog—what one sees there and elsewhere in Russia is very interesting indeed. There you find a Swedish machine, a German machine, an American machine, and, as you know, they all had to be supplied together with the detailed plans for making them. And then they got busy copying them. I personally believe that the Slav people are incapable in the long run of promoting the progress of civilization. There will always be individual great military leaders and statesmen such as those of whom history

tells us, be their name Genghis Khan or be it Herr Lenin or Herr Stalin. They are isolated figures in whom a fortunate mixture, a fortunate coincidence—unfortunate, of course, for us Europeans—has brought together a number of components, which enable them to be the leaders of their peoples. But the moment such a figure disappears the Slavs revert to what they have always been : a people thriving on intrigues and incapable of ruling themselves. . . .

" As I said on a recent occasion : we shall never get to know the Slav properly, we shall never be able to delve to the bottom of his mind—let us make no mistake about that. The Slav is capable of anything : of giving a brotherly kiss to his sworn friend, of praying fervently to the Holy Virgin of Kazan, of the Song of the Volga Boatmen and similar moving things. He is capable of blowing himself up together with his tank or—as a certain Commissar did at Sevastopol —of blowing up an entire fort with women and children. He is capable of cannibalism, of butchering his neighbour, cutting out his liver and keeping it in his haversack. All these possibilities are present in him. It is purely a matter of luck, in view of these unlimited possibilities, which stop happens to be pulled out at any moment. Therefore I consider that in dealing with members of a foreign, especially of a Slav nationality (*Volkstum*), we must start not from German points of view, and we must not endow these people with decent German thoughts and logical conclusions of which they are not capable, but we must take them as they really are.

" Obviously in such a mixture of peoples there will always be some racially good types. Therefore I think that it is our duty to take their children with us, to remove them from their environment, if necessary by robbing or stealing them. That may seem strange to our European minds, and many people will say : How can you be so cruel as to take a child away from its mother ? To them I would say : How can you be so cruel as to leave on the other side a brilliant future enemy who later on will kill your son and your grandson ? Either we win over any good blood that we can use for ourselves and give it a place in our people, or, Gentlemen—you may call this cruel, but Nature is cruel—we destroy this blood. But we cannot answer for it to our sons and ancestors if we leave this blood to the other side, thus letting our enemies gain able leaders and able commanders. It would be cowardly for the present generation to shirk this decision and to leave it to those of the future."

Lessons for Germany

" Under the Russian system of political Commissars and political officers, to send in a false report means to sign one's own death sentence. I fully realize, Gentlemen, the implication of what I am saying. There may be a danger—though I do not think so—of my being misunderstood. I have intentionally described the Russian system and I have intentionally shown up many weaknesses on our side. After all, I think, we are agreed that we are up against an extra-European enemy who in the game of war does not keep to our nice rules which partly date back to the days of Cabinet wars. Rather are we dealing with

an enemy who simply disregards many of our tactical and strategic experiences. For instance, he just does not care whether he is encircled ; it is of no importance to him. He attacks at places where our tactical sense, or perhaps we had better say our tactical doctrine, tells us that there is no sense in doing so. Still, attack he does, and often enough he is successful.

We are up against an enemy who uses the laws of war with a sort of Slav cruelty in his own ranks and against us. It is my opinion that we can oppose him only with something different of our own, something Germanic that will make us just as hard as the enemy troops are made by their Commissars. A very beautiful saying has been handed down to us from the Middle Ages, written up in the vestibule of a Westphalian merchant's house : ' Honour is compulsion enough.' I think this saying is the right slogan for us Germanic and German men. Every corps will do what it must do from its own *esprit de corps*, for its own sake and on its own initiative. One thing, however, we must all do : we must abjure and deny all false feelings of comradeship, misconceived mercy, false softness and false excuses to ourselves. In these things we must regain our courage to be brutally truthful and frank.

" You see, in every organization there are adequate and inadequate people. Even good and valuable men will have their moments, days, weeks and months of weakness and inadequacy, although otherwise they are good soldiers. The world has always distinguished between two types of organizations. The organizations which have perished followed the bad principle : We will not expel this man, we will not take action against him, we will not start proceedings against him, for this would expose our organization. Such an attitude leads to a death which though not quick, is all the more certain, because it is a poison which kills without fail. Other organizations, above all those which have endured, have followed the principle that is necessary to act mercilessly even where friends are concerned ; that one must sit in judgement and pass sentence on them. In particularly serious cases one can then say to a man : Very well, you were hitherto an officer ; you have now been reduced to the ranks. Pick up your rifle and gain a decent name for yourself and your family by dying a decent death. In less serious cases one can say to him : You will not be able to get back your old rank, for it was too high, and you are not equal to it. But you will at least be able to rise to a less exalted rank, and after the war to leave our forces an honest soldier. In the worst cases of all, if it is not possible to grant such mercy, the soldier, SS-man or police-man is sentenced to death and the sentence is executed without mercy.

I believe that in this respect we must be terribly hard against ourselves. If we were not, our enemy, harder still, would triumph over us. We cannot take the responsibility for this ; for after all we soldiers do not live merely for ourselves, but in our hands rests the fate of our nation like a die. We throw for Germany's fate. It is for this we are fighting, for we became professional soldiers as the result of an inner call and vocation. The war, even if it should last for a long time, must never find us tired, for war, though it may be

hard and unwelcome to hundreds of thousands, must be for us professional soldiers the great time of the fulfilment of our life as men. It must be the time in which as soldiers we can with reverence show our gratitude to the nation for having raised us to the highest position in times of peace and for having given us rank and dignity, sustenance and even wealth. As decent men, we who have chosen this profession should indeed be glad and happy to have an opportunity in our lifetime to show our gratitude to the entire people for all that it has given us in such abundance. . . ."

German War Aims

" There is a tremendous prospect still before us. All that we shall have to put up with now, during the coming winter, during which we shall certainly have to beat off and slaughter another two or three million Russians, all these are only passing phases—difficult though they may be—through which we must and shall pass successfully. We shall get through them if the leaders' corps, the officers' corps, is in order, if it leads, if it has faith, and if it feels an irresistible urge to expel every unworthy individual from its ranks. We shall get through all this, this phase which lies before us, and all the other phases still to come, without ever asking how long the war will last. It will last until it is over and until we have won. That is the simple answer for us soldiers. We shall get through everything and we shall be victorious if we are united, if we refuse to allow the least dissension to appear at the top, the least dispute or the least envy to spring up between the different branches of our Wehrmacht or between the different organizations, and if we—and here I speak as a comrade among comrades—never allow any dissension to arise between the Army and the Navy and the Air Force and the Waffen-SS and the Police.

" One thing we know : only if we remain loyal to the oath which we have taken to our supreme war lord, if we are loyal, faithful and united, can we, shall we, win the victory which we are destined to win one day. One day one of our enemies will be down, and one day the others will see that there is no sense in going on. The only thing that matters is to stand our ground and hit back. There may be serious crises ; we shall still have many of them to go through. But we must never lose faith, we must always hit back, and then one day the war will be over. It took old Frederick ten years to attain Germany's confirmation as a European Power. For us the end of this war will mean an open road to the east, the creation of the Germanic Reich in this way or that—exactly how it is as yet impossible to tell —, the fetching home of thirty million human beings of our own blood, so that yet during our own lifetime we shall be a people of 120 million Germanic souls. That means that we shall be the sole and decisive Power in Europe. That means that we shall then be able to tackle the peace, during which we shall be willing to spend the first 20 years in rebuilding and spreading out our villages and towns, and that we shall push the borders of our German race (*Volkstum*) three hundred miles further to the east. And that means, Gentlemen, that we shall then need to have a defensive frontier (*Wehrgrenze*) in the east which will be constantly mobile, which will keep us eternally young, and

from which we shall gradually be able to grope forward (*vorwachsen*) so that our grandchildren and great-grandchildren will have a military security belt such as will be essential in any war of the future if we are not to be smashed to pieces by our enemies' bombs.

" All this, Gentlemen, is what peace means to us, what the end of this war means to us, that wonderful future of which we must think. The moment we look ahead in this way the worries and dangers of the present day, through which we have to pass, appear smaller, because they are small in proportion to the greatness of this age in which we have had the good fortune—we cannot realize this often enough in our hearts—for once after 2,000 years as a Germanic people to have found a leader, our Führer Adolf Hitler. Let us be worthy of him and let us be great enough to be his loyal and obedient followers. Heil Hitler ! "

B. A SESSION OF THE GERMAN PEOPLE'S COURT IN BERLIN

The following is a translation of a report of the proceedings at a typical session of the *Volksgerichtshof*, which appeared in German in the Swiss periodical *Die Nation* (Berne) on October 5, 1944 :

" When I had passed through the entrance door to the People's Court, a heavily armed SS-man approached and asked me in a very friendly manner to enter a small cabinet for a few moments. There I was searched for weapons and photographic apparatus. After these formalities were over I was allowed to enter the court-room. In the gallery there were about 80 people, partly members of the Armed Forces, partly journalists. Behind a long table were five chairs, on which the President of the Court, Freisler, and four jurors took their seats. Another table was reserved for the Reich Prosecutor, beside whom the counsel defending the accused was seated. On that morning only " uninteresting " cases were dealt with ; that is to say that the accused were known neither in political circles nor to the Armed Forces. Nine persons were sentenced during the day. The proceedings began with the trial of an elderly woman, who had been denounced by her servant. The accused looked very pale and worried. You could see that she had been on remand for many months. Freisler opened the proceedings : ' You are Frau Klara Z., 49, born in Berlin, married with three children. Is that correct ? ' The accused then rose, and said in a soft voice that she now had only two children as her daughter had been killed 11 months before during an air raid on Berlin. ' Yes, yes, that is just the point. We shall come back to it later,' replied Freisler. After the charge sheet had been read, witnesses were heard. It surprised me that the President did not swear them in, although they were not related to the accused. The main witness was the servant of the accused. To a question by the President she declared somewhat shyly : ' Frau Z. never talked about politics or events of the war. Herr Z. has for a long time been on the Eastern front. As far as I know, Frau Z. heard from him regularly. Her eldest son was called up about three months before her arrest ; the other son works as an engineer in an Austrian factory. That is all I know about him, for Frau Z. never talked to me much about her family affairs. Her daughter, the youngest of her children, died when she was 17 years old. She lost her life during a raid on Berlin. When Frau Z. learned the news I happened to be in the room. First she stared at me like a ghost, then she screamed : " For all this that Satan, that mass-murderer is responsible ! Poor Germany ! you have gone far." As I regarded this outcry as definitely defeatist and hostile to the *Führer*, I did not hesitate to inform the authorities about it.' ' You acted quite rightly. Such a criminal attitude has to be reported at once. I thank you in the name of the German people,' said Freisler. The accused then confirmed that she had made this remark. She declared that owing to her grief she had been beside herself. The

resident porter (*Hauswart*) of the house in which Frau Z. lived was also called as a witness. Freisler asked him how much and how often had Frau Z. given money to the Winter Help. The statement of the house porter was very unfavourable to the accused, for he declared that she lived very much in retirement, read no Party papers, gave extremely little to the Winter Help, never went to the meetings of the Party women's organization (*NS Frauenschaft*) and generally displayed a very lukewarm attitude. No further witnesses were called.

" The speech by the defending counsel lasted exactly three and a half minutes. It began with good wishes for a long life to the Führer and for a German victory. It concluded with praise of German jurisprudence. In between counsel pointed out, that, although the accused deserved severe punishment, it should be taken into account that her husband and her sons had served Germany. Counsel seemed to be very timid, and weighed every word before he uttered it. He was right to do so. How many barristers had put themselves into the dock, because they had dared to bring out points, however harmless, in favour of their clients ! After half an hour the trial was concluded : on account of her defeatist attitude, her insult to the *Führer*, her abuse of the German people, and her words against the State, Frau Z. was sentenced to death by the axe.

" The other trials were similar in kind. A merchant was sentenced to death because every day for two months he had given bread to a French worker without ration books. Two women also were sentenced to death because they had distributed former speeches of the Führer, which were in strange contrast to the situation, amongst their colleagues. The mildest sentence was one of twenty years' hard labour. All the trials were undertaken on the basis of denunciations. With one exception all the informers were women. They showed themselves very satisfied after the sentences had been promulgated. Freisler never failed to thank them. The German People's Court operates unceasingly. Every day you have the same spectacle : Defeatists of the type of Frau Z. are put in the dock and sentenced. The press now publishes only the names of the sentenced persons, which by the way can also be found on long lists adorning the remaining walls of Berlin."

C. CONDITIONS IN A PRISON FOR POLITICAL PRISONERS IN MILAN

The following details about conditions in the prison of San Vittore in Milan, where, in 1944 anti-Fascist Italians, Jews and others were detained by the Gestapo in co-operation with Italian Fascists, appeared in two articles in anti-Fascist Italian papers, published in Lugano (Switzerland). Part I appeared in *Libera Stampa* (July 10, 1944), Part II in *Popolo e Libertà* (September 4, 1944).

I

" The penitentiaries were the life-blood of Republican Fascism. Germans and Fascists, in harmonious collaboration, started mass arrests among Italian patriots. Hundreds were killed in the theatre in the San Vittore building where the persecutions were carried out under the direction of the notorious N.C.O. (*maresciallo*) Schmidt. When the prison came under the control of the Gestapo, it was intended to be used exclusively for honest men who were guilty only of opposing Fascism, and the Carabinieri, the authorities and the special police were compelled to release thieves, swindlers and robbers and even murderers, because there was no other place of preventive custody. It was only in February 1944 that a wing, with a separate entrance from the Via Papiniano, was placed at the disposal of the police. In indescribable hygienic conditions, about 4,000 political prisoners are massed together in the San Vittore prison, a building of antiquated construction and, in addition, seriously damaged in consequence of last year's air raids. Food, as the saying goes, was insufficient to appease hunger, yet sufficient to prevent death from starvation. The interrogation was the most painful part of the *via crucis* reserved for the unfortunate individuals who entered the iron gates. The victim is taken to a room and his hands, held high above his head, are fastened to a chain in the wall ; beside him stand two assistant gaolers, armed with heavy oxhide whips ready to obey the orders of the inquisitor, who frequently intervenes personally to increase the number of blows. To begin with, the bestial cruelty of the gaolers is wreaked blindly on the victims, then the strokes are made more even and are directed against the most delicate parts of the body, preferably the head, in order to obtain a confession and the disclosure of real or supposed accomplices. The prisoner is next carried to his cell in a piteous state, often at the point of death, and left there for weeks and even whole months in the most complete isolation. Citizens of all social classes, workmen, professional men, industrialists, students, etc., have become acquainted with this bestial treatment. This explains the epidemic of suicides, the majority by hanging.

" The heads of San Vittore are N.C.O. (*maresciallo*) Koch, Corporal Klemm, both of the SS, and Captain Bossi and Lieutenant Melli of the department of special police. . . . The oxhide whip is the emblem of San Vittore. If, in the dismal silence of the prison, a subdued voice

is heard, Klemm at once gives the order which the interpreter translates : 25 strokes of the whip to the entire sixth section to teach them to hold their tongue. If, on returning from exercise, a cough is heard which is suspected of being a signal, or if a prisoner knocks on the wall to greet a friend, the cry of ' Halt ' resounds, and the order is given for 30 strokes of the whip for each man in the section, to be followed by 10 runs round the courtyard singing ' *Giovinezza* ', while the gaolers laugh. Frequently, late at night, the guards get drunk ; then the nocturnal pastimes begin, starting with the throwing of hand grenades against the doors of the cells, races among the gaolers mounted on prisoners dragged from the cells, whom they mercilessly whip (even a general, formerly a corps commander, who was lying in the infirmary seriously ill, was put through this torture), and other infamies of the sort.

" The terrible monotony of the prison is sometimes interrupted by an event which causes the greatest emotion among the prisoners : the rumour suddenly spreads that a convoy is about to depart for the concentration camps in Germany or Poland. Everyone holds his breath during the roll call, which is in alphabetical order ; then the prisoners are loaded on heavily escorted lorries, while in the square outside cordons of guards hold back the distressed crowd of relatives who have rushed out to get news. Within the prison, scenes like those of Dante's *Inferno* take place : all the prisoners break the iron discipline of the prison ; in defiance of the harsh penalties imposed, from the recesses of their cells they scream through their tears to express their solidarity with the deportees and to curse the gaolers. Among those who depart there are whole families of Jews, old men, women in an advanced state of pregnancy, even very small children, who raise heart-breaking cries of despair, while the gaolers push them with the butts of their rifles. It is a terrifying, heartrending sight. The lorries drive quickly to the railway station, where the prisoners are loaded in cattle-trucks which are carefully sealed, and in which they are made to remain for several days without food or water, and in indescribable hygienic conditions. A few days after the departure of the first convoy news was received of the death of a well-known Milanese professional man : Guido Vittoriano Basile. Such is the San Vittore hell."

II

An Italian who had recently escaped from San Vittore Prison in Milan gave the following description of the treatment meted out to political prisoners :

" The treatment of prisoners has very much improved since Sergeants Klimsa and Koch, and Corporal Heimmler, who were chiefly responsible for the brutalities inflicted on prisoners, have been deprived of their authority. At present the prison is under the command of a Czech N.C.O. of the *Feldgendarmerie* whose behaviour is correct. This change of guards occurred owing to the determined intervention of Col. Rauf and Captain Sevecke. Captain Sevecke, a young man of 32, a native of Hamburg, was formerly a naval officer. It can be said of the SS Commandant of the Milan garrison that he has performed his task

with energy but without cruelty. Several times he has intervened personally in the prison in order to recall his over-zealous underlings to the observance of the regulations and to correct procedure. It was through him that Sergeant Klemm, the predecessor of Klimsa, notorious for the tortures he inflicted and the disgraceful means he used in interrogations, was sacked. When the case of 'C' (a patriot whose legs were broken) and the scandal of the butchers Melli, Bossi and Colombo (all members of the 'Muti' Legion) was reported, it was on orders from the Hotel Regina (the H.Q. of the SS Command) that the three men responsible were arrested. When they were subsequently freed by Pavolini, Buffarini Guidi, Parini and other Fascist hierarchs, they were sent away from the prison and received instructions never again to carry out interrogations. At present, these interrogations do not include resort to torture. Disciplinary punishments for the breaking of prison regulations consist of two or three days' 'bread and water' and two or three nights without a mattress, where Corporal Heimmler, when he was undisputed master of the prison, would have inflicted bloody mass bastinadoes.

One of the most serious and unfortunate inconveniences is the lack of specialized staff for conducting the interrogations, which are entrusted, for the most part, to N.C.O.s who in civilian life were engaged on other callings and are absolutely unprepared for that of inquisitors, not knowing how to distinguish between one crime and another, or even between crime and innocence. Thus it happens that many peaceful citizens, who are completely innocent, are kept in prison indefinitely or even sent to concentration camps in Germany, and also that many of the accused, persons of great intellectual and moral worth, have been treated as common criminals. The other day there was a typical case of a colonel who, having been brutally interrogated by a sergeant, refused to answer, saying that his rank did not permit him to give an account to an N.C.O. Sevecke intervened in person, admitting the colonel's claim, undertaking the enquiry himself and paying the latter the respect due to his rank. It appears that the situation has been exasperated by the recent incident at the station, when, following the throwing of a bomb into a restaurant, it was decided to shoot 20 hostages. According to information which I have received from a reliable source, there was a long dispute between the Milan Command, which was against the execution, and the Fascist authorities outside the city, who gave the order. Finally good sense prevailed. At present the 'political' quarters of San Vittore are almost empty. A few days ago a party of about 500 persons, mostly women, was sent through Bolzano to Germany. At the moment of departure there were not the usual cruelties which were the rule with Koch, Klimsa, and Heimmler, willingly supported by the Fascist Militia Sergeant Desio, and Sergeant Nanfredini. It is these five men whom we, sometime inmates of San Vittore, do not wish to forget. They have left many records of themselves on our bodies. We are glad for our companions who remain in the prison, that they have finally been placed where they can do no harm."

D. A SECRET NETWORK OF THE REXIST PARTY IN BELGIUM

In March 1944 the Belgian clandestine paper *La Monde du Travail*, an organ of the Belgian Socialist Party, published an account of the activities of Leon Degrelle's Rexist Party which co-operated with the German authorities. The following is an extract from the article :

" The fact is that recently the Rexist Party—or what is left of it—has been subjected to a radical transformation, which will turn it into a vast spy organization and a centre of anti-Belgian repression.

" In the Liège and Verviers district in particular—presumably the same applies to the whole country—these are the main lines of the new orientation : the staff of *Rex* is directly linked to the SS formations, and will be subdivided into three distinct formations, which will act, however, under the orders of the same chief.

" *Formation ' A ' :* Its aims are to track down clandestine organizations, labour fugitives, currency smugglers and black marketeers. Members are also expected to get rid of any person who might become a hindrance to them or to the Party, either by his activities or by his knowledge of certain facts liable to compromise them. Members wear civilian clothes and carry two 7·65 mm. pistols. They will work in collaboration with the German *Feldgendarmerie* and the *Werbestelle.* The volunteers are paid 3,400 Belgian francs a month.

" *Formation ' B ' :* Members undergo three weeks' military training in a special camp at Salzinnes-lez-Namur. This formation is divided into two sections, one in the uniform of the FC, the other in mufti. This group will consist of 30 men at first, 15 for Liège and 15 for Verviers. It will have the use of five or six cars. The men will be armed with tommy-guns and pistols and receive 3,400 Belgian francs a month.

" *Formation ' C ' :* Members will guard certain German installations (depots, warehouses, etc.) and will also be used as bodyguards for threatened Rexist militants and for ' settling accounts '. The men wear civilian clothes at the moment, but are eventually to wear *Wehrmacht* uniform. Arms are provided by the *Wehrmacht.* Pay is 2,950 Belgian francs a month.

" The entire organization will be modelled on that of Darnand's militia in France. The men have been warned that they will be expected to carry out numerous summary executions as reprisals and will have to act ' with brutality '. Measures will also be taken in case of serious developments in order to paralyse the action of the police and the gendarmerie, which the Rexists claim to have infiltrated with a sufficient number of men to achieve this end."

E. THE CONQUEROR'S IMPRINT

Some time after the liberation of a small part of Holland in the autumn of 1944, a local paper, the *Helmondsch Dagblad* (October 18, 1944) published the following reflections :

" It would have been reasonable to assume that now that the Germans have been driven out of the town and its surroundings, all voluntary reminiscences of this grim soldier-nation would have been wiped out ; four and a half years of Prussianism are really sufficient to make one fed up with it ! And yet their unhappy influence evidently still persists, even now that they have been driven out. People just imitate the Huns, try to appear martial by using the means which made such a repulsive specimen of the Prussian, who had indeed been brought up to handle rifles and guns. One can still detect outward as well as inward manifestations of Prussianism ; people neglect their own style of life, and forget to look at that of the British, who surely display an exemplary standard of manly yet unconstrained soldierly conduct. Why do some people in Helmond still wear German jackboots, the clumsiest of all clumsy footwear, those living symbols of German tyranny ? On a dark night the heavy clatter of such a Hun boot might even now provoke an artificial state of fear.

" For it is an undeniable fact : the showy Dutchman, who in some small post or other pretends to be very important, arouses unmistakable memories of the German private who used to strut across our roads like a proud cock among a thousand hens. Recent experiences have taught us that Dutchmen with a captured German rifle only need a German uniform in order to resemble someone whom they no doubt detest as much as we do. Away with all this false pride, this unfounded pretence of being important ! It has a decidedly irritating effect. We have long enough been tortured by such sights, and it is certainly not essential for the smooth running of our affairs ; just look at the British. Are they not a disciplined army ? We have only mentioned a few trivialities to illustrate our point : a sensible person does not walk about with a photograph or drawing of his brother's murderer in his pocket, neither does he adopt his methods. Therefore do not snarl, because the Germans unfortunately achieved so much success by doing so ; do not utter hidden or mysterious threats to the British, as you did in the past to the Germans. Our liberators might gradually find them a hindrance. In this respect moral reconstruction requires improvement and self-criticism. In post-war Holland, the average person will fortunately be just as little impressed by Prussian methods as before 1940. Holland, which has been annoyed, insulted, besmirched, reviled, abused and tortured, needs calm, dignity, respect, justice and humane treatment. Our whole community is quite obviously trying to find its feet ; we must make every effort to help them ; this cannot be achieved by applying the force of the Hun —that much has been proved—neither can it be done by applying the not so rough methods of bowing and scraping ; all that is Prussian and therefore taboo ! "

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INTRODUCTION : THREE PERTINENT QUESTIONS

(1) K. MANNHEIM, *Man and Society in the Age of Reconstruction*, London, 1940, p. 58.
(2) Dr. GOEBBELS in an article in the German army paper *Front und Heimat*, 5th June, 1944.

PART I : TWO TEST CASES FROM HISTORY

CHAPTER I : THE POLITICAL POLICE UNDER NAPOLEON I

(1) H. A. L. FISHER, *Bonapartism*, London, 1913, p. 47.
(2) N. FORSSELL, *Fouché, the Man Napoleon Feared*, London, 1928, p. 116.
(3) J. GALTIER-BOISSIÈRE, *Mysteries of the French Secret Police*, translated, London, 1938, p. 73.
(4) Further examples are to be found in LOUIS MADELIN, *Joseph Fouché*, Paris, 1900, I, p. 490.
(5) E. D. HAUTERIVE, *La Police Secrète du Premier Empire*. Bulletins quotidiens addressés par Fouché à l'Empereur, Paris, 1908, 2 vols.
(6) All the examples are taken from *Lettres Inédites de Napoléon Premier*, ed. L. Lecestre, Paris, 1897, 2 vols.
(7) *Lettres Inédites*, I, pp. 57—8.
(8) *Lettres Inédites*, I, p. 279.
(9) *Lettres Inédites*, II, p. 47.
(10) Quoted in GALTIER-BOISSIÈRE, op. cit., pp. 126–7.
(11) H. A. L. FISHER, op. cit., p. 31.
(12) *Erinnerungen von Joseph Fouché, Polizeiminister Napoleons I.*, translated and edited by P. Aretz, Stuttgart, n.d., p. 121.
(13) This section is mainly based on H. WELSCHINGER, *La Censure sous le Premier Empire*, Paris, 1882. The book reproduces important documents concerning the French censorship, 1799–1815. (Appendix I, pp. 263–324).
(14) Mme DE STAËL, *Dix Années d'Exil*. Œuvres Complètes, Paris, 1821, vol. 15, p. 191.
(15) *Lettres Inédites*, I, p. 49.
(16) Mme DE STAËL, op. cit., p. 6.
(17) Cf. LADY BLENNERHASSET, *Mme de Staël et son Temps* (1766–1817), Paris, 1890, vol. III, p. 198.
(18) P. GAUTIER, *Madame de Staël et Napoléon*, Paris, 1903, p. 185.
(19) P. GAUTIER, op. cit., p. 187.
(20) P. GAUTIER, op. cit., p. 188.
(21) P. GAUTIER, op. cit., p. 241.
(22) BLENNERHASSET, op. cit., III, p. 523.
(23) Mme DE STAËL, op. cit., p. 159.
(24) P. GAUTIER, op. cit., p. 405.

CHAPTER II : THE POLITICAL POLICE UNDER NAPOLEON III

(1) E. BOURGEOIS, *History of Modern France, 1815–1913*, Cambridge, 1919, p. 392.
(2) Op. cit., I, 391–2.
(3) Cf. E. BOURGEOIS, op. cit., I, 397.
(4) Cf. K. MARX, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, London, 1926, pp. 130–2.

(5) F. A. SIMPSON, *Louis Napoleon and the Recovery of France*, London, 1923, p. 186.

Various writers on the Second Empire have differed in their figures of these sentences and it seems that Republican historians, particularly E. Bourgeois, have been inclined to exaggerate them. Professor Simpson has made out a good case for the correctness of the figures given above ; they are based on a confidential report of Maupas, Minister of Police to the Emperor, discovered after the downfall of his reign.

(6) F. A. SIMPSON, op. cit., p. 188.
(7) F. A. SIMPSON, op. cit., p. 185.
(8) J. GALTIER-BOISSIÈRE, *Mysteries of the French Secret Police*, p. 218.
(9) Ibid.
(10) J. GALTIER-BOISSIÈRE, op. cit., p. 229.
(11) Op. cit., p. 230.
(12) BOURGEOIS, op. cit., II, p. 75.
(13) Cf. F. JELLINEK, *The Paris Commune of 1871*, London, 1937, p. 56.
(14) GALTIER-BOISSIÈRE, op. cit., p. 234.
(15) F. JELLINEK, op. cit., pp. 22–3.
(16) Cf. GALTIER-BOISSIÈRE, op. cit., p. 236.

PART II : SECRET CONTROL IN OUR TIME

CHAPTER I : MUSSOLINI'S OVRA

(1) M. ASCOLI and A. FEILER, *Fascism : Who Benefits ?* London, 1939, p. 56.
(2) Ibid.
(3) G. SELDES, *Sawdust Caesar*, London, 1936, p. 195.
(4) G. SALVEMINI, *Carlo and Nello Rosselli*, London, 1937, p. 16.
(5) H. FINER, *Mussolini's Italy*, London, 1935, p. 242.
(6) Op. cit., p. 247.
(7) Cf. M. ASCOLI and A. FEILER, op. cit., p. 58.
(8) G. SALVEMINI, *Under the Axe of Fascism*, London, 1936, p. 401.
(9) G. SELDES, op. cit., p. 198.
(10) FINER, op. cit., p. 246, and H. W. SCHNEIDER, *Making the Fascist State*, New York, 1928, pp. 134–5.
(11) Cf. SILVIO TRENTIN, *Dix ans de Fascisme totalitaire*, Paris, 1937, p. 33.
(12) Quoted in H. H. TILTMAN, *The Terror in Europe*, London, 1932, p. 254.
(13) Ibid.
(14) G. SALVEMINI, *The Fascist Dictatorship in Italy*, London, 1928, p. 303.

Secret Italian Fascist agents, who acted against anti-Fascist " traitors " were sometimes assisted considerably by groups of French Fascists. A major trial in January, 1945, in Rome of fifteen former Fascist Ministers, generals, secret service officers and officials of the *Palazzo Chigi* threw some light on this underground Internationale of Fascism by revealing the share of a French secret society, the *Cagoulards*, in the assassination of Carlo and Nello Rosselli in Bagnoles in June, 1937. Carlo Rosselli issued an anti-Fascist newspaper in France and recruited volunteers for the International Brigade in Spain. At the instigation of Count Ciano, then Minister of Foreign Affairs, and of Anfuso, his *chef-de-cabinet*, members of the Italian counter-espionage section of the S.I.M. (military intelligence service) discharged the task of eliminating the brothers Rosselli through the " good offices " of the *Cagoulards*. It seems that this organization

aimed at a Fascist revolution in France, and it was said to have contacts with the Nazis in Germany and to desire similar relations with Fascist Italy. Its agents professed the greatest admiration for Mussolini and, for the sake of securing good relations with the Fascists and the gift of 100 Beretta automatic rifles, were prepared to carry out doubtful jobs which might serve the common cause, such as the suppression of anti-Fascists. The trial not only revealed a number of acts of political gangsterism in the later years of the Fascist régime, but also shed a lurid light on the shady dealings of its Ministry of Foreign Affairs and on the use made by it of the OVRA and of the S.I.M. (Cf. the Rome correspondent of *The Times*, 24th January, 1945.)

(15) G. SELDES, op. cit., pp. 205–6.
(16) H. H. TILTMAN, op. cit., p. 303.
(17) TILTMAN, op. cit., pp. 299–300.
(18) BORGHESE, *Goliath* : *The March of Fascism*, London, 1938, p. 289.
(18*a*) Memorandum of Cesare Rossi, paragraph 8, quoted in H. H. Tiltman, *The Terror in Europe*, p. 218.
(19) SARACENI, *Nuova Pratica di Polizia Amministrativa*, Naples, 1929, p. 418.
(20) *Italy To-day*, issue of July–August, 1931.
(20*a*) Reuter report from Rome, 11th August, 1944.
(21) Article 166 of the Public Safety Act of 25th November, 1926, quoted in H. FINER, op. cit., p. 242.
(22) Cf. F. F. NITTI. "The Island of Lampedusa," in *Neither Liberty nor Bread. The Meaning and Tragedy of Fascism*, ed. by F. Keene, New York, 1940, p. 88.
(23) Op. cit., p. 89.
(24) The attitude of the police towards hostages has been minutely described by P. TREVES in *What Mussolini Did to Us*, London, 1941.
(25) *Popolo di Roma*, 28th September, 1926.
(26) SELDES, op. cit., p. 204.

CHAPTER II : THE SS—THE FORMING OF AN ÉLITE FORCE

(1) Cf. F. NEUMANN, *Behemoth, The Structure and Practice of National Socialism*, London, 1942, p. 61.
(2) A. SCHWEDER, *Politische Polizei*, Berlin, 1937, p. 145.
(3) NEUMANN, op. cit., p. 62.
(4) *Die Jahre I–IV des Nationalsozialistischen Staates*, Breslau, 1937, section III, p. 65.
(5) SCHWEDER, op. cit., p. 144.
(6) SCHWEDER op. cit., p. 168.
(7) H. RAUSCHNING, *Makers of Destruction, Meetings and Talks in Revolutionary Germany*, London, 1942, p. 266.
(8) J. C. HARSCH, *Pattern of Conquest*, London, 1942, p. 169.
(9) S. ROBERTS, *The House that Hitler Built*, London, 1937, p. 88.
(10) ROBERTS.
(11) HARSCH.
(12) RAUSCHNING, op. cit., p. 269.
(13) *Das Deutsche Führer-Lexikon*, 1934–5, p. 196, and *Taschen-Brockhaus zum Zeitgeschehen*, 2nd ed., Leipzig, 1942, p. 172.
(14) RAUSCHNING, op. cit., p. 266.
(15) RAUSCHNING, op. cit., p. 268.
(16) SCHWEDER, op. cit., p. 144 and G. D'ALQUEN, *Die SS*, Berlin, 1939, p. 8.
(17) *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 20.3.1942.
(18) SCHWEDER, op. cit., p. 144.

(19) See G. D'ALQUEN, op. cit., p. 8, and P. DEHILOTTE, *Gestapo*, Paris, 1940, p. 29 ; further *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 20.3.1942 and *National Socialist Year Book for 1940* quoted in *The Axis Grand Strategy*, ed. by L. Farago, New York, 1942, p. 469.
(20) H. RAUSCHNING, *Hitler Speaks*, London, 1941, p. 167 ; see also ROBERTS, *The House that Hitler Built*, pp. 112–16.
(21) G. D'ALQUEN, op. cit., p. 13.
(22) *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 20.3.1942.
(23) RAUSCHNING, op. cit., p. 162.
(24) RAUSCHNING, op. cit., p. 176.
(25) ROBERTS, op. cit., pp. 87–88.
(26) RAUSCHNING, *Makers of Destruction*, pp. 266–73.
(27) RAUSCHNING, op. cit., p. 272.
(28) GERTH, *The Nazi Party*, p. 526 ; see also H. SPEIER, *The Salaried Employee in Modern Society*, *Social Research* 1, (1934), 111–33.
(29) O. KOELLREUTTER, *Deutsches Verfassungsrecht. Ein Grundriss*, Berlin, 1936, pp. 151–2.
(30) D'ALQUEN, op. cit., pp. 18–19.
(31) *Juristische Wochenschrift*, 1938, quoted in F. NEUMANN, *Behemoth*, p. 63.
(32) H. HIMMLER, op. cit., pp 18–20.
(33) HIMMLER, op. cit., p. 20..
(34) HIMMLER, op. cit., p. 21.
(35) Ibid.
(36) HIMMLER, op. cit., pp. 22–3.
(37) Ibid.
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(39) Ibid.
(40) HIMMLER, op. cit., p. 24.
(41) HIMMLER, op. cit., p. 27.
(42) HIMMLER, op. cit., p. 30.
(43) HIMMLER, op. cit., p. 31.
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(36) Report by OEHM in the London periodical, *Der Sozialdemokrat*, 30th January, 1943.

CONCLUSION

ON THE ROAD TO THE FUTURE—LEGACIES AND LESSONS

(1) The manner in which these Nationalist cells gradually ate their way into the whole police organism has been well documented in the case of the Nazi movement in Hamburg. (See the two books by H. OKRASS, "*Hamburg bleibt rot!*" *Das Ende einer Parole*, Hamburg, 1934, and ALF KRUEGER, *Der Weg auf dem wir angetreten*, Berlin, 1938).
(2) S. L. SOLON, in an article "How Our Soldiers Live", *News Chronicle*, 8th February, 1944.
(3) F. C. BARTLETT, *Psychology and the Soldier*, Cambridge, 1927, pp. 118–23.
(4) W. L. SHIRER, *Berlin Diary*, London, 1941, pp. 345–6.
(5) GOODWIN WATSON, "Five Factors in Morale", in *Civilian Morale*, Second Yearbook of the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues, Boston, 1942, Ch. 3, pp. 30–47.
(6) G. D. H. COLE, *Great Britain in the Post-War World*, London, 1942, p. 151.
(7) H. READ, *Education Through Art*, London, 1943, p. 268.

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