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TORY DEMOCRACY

A FORUM BOOK

TORY DEMOCRACY

by

Bernard Braine

Bernard Braine has crammed a great deal into a short life. In 1940, he joined the army as a private soldier; in 1946, he left it as a Lieutenant Colonel. He has travelled widely, has lectured in three continents, has broadcast and has stood for Parliament.

In this, his first full-length book, he attempts to put down the guiding principles of his political faith, showing, with passionate conviction, how an enlightened Toryism can effectually reconcile the interests of the community with the liberty of the individual citizen.

TORY DEMOCRACY

by

BERNARD BRAINE

London

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FOREWORD

We live in dark and uncertain times. Abroad, tyranny reigns over vast areas and fear and cruelty are its principal lieutenants. At home, bereft of leadership, the nation appears to be drifting to disaster. We have become dependent for our very existence upon foreign aid, and the decline in our fortunes is reflected in a succession of injuries to our interest and insults to our honour which seemingly we are powerless to prevent. Our cherished freedoms are assailed. The old values upon which British greatness was built are becoming forgotten or are deliberately thrust aside. Hard work brings no extra reward. The trade-union ticket has become more important than the craftsman's skill. Success is no longer encouraged and the splendid assurance of the past is giving way to indifference and blind despair.

At such a time it is not unnatural that large numbers of men and women who have been brought up to believe firmly in the destiny of the British race and who are ready to meet the challenge of the age, are turning to the Conservative Party in the hope that it can rescue the nation from the dread prospect of economic collapse and socialist domination. The moment is ripe, therefore, to restate the basic philosophy of the Conservative Party, and to that end I have written this small book.

But what shall we call this philosophy? To many the word Conservatism has a limited meaning; it smacks of too much tenderness in conserving things as they are and too little regard to the need for keeping abreast of the times. Shall we call it Social Democracy—that is, Social Democracy without Socialism, as Mr. Quintin Hogg suggested recently? But that reeks unhappily of Socialism and conjures up visions of a nation herded into community centres, served by municipal shops and ale houses, restricted, confined and supervised by hordes of unloving officials.

Shall we call it Toryism? I confess that I like the word. It has the downright advantage of being regarded by its opponents as a term of abuse and by its supporters as a badge of honour. If a man says he is a Tory you can be sure that he is proud of the distinction.

To me Britain spells freedom and freedom is to be found wherever the sovereignty of Britain extends. Freedom is the Briton's way of living to safeguard which he has devised his own form of democratic government. The steady, majestic growth of British democracy owes much, as I shall presently demonstrate, to Tory method and outlook. It is my deep conviction that its continued growth, indeed, its very existence, now threatened both from without and within by totalitarian pressures, will depend in increasing measure upon the Conservative or Tory Party.

To describe the philosophy of this party, therefore, and the especial contribution it has made and will continue to make to democratic government in these islands, I have called this book TORY DEMOCRACY. But it matters very little what label I select. Call me a Conservative, a Tory, or a Democrat:

> *Friend, call me what you will: no jot care I;*
> *I that shall stand for England till I die.*

B.R.B.

Leigh-on-Sea
August 1948

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Chapter 1

THE BATTLE OF IDEAS

'A house divided against itself cannot stand . . . government cannot endure half-slave and half-free. I do not expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing or all the other.'—ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

1

OUR country stands at the cross roads of its destiny. Behind the present troubled scene stretches a long and glorious history. No man can foretell with certainty what lies ahead. If it were left to ourselves alone we could not doubt but that the native genius of our people would discover means to surmount all the difficulties which the future may bring. All history proclaims our ability to pluck victory from disaster, to bend before the storm when others of more brittle nature snap, to adapt and develop new ideas and to accept trials and tribulations with good humour and patience. But we live in a rapidly changing world and what will happen to us in the years ahead will depend perhaps more upon the kind of world in which we live than upon any intrinsic quality of our race. But that is no reason why we should not continue the search for good government and for the best method of adjusting our lives to the eternal process of change, a quest which has served as an inspiration to generations of our countrymen and as an example to the rest of the world.

At the moment we face great difficulties and dangers. Abroad we see our friends on the Continent struggling for their lives against the relentless pressure of Communist activity and conspiracy on the one hand and against economic

collapse on the other. We see too a steady diminution of our Imperial power and prestige which, of necessity, must weaken our influence for good in the world. At home our people are bravely struggling against economic difficulties which are due in part to the grievous cost of two world wars in a generation and in part to gross mishandling of our affairs.

Where are we going? What do we mean to do? Shall we take the road to the left? We have already started down that dim path and the prospect which is unfolding is not to the liking of a large number of our fellow-countrymen. If Socialism spells equality, then, its opponents say, it is an equality in misery. If it spells security then, they say, that is a blessing enjoyed also by the inmates of a prison! Shall we then turn sharply to the right? We have travelled the road of unfettered individualism before and there are millions who say that a system which rated wealth higher than men and which led to fortune for the few and poverty for the many is unjust and unkind and they will have none of it. Is there a middle way? Is it possible to find a method which seeks the best and rejects the worst of other worlds, which reconciles authority with liberty, rights with duties and justice with opportunity?

Since Socrates first spoke of the foundations of good government to the youth of Athens, men have argued with one another down the ages as to principles and methods of government and have been willing to fight and die in defence of their beliefs. There is, alas, no final answer to the debate, for politics is not an exact science. Since it is concerned with the government of imperfect men by imperfect men politics becomes a constant battle of ideas. Moreover, no single generation inherits *all* the virtues and wisdom of its predecessors, and the lessons of life and politics which spring from bitter experience have to be relearnt by each successive generation often at heavy cost in human life and happiness.

Politics, then, like life, itself is a constant conflict. In the course of their lives all human beings have aspirations and wants which they cannot satisfy, experience moments of fear,

passion and turbulence; most are tempered in the fire of adversity, some come through unscathed, while for others the battle is too much.

What is true of individuals is true also of nations which are, after all, the sum-total of human beings. History never repeats itself exactly, but it seems to follow a rough pattern. Nations pass through periods of peace and lassitude, of selfishness and complacency; and they drift into periods of war, chaos, and revolution. They develop internal strifes which accelerate crisis, and then, when crisis is upon them, find, sometimes too late, a sense of corporate unity which was lacking before. It is one of the paradoxes of politics that in periods of peace and material prosperity human society tends to sow the seeds of its own destruction while in periods of crisis it endeavours to think again in terms of the brotherhood of man. It is also in the nature of men that when governed by tyranny they struggle to be free, and when they have achieved freedom they call for strong government so that each age sees, in differing forms, a recurrence of the eternal conflict between order and liberty.

A cynic might remark that man has achieved a high standard of excellence in every field of activity except that of his own government, and there he has made a sorry mess of things. That does less than justice to the form of government which we, in these islands, have devised during the last three centuries, a form of government which has been the envy of most of the world and an inspiration to free men everywhere. Governments cannot be imposed upon a people arbitrarily for all time. They must either conform to the wishes of the governed or embark upon costly adventures in order to take the attention of the people away from their domestic miseries. This means war, little wars at first, then bigger wars followed by inevitable collapse. This was the story of the government of the third Napoleon, of Hitler and of Mussolini. It is likely to be the story of all governments which ignore the fact that human society is always in a state of flux and subject to a continuous process of change. The only kind of government so far devised by men which can withstand this process of change is one

which makes a conscious effort to reconcile authority or order with freedom, one which derives its authority directly from the people, is deep-rooted in their affections and commands their respect. This is government by *consent* of the governed, or as we understand the term, democracy. Such is the system of government in Britain.

There was a time when the word democracy had a clear meaning. To Abraham Lincoln and Woodrow Wilson, to Joseph Chamberlain and Winston Churchill it meant the same thing, the maximum of liberty for the individual citizen and the minimum of restraint by government. But to-day the word democracy is used freely by the enemies of human liberty and the archpriests of restraint. According to the men in the Kremlin, 'the Communist Parties alone, expressing the will and aspirations of all progressive democratic elements, are raising the banner of true democracy'. What does this mean? It makes nonsense of truth and is a hollow mockery of all those who since the beginning of history have struggled and died so that men should be free. It is indeed characteristic of the political *malaise* of our age that the plain meaning of words is turned upside down and others are accused of the very sins of which the authors are themselves guilty.

This confusion can only have arisen because democrats have become divided upon the ends which a democratic society should pursue, because they have themselves become confused and filled with doubt.

It is of prime importance to the British people that the matter is clarified. In the social and political debate of our time, in which the issues are obscured by the passions and prejudices of rival ideologies, we must see clearly where we stand. Should democracy be interpreted as the Americans interpret it? That form of government is best which governs the least, a form of polity which offers the widest individual freedom. Or should it be interpreted as the Russian Communists interpret it? That form of government is best in which a rigid dictatorship based upon a single party exercises control in the interests of the community as a whole. Here is a polity in which all economic power is vested in the State and all

individual freedoms, such as the right to criticise, the right to choose what one will make of one's life, are subordinated to the power of the dictatorship.

Forms of government, whether democratic or despotic, invariably bear the stamp of the people they govern; their methods, whether good or bad, are a reflection of the weaknesses and virtues of the governed. It is idle to suggest, therefore, that a form of government which may be suitable for Americans or Russians need be suitable for men and women of British metal. It is a common device of the more moderate Left-wing thinkers to portray democracy in Britain as being half-way between the strongly individualistic society of America and the collectivist society of the Soviet Union. No doubt the wish is father to the thought. But one of the purposes of this book is to show that the best form of government for our people is one which owes nothing to Russian Communism and resembles that of America only in the respect which it has for the *value* of personal liberty and freedom of expression. In short, the best government for Britain is that which seeks to reconcile the Briton's natural desire for order with his passionate love of individual freedom, which expresses his sense of fair-play and social justice, which allows him to argue, to grumble, and to be himself, which gives him opportunity, if he so desires, to play an active part in the government of his parish, or town or country. This is a form of government peculiarly British, with its roots in institutions peculiar to our land, the parish council and the House of Commons, the trade union and the friendly society, the working-man's club and the discussion circle, the public-house and the open-air forum.

A second purpose of this book is to show that our democracy is in serious danger, that while its enemies are not to be found exclusively in any one political party and its friends are to be found in the ranks of all political parties (save those, like the Communists, whose avowed intention it is to overthrow our form of government), both the ends which a Socialist government seeks, and the means employed to secure the ends, are alien to the *spirit* of British democracy and make for its

destruction. For the time being British Socialism poses as the guardian of our democracy. It will continue to do so as long as it is expedient. In reality democratic government in these islands lies in mortal peril from a political method which threatens to become more ruthlessly totalitarian with the passing of the years. Opposed to this pseudo-democratic socialism, which derives its philosophy and method so largely from foreign thinkers who experienced little and could understand nothing of the traditions and characteristics of our people, is Toryism. Here is a creed which is peculiarly British in its origin and development, which is deeply rooted in the history and traditions of our land, and which has no real counterpart in any other country. It is to Toryism which those who desire the preservation of our democracy must turn . . . for in Tory method lies the best guarantee that government will continue to respect the individual, will continue to preserve the fundamental freedoms of the nation whilst ensuring, within an ordered framework, the proper management of the nation's affairs.

First, however, it is necessary to review the nature and development of the violent battle of ideas which has convulsed Europe in the last hundred years and from the consequences of which we can hardly hope to escape. We cannot be indifferent if our neighbour's house is burning; the wind may carry the sparks across the channel and set fire to our thatch.

2

A hundred years ago there was less confusion in men's minds. Europe was seething, but everywhere men laid emphasis upon political and economic freedom. Everywhere men fought for freedom from arbitrary tyranny and were prepared to die for it. The struggle took many forms. For some it was to secure representative and responsible government, for others it was to drive out an alien prince and to secure national unity, for others again it was to secure the rights of working men to safeguard themselves against the exploitation of their labour by unscrupulous employers. But in all cases it was to secure

freedom from what seemed the unnatural and unbearable tyranny of the few over the many. By the turn of the century Germany and Italy had achieved national unity and parliamentary government was in the saddle with varying degrees of success in nearly every major country in the world except Russia. In our own country manhood suffrage and the two-party system were soundly established.

But the middle of the nineteenth century saw the emergence of Marxist Socialism, a new political doctrine which threatened the very foundations upon which existing society was based. It declared that the history of mankind was determined not by human ideas but by economic development and that this operated in accordance with unalterable laws. It declared that each social order contained within itself the seed of its own destruction. As Marx put it, 'capitalism produces its own gravedigger'. It declared that labour was the sole source of value, that the profit motive was immoral, that property was theft, that a democracy which embraced all existing classes was an illusion, that class warfare was a reality and that social revolution was not only desirable but inevitable.

These new ideas were based upon a utilitarian and materialist conception of life. They mocked at religion which Marx called 'a fantastic degradation of human nature', the abolition of which 'is a necessary condition for the true happiness of the people'; they railed at the accepted standards of Christian morality, and they taught that political power could be used to further sectional and class ends. In this way they helped to inculcate a spirit of greed and discontent, of hatred and frustration, and they sought at every opportunity to exploit misery and suffering as a means to advance revolution. 'Every effort is to be made', declared the Manifesto of the Socialist International of 1873, 'to heighten and increase the evils and sorrows which will at length wear out the patience of the people and encourage an insurrection *en masse*.'

Yet it would be impossible to deny that certain aspects of Socialism—its exaltation of the interest of the community above the selfish interest of the individual, its heightening of the public conscience by the laying bare of the social evils of

the day, its emphasis upon the interdependence of men and nations—all these exercised a most powerful appeal to the imagination of millions. And it must be conceded that the movement towards Socialism was, in essence, an expression of the desire of working men for freedom and as such was a projection of the struggle for liberty which was the dominating theme of the whole nineteenth century. For the toiling masses *freedom* meant *equality*. Nor was there anything strange in this interpretation. European civilisation rests upon the twin concepts of respect for the person and the rule of law. The first concept sprang directly from the teaching of the Christian Church that all men were equal in God; while the second was part of the inheritance of Greece and Rome.

The movement towards Socialism was the measure of the dissatisfaction men felt with the social conditions which accompanied the development of capitalism. Ninteenth-century capitalism greatly expanded the wealth of the world. In the name of economic progress it swallowed up the serf and the landless peasant, and brought about an unprecedented advance in standards of living, but it still did not succeed in abolishing poverty and want nor, except perhaps in America, did it break down the existing class structure of society. The advocates of the system frankly believed that economic expansion and progress depended entirely upon the exercise of the profit motive. They did not have to invent the profit motive, since the desire for gain is, after all, deeply rooted in human nature and is one of the chief motivating forces in human beings irrespective of class or race, but they succeeded in elevating the profit motive to new heights. If all human energies were bent to the making of profits, ran the argument, then immeasurable benefits would accrue to all mankind. If, however, capitalism was successful in the material benefits it produced, and none can doubt that it added great wealth to the world in which the humblest of working men shared, it failed to provide a satisfactory social philosophy. It did not provide an equalitarian society and it did not destroy the old class system; on the contrary, the free play of economic forces promoted inequality and created a new system of

intermediate classes, book-keepers, technicians, managers and the like, with the unskilled labourer still at the bottom of the social scale.

It was not strange, therefore, that from the middle of the nineteenth century many should turn to Socialism for salvation. Marx taught that only through Socialism could real freedom be attained, that Socialism alone could provide a classless society in which all men were *equally* free. He taught that capitalism leads inevitably to the merging of the smaller units of private enterprise into combines and ultimately into great monopolies, and that these of necessity must develop a social order in which fewer and fewer persons would control more and more wealth while the great mass of human beings would be condemned to toil and slave for them, becoming poorer and poorer in the process. When this final stage of monopoly capitalism (which Lenin called 'Imperialism' because in his analysis the monopolists would seek world conquest) has been reached the time is ripe for the workers to strike off their chains and seize control of all the means of production, distribution, and exchange of wealth. Power would then be vested in the workers, that is the proletariat, and after an interval, during which the remnants of the former governing classes would be swept away, the classless state would become a reality and social justice would reign for evermore. Marx and his disciples preached this doctrine with such fire and zeal that millions were convinced that it was the word of God. Moreover, many came to the conclusion that if capitalism was in fact destroying itself, it was logical and right to accelerate the process by every possible means. Thus, though there is no sign that Marx was right, his teachings have done much to confuse men's minds, to sow discord and hate and to retard the onward march of civilisation. It is, of course, true that the irony implicit in the belief that progress in human affairs could only come through a deterioration of social conditions, that a state of misery and destitution was the necessary prerequisite of social revolution and that it was the duty of the good Socialist to assist in the disruption of capitalism, did not escape the notice of some Socialist

thinkers and helped to widen the breach between the Marxists and those who believed Socialism could come through reform and revision.

But Marx was wrong, both in his analysis of Capitalism and his vision of the Socialism that was to be. In the first place, the trend of capitalism towards the concentration of businesses into larger concerns was motivated in the main by the desire for more efficient production. This is precisely what has happened and modern mass production has resulted in a cheapening of goods and a general raising of the standards of living in the capitalist countries. Moreover, far from simplifying the class structure and reducing it to a handful of exploiters on the one hand and a huge single class of the exploited on the other, the development of capitalism was accompanied by an increase in the number of intermediate classes between the boss and the labourer. These intermediate classes, the foremen, the clerks, the salesmen, the managers, have become indispensable to modern mass production and the socialisation or nationalisation of big industries would do nothing to remove them. Indeed, if the Soviet Union is to be taken as an example of Socialism in practice, class stratification in the socialist state would tend to harden and the poor proletarian would find that the *free* and *equal* society was as far off as ever.

This is the dilemma of Socialism. It roundly condemns Capitalism, works for its destruction, rails against class but cannot itself provide a classless society. *The historic function of Socialism is that of criticism—it has little of a positive nature to contribute to civilisation.* During the last thirty years most European countries have experienced periods of Socialist government. In those instances where an attempt was made to equate Socialism with democracy, Socialists have been on the defensive, endeavouring to keep their party shibboleths bright whilst operating a system of government and a form of economy in which they did not believe. Socialism first captured the imagination of the masses as a force which would destroy capitalism from *without*. It has either become totalitarian, in which form it revolts the souls of free men everywhere, or

reformist, hoping to change capitalism from *within*. But this latter course demands a considerable surrender of principle and involves reformist Socialist parties in endless squabbles as to whether the degree of Socialism to be applied is too great or too little.

The beginning of disillusionment came in 1914 when the international class solidarity of the European socialist parties crumbled in the face of international war. The German Socialists found that they were Germans first and Socialists second. In France the class war became of secondary importance. In Italy Mussolini ceased to be a Marxist and campaigned for the entry of his country into the conflict. The moment Mussolini's Socialism was submerged in the idea of Italian national consciousness, Fascism was born. As a result of the break-up of the solidarity of European Socialism in 1914, the leadership of the revolutionary movement passed to those who believed that the only war worth fighting was the class war, who thought in terms of violent revolution, of the overthrow of parliaments and other democratic manifestations and the setting up of a 'dictatorship of the proletariat', a convenient term meaning dictatorship of the party caucus. These were the Communists, and when it came to describing what they meant by dictatorship Lenin stated it with admirable clarity: 'Dictatorship is power, based directly upon force, and unrestricted by any laws. The revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat is power won and maintained by the violence of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, power that is unrestricted by any laws.'[1] Later he elaborated, 'The proletariat cannot achieve victory without breaking the resistance of the bourgeoisie, without forcibly suppressing its enemies, and where there is "forcible suppressing", where there is no "freedom", there, of course, is no democracy.'[2] Thus one wing of the Socialist movement declared open war on democracy as the Western world knew and practised it.

[1] Lenin, *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* (Little Lenin Library), p. 19.

[2] Ibid., p. 38.

3

When the first world war came to an end people had very largely ceased to believe in anything. Old values had been destroyed, ancient institutions had been hurled into the dust and an exhausted and embittered world was left with a legacy of political, social and industrial strife with which governments were to grapple in vain.

Both Capitalism and Socialism had laid all emphasis upon the economic aspect of man and had excluded any reference to the other aspects of his nature. Let there be unhindered pursuit of profit, cried the fervent capitalist, and all else shall be rendered unto you! Let us destroy the existing form of society, let the workers expropriate the capitalists, cried the socialist, and the good republic will be established on earth! But man is something more than a cog in a machine, nor can he live by economics alone. It is, unfortunately, only too true that capitalism, despite the great material benefits it brought, was accompanied by social conditions which by their very harshness and lack of humanity gave point to Marxist teachings. Both Capitalism and Socialism looked to economic motives for the development of society and both failed to recognise that power to control man's material environment is but a means to an end, not an end in itself. The end is surely a society which accepts absolute standards of moral values and in which men can live in dignity, self-respect and freedom. There was little of dignity, self-respect and freedom in the slums of Birmingham and Manchester in the 1850's, there is even less in the vast slave-labour camps of the Soviet Union to-day. There cannot be a healthy, happy society if the State does not accept an absolute moral law. Economics are important—and Socialism has demonstrated correctly that they cannot be separated from politics—but the science of economics merely tells us how to organise the production of wealth, it cannot tell us how we should behave, nor can it tell us the meaning of life. Salvador de Madariaga, the eminent Spanish thinker, puts his finger on the fundamental

error of socialism when he remarks: 'Marxists are unable to realise that in the subtle interaction between men and things which weaves the cloth of life, the predominant partner is . . . the spirit of man, and that, therefore, the key to history is sought in vain in any passing form of life such as capitalism, for it lies hidden in the depths of the human spirit'.[1]

It is true that the materialistic nature of both capitalism and Socialism had long conjured up opposition. Throughout the nineteenth century elements in all the Christian Churches raised their voices against the harshness of capitalism and the fratricidal nature of socialist teaching and sought desperately for a new and more satisfactory social philosophy. In Britain a new and dynamic Toryism inspired by Benjamin Disraeli, who taught that the first duty of political power was to elevate the conditions of the masses, rose to challenge the smug complacency of *laissez-faire* capitalism and Gladstonian Liberalism. But there was no parallel movement to Tory reformism on the Continent with the result that the fabric of European society was too brittle to withstand the shock of the first world war. When that conflict came to an end much more than the Hapsburg and Hohenzollern dynasties had been overthrown and cast into oblivion. Men had finally lost faith in political institutions and found themselves in a spiritual void.

At first, however, there was an almost universal acceptance of democratic forms; the war, after all, had been fought, in President Wilson's famous words, 'to make the world safe for democracy'. It seemed to augur well for the future that in Germany, where the ambitions of despots had wrought so much misery, more than thirty million citizens should elect a National Constituent Assembly by a free and secret ballot within a few short weeks of defeat. Nobody remarked at the time that this 'German revolution' had *followed* not *preceded* military defeat and that the German peoples' acceptance of democracy was not due to any inherent love of freedom as such but because it seemed the most practical form of govern-

[1] Salvador de Madariaga, *The World's Design*, p. 201.

ment with which to face the historic fact of defeat. But elsewhere too, in quick succession, democratic republics with popularly elected assemblies, universal suffrage and secret ballot sprang up, while in countries where democracy had been long established popular government was seemingly strengthened and revivified. In Britain the franchise was widened to include women and the rise of the powerful Labour Party, strongly reformist in character and not yet unduly influenced by Marxism, marked the growing political consciousness of the working classes.

After this first flowering of the democratic idea the decay was rapid. The war had intensified economic problems everywhere. The Peace Treaties had largely ignored economic factors in determining the new national frontiers and in fixing reparations with the result that they helped to bring economic ruin to large parts of Europe. In the defeated countries it was heavy enough to bear the humiliation of defeat, yet even for the victors victory had a bitter taste. As the years advanced the high hopes for a new world gave way to a cynicism, an indifference, and everywhere, except perhaps in the English-speaking world, a contempt for parliamentary government.

The effect of this upon states that had arrived too late on the world scene to have acquired much experience in the technique of responsible government, and as a consequence lacked that corporate unity which in an older nation such as ours held people together in times of difficulty and distress, was productive of a violent swing towards extremism in politics. By 1923 Lord Bryce was remarking that the universal acceptance of democracy '. . . is not a tribute to the smoothness of its working, for discontent is everywhere rife, while in some countries, the revolutionary spirit is passing into forms hitherto undreamt of . . .'[1] European democracy was in fact entering upon a crisis that was to gather momentum year by year until the economic slump of 1929 sealed its doom for a decade.

[1] Lord Bryce, *Modern Democracies* (Macmillan 1921), vol. i, pp. 5 6.

Democratic governments not only found difficulty in grappling with the economic problems of the new age, they lacked stability because of the multiplicity of parties. The two-party system is largely a British device. But abroad, each country possessed a dazzling array of parties few of which at any time could command a majority. Some of these obtained power and held it for a brief space of time, not by reason of their possessing a superior policy or by virtue of their instinctive genius but by their art in discrediting the government of the day upon issues which had little real bearing upon the realities and necessities of life. Many of these parties were Socialist labouring to wreck or at least to transform the existing social order, which according to Marx was doomed anyway. Ministries rose and ministries fell, for no government can be stable when it derives its support from multiple groups each bargaining for its own programme, each placing its party advantage above the interest of the nation. Instability became the order of the day. Confidence in the parliamentary system waned rapidly. Marshal Pilsudski, who destroyed the young Polish democracy in 1926, echoed the feelings of millions when he contemptuously described the Polish Parliament as 'a paradise of voluble windbags' and told the assembled deputies, 'Gentlemen, even the flies cannot bear your prattle. See, when they try to spread their wings they fall dead with boredom!'

In the attack upon formal democracy Russia led the way. If the February Revolution of 1917 had given hopes of an emancipated, democratic Russia, the Communist Revolution later that year dashed them to the ground. At the outset the Russian Communist Party, in which was blended the revolutionary and abstract ideas of Europe with the cruelty and oriental fanaticism of Asia, was a minority. Purposefully led, armed with resolution and a complete lack of scruple, it ruthlessly uprooted every likely opponent and every lover of liberty. Over the bodies of Russian liberals, reformist socialists and patriots, Lenin gave the funeral oration to democracy everywhere: 'Democracy', he thundered, 'is a bourgeois-state form . . . upheld only by those who are traitors to

true Socialism'.[1] The echo of this was to reverberate round the world. From 1917 onwards Russia was to demonstrate that the only effective way of imposing a *fully* socialist system upon a people was by force. Henceforward the Communists were to be regarded as Socialists with the courage of their convictions. All this naturally weakened the position of the reformist parties.

From this European atmosphere of frustration and cynicism, with its unresolved conflicts between capital and labour, its sectional selfishness and its fruitless clashes between parties, a new type of leader emerged. He was not in the tradition of the great popular leaders of the nineteenth century. It is impossible to think of men like Mazzini or Disraeli or Abraham Lincoln without thinking of the cause of humanity, which in their different ways these men served. The new leader was not concerned with humanity but with *power*, not with men but with *things*. He did not have to possess great intellect nor great qualities of character, providing he possessed the power of oratory, was able to whip up the passions of the devil, to capture the emotions and to subdue the humanity of the masses. The divine spark of enthusiasm must burn within him and he must be equipped with an indomitable will, knowing but one thing—his personal destiny and the means of its fulfilment.

Such men rose to grasp the opportunity history offered them. Their task was easy. Before their onslaught political parties crumbled in the dust of their own corruption and whole peoples rose to their feet with a new and great enthusiasm. Democracy had failed them. Freedom they repudiated. Had it not been freedom for the few and poverty for the many? Trotsky had put his finger on it when he said of the democratic liberals and socialists who made the first Russian Revolution of 1917 and who governed for a few fleeting months, that their formal democracy was bankrupt in a deep historic crisis and that even with power in their hands they did not know what to do with it!

[1] Quoted by Alexander Kerensky, *The Crucifixion of Liberty* (Eng. trans.), pp. 348–9. See also L. Trotsky, *Defence of Terrorism* (Eng. trans., 1921), pp. 10–30.

Outside Russia the new revolutionary movements were to be coupled with the idea of ultra-nationalism. If liberty was to be a thing of the past, the glory of the nation and the power of the State were to be the inspiration of the future. In Italy the goal was the resurrection of the Roman Empire; in Germany, the revival of former greatness, the creation of a third Empire and the assertion of race superiority. In each country it was some new vision bringing with it fervent hopes to millions and damnation to the rest of the world. By the early 1930's Oswald Spengler, the German philosopher who years earlier had foretold the decay of the old ideas of liberty, was able to write of the new Europe: 'The age is approaching—nay, is already here—which has no more room for soft hearts and weakly ideals. The primeval barbarism which has lain hidden and bound for centuries . . . is awake again'. He was able to write in rapturous tones of ' . . . that warlike, healthy joy in one's own strength which scorns the literature-ridden age of rationalist thought, that unbroken race instinct, which desires a different life from one spent under the weight of books and bookish ideals.'[1] Spengler was right. There was no room for soft hearts and weakly ideals in the age which was approaching, the age of Guernica, Dachau, Buchenwald and Belsen, the age which saw mass murder on such a gigantic and unprecedented scale that the jurists had to invent the new term of genocide in order to describe it, the age in which whole populations were to be uprooted from their homes and cast into slavery, and in which cities and cultural monuments which had stood for a thousand years were to be destroyed. Thank God for the English hearts and ideals which declined to succumb to these filthy abominations.

And so it was that into the hands of the new barbarians the peoples of Europe surrendered their past and placed a trust, a confidence and a power such as no men have enjoyed since the days of Augustus. So rapid was the onslaught upon the Old World that by 1933 only one democracy remained east of the Rhine, the young republic of Czechoslovakia, a lone island of freedom, surrounded by enemies and remote

[1] Oswald Spengler, *The Hour of Decision* (Allen and Unwin, 1934), p.19.

from friends. Five years later she too was swirled into the totalitarian flood.

It is only now, long after the event, that we can see the true nature of the crisis which assailed European democracy in the years between the two world wars, how it failed to reconcile the conflict between order and liberty and how by throwing all emphasis on the side of liberty it failed to provide a satisfactory social philosophy for the masses. We can see also how the reformist socialist parties in every country in Europe were more concerned with fighting yesterday's class battles and weakening capitalism without making it more effective. We can see, too, how with the tempo of events moving faster than the minds of men, democratic governments, fearful of not being able to carry public opinion with them, always lagged behind the new dictators who did not have to wait upon anyone before making a decision. We can see now that the giving of unrestricted freedom of political action to the avowed enemies of democracy was the action of condemned men voluntarily helping the hangman to build the gallows and adjust the ropes. We can see too how preventive war, by which the National Socialist conspiracy against the world could have been destroyed in the bud,was a step psychologically impossible for any democratic government to have taken largely because of the success which the negative pacifism and poisonous influence of the Left had had in sapping the moral fibre of men whose grandfathers had been willing to die for freedom.

Chapter Two

DEMOCRACY IN BRITAIN

'. . . all plants are apt to taste of the soil in which they grow, and we that grow here have a root that produceth in us a stalk of English juice, which is not to be changed by grafting or foreign infusion.'—GEORGE SAVILE, *Marquess of Halifax.*

'I am sure I shall not be misled when . . . I consult the genius of the English constitution . . . We want no foreign examples to rekindle in us a flame of liberty; the example of our ancestors is abundantly sufficient to maintain the spirit of freedom in its full vigour.'—EDMUND BURKE.

1

In these islands we were happily saved from the worst effects that these revolutionary ideas and developments were to have upon our continental neighbours. The accident of geography had long insulated us from the more violent political, religious and social upheavals of the Continent.

There is a certain majesty about the slow steady growth of our political order. Its foundations were laid in the seventeenth century. The wings of absolute monarchy were clipped and the principle of the sovereignty of the people in parliament was firmly established at least a century before the Industrial Revolution swept over Britain, bringing in its train social and economic change which might well have destroyed the whole system if the foundations had not already been laid for fully representative and responsible government. The importance of this is that the idea of political freedom, and the institutions necessary to safeguard it, had had time to develop long before political power was transferred from a narrow ruling class to the people as a whole. As a consequence, the sweeping economic changes which came to Britain in the nine-

teenth century found a system and a philosophy of government elastic enough to withstand the strains and stresses which rapid change would bring. The middle classes had been preparing for power from the fifteenth century onwards. There was no sharp division between them and the landed aristocracy as had existed in France before 1789 or in Russia before 1917. From the early sixteenth century onward the aristocracy was not, as in France, a ruling *caste*, but merely a ruling *class* with its doors open to those of other classes who were willing to accept their standards of behaviour and style of living. Moreover, during the same period, and not without a prolonged struggle, the House of Commons had firmly established the idea of the supremacy of Parliament over the Sovereign and his personal entourage. A politically emancipated middle class which had long been used to responsibility was thus able to accept and assume the traditions of a privileged aristocracy and to step into its shoes without having to take to the barricades or play with the fire of revolution. The result was that the effects of change were softened, continuity was assured, and violent class warfare, which everywhere else was to be led by middle class intellectuals, was averted.

For us the nineteenth century was period of vast economic expansion. Our rich resources in coal and iron and our early lead in the technique of factory production had given us a virtual monopoly of the world's markets. Mass unemployment was unknown and in any case it was an age of general expansion in which surplus populations could emigrate freely to America or to the colonies in search of work and opportunity. For us too the nineteenth century was an era of unbounded optimism. There seemed to be no limit to the expansion of our wealth and power. 'It was a good England for the healthy and successful,' writes Mr. Arthur Bryant, 'a fearful one for the weak and inefficient. Yet for all the gloomy horrors of its growing towns, the nation still had enough of vigorous country blood in its veins to make light of its cancers. It stood foursquare to the world with a confident smile on its good-humoured pugnacious face ready to take on all-comers. Its wealth was growing day by day, its ships

sailed triumphant and unhindered on every sea . . . One just took this strong-founded dynamic island of contradictions for granted and accepted it as a whole.'[1]

The self-assurance of the age, at best a sincere faith in economic progress bringing untold benefits to all men, at worst an unimaginative, self-centred complacency, provided an unfertile soil for the revolutionary ideas of Marx. Whilst on the Continent Marx was to be the most potent intellectual and political influence of the century, in Britain, where he had elaborated his ideas, his influence was negligible. This was remarkable, but it is not difficult to understand for at least three reasons. First, as Mr. A. L. Rowse has brilliantly expressed it, 'There is in English minds a notable reluctance to systematise our reflections upon industry and politics; and when the system takes the highly abstract and semi-philosophical form of Marx's theories, we are apt to consider the whole thing as unpractical and irrelevant'.[2] As a consequence it was not until after the Russian Revolution, when abstract theory was translated into a programme of action, that the Marxist influence began to be felt in British politics, and then only in intellectual circles. Second, the way in which Britain was to meet the economic and social change of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries almost completely falsified Marx's prophecies and made his teachings seem irrelevant where they were not wholly wrong. And third, Marx's conception of Socialism rested upon the central idea of class war, upon hatred and bitterness rather then upon love and co-operation. All this was so alien to the rough, kindly British way with its qualities of friendliness, tolerance and disinclination to malice that it could never seize the imagination of working men and women.

2

As long as we possessed the monopoly of trade we enjoyed in the nineteenth century, we were in a strong position. At

[1] Arthur Bryant, *English Saga* (Collins, 1943), pp. 148–9.

[2] A. L. Rowse, *The End of an Epoch* (Macmillan, 1947), p. 225.

the beginning of the century our population was about nine millions. For long centuries previously we had been an agricultural country dependent upon the products of our soil, the skill of our craftsmen and the courage of our seamen. Then, in the second half of the eighteenth century the inventive genius of our race stumbled upon new and startling discoveries which were to change the face of the world. Men discovered how the application of scientific methods to farming made it possible to rear bigger cattle and sheep and to grow more abundant crops in the fields, thereby removing, over a period of years, the danger of famine which had always been nature's check to population increase. About the same time they discovered how to harness the power of steam and how this could drive the new machines they invented. By this means and the perfection of new techniques of production, the quantity and quality of goods which formerly a single pair of hands could produce was vastly increased. As a consequence the nineteenth century was to see an enormous expansion in the productive capacity, wealth and population of Great Britain. But by the middle of the century the wise men who directed our affairs saw that if this process of expansion was to continue unhampered the co-existence of an abundance of cheap food and an expanding market overseas was imperative. The answer lay in the newly opened-up middle west of the United States, in the virgin prairies of Canada, in Australia, and the rich, undeveloped continent of South America. Up went the cry, away with all Government interference with trade! Away with protection, which is nothing but a clumsy device to shield inefficient producers! If agriculture at home is unable to compete with cheap foreign food, then no matter, to buy cheap food abroad will expand the markets for our manufactured goods, and if men drift from a ruined countryside let them seek work in the factories where their hands are required! Let us have free trade, untrammelled by any consideration except that of buying in the cheapest and selling in the dearest market! Thus argued the *laissez-faire* capitalists and they had their way. And it must be admitted that to industry the arrangement was highly satis-

factory over a long period, but it was not to be permanent. From 1870 onwards the march of industrialisation in other countries began to menace the comfortable security we had acquired. By 1914 Germany was a serious competitor in the world's markets, the United States had already become a great industrial power secure and confident in her strength, rich in her resources, and Japan was fast developing into a serious trade rival in the Far East.

For Britain the age of unfettered private enterprise had already begun to decay before 1914 and the upheaval which followed merely accelerated the process. Cut off by the exigencies of war in 1914 from the stream of British production, industrialisation abroad, particularly in our own dominions, was given a powerful impetus. With the return of peace, Britain found that she no longer possessed a monopoly of the world's markets. Her former buyers had themselves become producers, and countries which had previously absorbed our surplus population as well as our production became our rivals. The result was a rising tide of unemployment, the dread shadow of which was to fall on every British government between the two wars. The change for the worse in our economic position was recognised belatedly in 1931 by the Macmillan Committee on Finance and Industry when it reported, 'We may well have reached the stage when an era of conscious and deliberate management must succeed the era of undirected material evolution . . . our former easy-going ways will no longer ensure our prosperity in a crowded and increasingly competitive world'.

The breakdown of the economic machine by 1929 and the prolonged depression which followed led men everywhere to question whether the system could be revived. As events turned out it was revived in Britain and was strong enough to withstand the pressure of totalitarian war a decade later. Even to-day, after the exhaustion of war, there is little wrong *fundamentally* with our industrial machine, and the extraordinary expansion of the export industries is a testimony to its flexibility and efficiency. What had gone wrong by 1929, as far as our own country was concerned, was that the

conditions governing the development of our industrial system had changed. The markets which had absorbed the products of our staple industries, coal, iron and steel and textiles, had shrunk or disappeared. A single instance will illustrate how sharp was the decline of the competitive power of our staple industries. Before 1914 the cotton industry reached an annual export figure of 7,000,000,000 yards of cotton cloth. By 1939 this had dropped to 2,000,000,000 yards. During the late war the figure dropped still further to 375,000,000 yards and is now toiling painfully back towards the 1939 production level. Here is the key to unemployment between the wars. The *source* of employment is not the employer but the consumer, and the consumer markets of our goods are for the most part outside the British Isles. If demand for the British product falls off then there is unemployment at home and there is little that the home government can do about it. It is this simple economic fact which makes it immaterial whether industry is owned and operated by the State or by private enterprise. It matters very little whether the State or the Nuffield Organisation produce motor cars, since they would still have to be sold in the competitive world outside at prices and a quality which bear favourable comparison with those of our competitors. For us, obliged to live in a competitive world, and forced to export manufactured goods to pay for the food and raw materials we consume, the important thing is the *efficiency* of each producing unit in industry. Our survival between the two wars was due in no small measure to the remarkable resiliency of our industrial system. Over a period the staple industries reorganised themselves to meet the new competitive situation and new industries arose to compensate in part for the decline of the old. Mr. Alfred Kahn has written: 'the growth of "new" industries during the years 1919 to 1939 in the fields of power (electricity) transportation (automobiles, airplanes), engineering (electrical machinery), metal manufacture (aluminium), textiles (rayon), and chemistry (synthetic nitrogen and dyes, coal hydrogenation), permeating the entire industrial structure, belies any facile generalisations about

Britain's industrial decline, about her lack of adaptability or ingenuity'.[1]

This does not seem to indicate any decline in our industrial vitality, but the very reverse. But all this, and much more, was imperfectly understood between the two wars, and the obvious dislocation of the industrial system and the presence of much unemployment gave powerful encouragement to the views of those who desired the establishment of permanent state control over the nation's economic activities.

But the division went much deeper. If man was incapable of organising himself in the economic sphere, then did it not follow that he was incapable of directing his own government? If capitalism was decadent so was democracy in the sense it had always been understood in Britain. After the fall of the second Labour Government in 1931 the Socialist movement swung sharply to the left. Not only were its leaders disillusioned with parliamentary democracy but they began to speak in accents quite alien to the British tradition. Mr. Attlee wrote in 1933: 'The important thing is not to do things with the most scrupulous regard to theories of democracy or exact constitutional procedure, but to get on with the job'.[2] A year later, Dr. Hugh Dalton told the party conference: 'We must take such steps as will lay the foundations of a Socialist Commonwealth *and sweep away obstructions wherever they may be found*'. It is interesting to note that this emphasis upon *action*, a quality noticeably absent during the period 1929–31 when the Socialists had formed the government of the country, this insistence upon Socialism at all costs, was in tune with the temper of the times. It was the language employed by Hitler and Mussolini in Europe and by Mr. Attlee's former ministerial colleague, Oswald Mosley, at home. When Mr. John Strachey wrote as recently as 1940, that the preservation of democracy in the sense of 'government by consent' is not more important than the advance to Socialism,[3]

[1] A. E. Kahn, *Great Britain in World Economy* (Pitman, 1946), p. 105.
[2] C. R. Attlee, *Problems of a Socialist Government* (Gollancz, 1933), p. 189.
[3] John Strachey, *Federalism or Socialism* (Gollancz, 1940), p. 267.

he was not expressing a wholly new and revolutionary idea. Twenty years before Professor Laski had written that in the view of Marx ' . . to introduce considerations of consent, to wait on in the belief that the obvious rightness of communist doctrine will ultimately persuade men to its acceptance, is entirely to ignore reality . . . Communists must proceed on the assumption that nothing matters save the enforcement of their will'.[1]

The whole intellectual trend of the Socialist movement after 1931 laid emphasis upon the need for more ruthless direction from the centre and a considerable reduction of the powers of the House of Commons. Sir Stafford Cripps wrote in 1933: 'The machinery of government may appear of comparatively less importance than the measures which the Government will be called upon to take, yet I consider it to be a primary consideration. Unless some adequate democratic machinery can be devised, Socialists will be left with but two alternatives. Either to seize a dictatorship or else to abandon power and hand it back to the Capitalists. I can regard neither of these with equanimity, as I am convinced that both would mean dictatorship. Obviously a dictatorship of the left based upon a majority in favour of Socialism would be the better of two bad alternatives'.[2] He therefore envisaged the first step to be taken by a future Socialist Government as the placing of an Emergency Powers Bill before Parliament 'to be passed through all its stages on the first day. This bill will be wide enough in its terms to allow all that will be immediately necessary to be done by Ministerial orders. These orders must be incapable of challenge in the Courts, or in any way except in the House of Commons'.[3] And later,' . . . The devising of the detailed administrative methods for the working out of the [Socialist] Plan are not matters with which the House of Commons need concern itself. Ministers with the advice of their administrative staffs and experts should handle the detailed work. Full

[1] H. J. Laski, *Karl Marx—an Essay* (Fabian Society), p. 37.

[2] Sir Stafford Cripps, *Problems of a Socialist Government* (Gollancz, 1933), pp. 15, 16.

[3] Ibid., p. 43

powers to that end should be delegated to them . . .' Mr. Attlee, upon whom was to fall the mantle of a Prime Minister of Great Britain, saw much that was admirable in the ideology and political method of the Soviet Union. In the place of local government machinery was required to ensure effective local obedience to 'the will of the Central Government. . . . It is essential that there should be available in each locality an administrative machine which will be energised and controlled by the Central Government'. Mr. Attlee envisaged the country divided into some ten or more regions each in charge of a Commissioner, who must be first and foremost a Socialist, who will be ruthless—'recalcitrant authorities must be superseded ruthlessly'. 'I conceive the district commissioner as something more than a public servant. He is the local energiser and interpreter of the will of the Government. He is not impartial. He is a Socialist and therefore in touch with the Socialists in the region, who are his colleagues in his campaign. It may be said that this is rather like the Russian plan of commissars and Communist Party members. I am not afraid of the comparison! We have to take the strong points of the Russian system and apply them to this country.'[1] Mr. Attlee might be excused for not seeing, as early as 1934, that his regional commissioners bore at least as close a resemblance to Nazi gauleiters as they did to Communist commissars! The whole trend was admirably summed up by Mr. G. D. H. Cole, one of the leading Socialist intellectuals, who affirmed that ' . . . it will be best, as soon as Parliament has conferred the necessary emergency powers, for it to meet only as often as it is needed for some clearly practical purpose, leaving the Socialist administrators to carry on with the minimum of day-to-day interference. *There will be no time for superfluous debating while we are building the Socialist Commonwealth*'.[2]

Compare these frank utterances with the views Sir Oswald Mosley was expressing at about the same time: 'We seek

[1] C. R. Attlee, *Problems of a Socialist Government* (Gollancz, 1933), pp. 190–1, 204.

[2] G D. H. Cole, *Problems of a Socialist Government* (Gollancz 1933), p. 173.

power by constitutional means . . . the first Act of a Fascist majority will be to confer on Fascist Government the power to act by order, subject to the right of Parliament at any time to dismiss the Government by vote of censure if it abuses that Power . . . In the name of free debate a minority now has the power to prevent a Government carrying out the programme for which the majority of the people have voted . . . an obstructive opposition has the power by endless talk to prevent action by Government'.[1] Between totalitarian socialism and fascism there may be subtle ideological differences but in the field of action there is a remarkable similarity of method and outlook.

In the light of current politics it is of great interest now to look back on the years following the Socialist debacle of 1931 and to observe how Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's 'defection' and the subsequent defeat of the Socialist Party engendered a sense of bitter frustration which strongly influenced the thought of the Left in the direction of totalitarian government. The only warning note was that uttered by Mr. Herbert Morrison, whose astute political sense enabled him to see the practical difficulties of establishing totalitarian government in Britain. In a speech to the Socialist Party Conference at Southport in 1934, he gave a warning. 'A political party, particularly our party, has got to consider in formulating its policies, first, what it wants itself, what it would do if it were living in conditions of political dictatorship *and we were the dictators.* Secondly, it has got to consider what it can get away with in practical political circumstances.'

In 1945 the fortunes of politics decreed that the would-be totalitarians of 1933 should be entrusted with power. The reader can judge for himself what use was made of it, to what degree an advance was made towards dictatorial government. But this can be said. If parliamentary democracy means government resting upon the consent of the governed and acting at all times with scrupulous regard for the rights of minorities, then our form of government is doomed. It is

[1] Sir Oswald Mosley, *Fascism* (Fascist Shilling Library), vol. 1, sections 16–18.

doomed because every Socialist is at heart a totalitarian and cannot face the prospect of losing the power which the favour of the people has conferred upon him. But he will lose power at one election or another, if he plays the parliamentary game according to the rules. One Socialist member of parliament has put it on record in an official party publication that the whole object of the Socialist Party is to achieve '*permanent power* by democratic means'.[1] How can one talk of democracy and permanent power in a single breath!

Mr. Aneurin Bevan has hinted broadly that parliamentary democracy will survive only as long as it serves the Socialist purpose. At Scarborough, in 1948, he made two revealing statements. The first, made at a public meeting, was that '. . . *in* 1945 *we could have made a revolution but we decided against it*'. The second, made at the Socialist Party Conference, was that it was '. . . *still in doubt whether political democracy in Britain is sufficiently self-disciplined to bring about the profound changes necessary without first of all going through political catastrophe*'. Taken together these two statements clearly imply that if the British people do not accept 'the profound changes' which Mr. Bevan and his friends consider necessary, then at some future date they may decide to precipitate 'a political catastrophe'. Thus within the governing party of the country are men who are not prepared to accept the possibility of defeat at the hands of the electors and who seem to be thinking in terms of superseding parliamentary democracy by some form more suitable to their purpose.

It is clear that if parliamentary government is to function successfully then not only must there be a corporate unity in the life of the nation which all parties contending for power are jealous to preserve, but there must be a basic agreement upon fundamentals between, at least, the main political parties. During the nineteenth century, and up to 1914, this agreement existed. Between the Tory and Liberal Parties there were profound differences, but they hardly struck at the foundations of society. The issues which divided the parties, and some-

[1] P. C. Gordon Walker, M.P., *Fit to Hold Power !* (London Labour Party Pamphlet), p. 3.

times divided them bitterly, were such matters as Home Rule for Ireland, the disestablishment of the Welsh Church and Tariff Reform. These were differences *within* a common and agreed premise—the premise that the capitalistic nature of our economy was right and that there was no workable alternative to it, that the institution of private property was sound and beneficial, and that religious belief, constitutional monarchy and empire were the essential foundations of our system of government and way of life. Moreover, despite the greater emphasis the Tories laid upon authority, they were not anxious to concentrate too much power in the hands of the State.

By 1918, however, the old balance of political power had started to shift. The powerful Liberal Party was already on the wane, yielding place to the rising Labour Party. By the mid nineteen-twenties it was clear that the emergence of a powerful Labour Party, as the second party of the State, pledged to implement Socialist policies, together with the influence of revolutionary movements abroad, had created a new situation. The premises themselves were now the subject of dispute. The fundamentals, property, liberty, the constitution, upon which both nineteenth-century Tory and Liberal were agreed, were now assailed with bitterness and invective. But more than that, with the rise of Socialism, the older parties were confronted with men who believed that the greatest good would be served by subordinating individual freedom to the State, and who were not over-scrupulous about the observance of moral law.

As long as the Labour or Socialist Party was the heir to nineteenth-century radicalism, as long as the nonconformist allegiance transferred to it from the Liberal Party remained a guiding force, as long as the Trade Union movement was led by men for the most part conservative in temperament, though not in party, then there was no great danger that our form of government would be weakened or destroyed. On the contrary, the decline of the Liberal Party demanded the existence of a powerful radical party to counter the weight and influence of the party of tradition and authority. But it

is almost a law of politics that radical parties carry within themselves the elements of their own destruction. In the last analysis it was not the Tories who destroyed the Liberal Party but the Labour element with whom it had been in alliance since 1906 and earlier. Similarly to-day, the left wing of the Socialist Party is decidedly Marxist in character and since the debacle in 1931 the influence of this group in shaping party policy has made itself felt in no uncertain fashion. The implacable hostility with which certain Socialists pursue Communist influence and infiltration does not alter the unpleasant fact that their Marxist colleagues *within* the Party, some of whom enjoy high office, are careful never to join in the heresy hunt and thereby enjoy the favour of the *Daily Worker*, and the foreign power for which it speaks. After the General Election of 1945 it was variously estimated that the Socialist Party in the House of Commons included between thirty and fifty convinced Marxists who were Communists in all but name. Of these only one has been expelled from the party; the others are too influential to touch.

The influence of Marxist thought within the Socialist Party can best be measured by the growing disregard of moral law which has since characterised Socialist administration. To give one example; in the debate on the Transport Bill, the Minister of Transport was asked whether he thought the government had the right to take away the property of individual citizens without arbitration, and in reply he said, 'Yes, I think that the Government of the day, which has the will of the people behind it, *can do anything it likes*'.[1] There can be only one interpretation of that. There are no constitutional or other limitations to the powers which a government majority might exercise, if it chose. In other words, the State can rob with impunity, for it is above moral law. Moreover, as the Stevenage Case showed, the State is to be its own judge and jury when its interests conflict with those of private citizens. No better illustration of the complete lack of principle which animates these men can be found than

[1] House of Commons, 28th April, 1947

in their pitiful defence of conscientious objection to military service and their ruthless refusal to allow conscientious objection to membership of a trade union. What kind of morality is it that gives men who decline to defend their country the protection of the law whilst denying to those who have religious or political objections to joining a Socialist Trade Union the right to work at the job of their choice? Ask anyone in England to-day if the law is as widely respected as it was in the past! The answer is plain. When the State departs from the observance of moral law, it becomes the source of bad law and forfeits the respect of its citizens. Democratic government cannot operate for long under such conditions.

The tragedy of the Labour movement is that it has been poisoned by Marxism. There would be less danger to our system of government in an administration led by a man of the earthy quality of Ernest Bevin than by the cold calculating intellectuals who contributed to *Problems of a Socialist Government*—the Mein Kampf of the Socialist Party— more than a decade ago, for such a man is cast in the best tradition of English radicalism. But a hundred Bevins would be insufficient to make a sound constitutional party. The danger lies in the prospect of the Socialist Party breaking up through internal dissension as the Liberal Party broke up more than a quarter of a century ago. If that happens then the bulk of the Trade Union movement, the Co-operative Party and the right wing of the parliamentary Socialist Party will gravitate towards the centre of politics, or perhaps will merge as did the Liberal Unionists and Liberal Nationals with the Tories. In that event the Marxists and their followers will join up with the Communists and for the first time in British politics the nation will be faced with the prospect of Communist government and all that it would signify. It would be a tragedy for democracy if the Labour movement disintegrated in this fashion; and it might well mean the end of Britain. But it would delight the Communists and play completely into their hands. Lenin enjoined his followers everywhere to use every device to enter parliament and obtain

power. The 'dispersion of Parliament', he said, 'would be facilitated by the presence of a Soviet opposition *within* the counter revolutionary parliament'.[1] The 'dispersion' of our parliament would be impossible, without external aid, unless the Communists were to find allies or tools in a substantial part of the existing Labour movement.

3

There can be no better insurance against bad government or dictatorship than a healthy democracy. Now, a democratic form of government demands certain prerequisites. It requires a high standard of public honour and honesty, both in business and political life. It requires an ingrained sense of responsibility not only in those entrusted with power by the people, but in the people themselves. It requires an all-pervasive feeling of communal unity so that whatever political differences there are between individual groups or parties there is always a sense of belonging to *one* nation. It requires an educated electorate capable of understanding at least the broad issues confronting government and people. And from this it follows that democratic government requires the existence of a coherent public opinion and a well developed social conscience.

There can be little doubt that our standards of public life are high, although it is open to debate whether the standards have not declined in the present century. Nor can there be any doubt about the integrity of our public servants. Indeed, whatever we may think of bureaucracy, it is undeniably true that we have the most efficient and least corruptible civil service in the world. But if we enjoy exceptional standards of integrity in public life and public administration it is due in part to the fact that we have developed down the centuries a system of government which has not only limited the political power which men exercise over their fellows but has made it certain that men must answer for the use of power. This does

[1] Lenin, *Left Wing Communism* (Little Lenin Library), p. 44.

not imply that the leaders of a democracy should be in constant apprehension of the criticism or the clamour of the mob, should be hesitant to act for fear of unpopularity, or too ready to bow before every sudden surge of popular passion, but it does mean that all government, whether national or local, must ultimately give an account of its stewardship to the governed. This implies a double responsibility. Since the object of government is to govern, those whom the people choose to govern must not be afraid to do so. They must not be afraid to speak the truth, and in their hearts they should have a love of humanity. No man can be a really great leader unless he possesses an element of humility and a sense of being a servant of some noble cause and not its master. The greatness of Franklin Roosevelt is enshrined in the words he uttered on becoming President for the first time. 'Fame comes to a man because for a brief moment in the great space of human change and progress some general purpose finds in him a satisfactory embodiment.' Such a man is not afraid to face the responsibilities of leadership. Moral courage lies at the heart of great leadership and without it a man possessed of all the other virtues can do little of consequence. 'Courage', Mr. Winston Churchill tells us, and since he is the embodiment of it he speaks with greater authority than any living man, 'is rightly esteemed the first of human qualities because . . . it is the quality which guarantees the others.'

But to ensure good government in a democracy the people themselves must take a responsible and intelligent part. They can do this not only through the ballot box but through their trade unions, their churches and their local government, their clubs and professional groups, and in discussion within their family circle and with their workmates. Through the rich profusion of social groups and activities which make up our national life, people can and should exercise a continuous and beneficial influence upon their government. Politics is every man's business. Even if the people in a democracy do not govern themselves they choose their government and probably get the government they deserve. It is right and proper, therefore, that Government should be subjected to

constant criticism and publicity. If the public are apathetic and uninterested, power will invariably be abused. 'A despotism', wrote G. K. Chesterton, 'may almost be defined as a tired democracy. As fatigue falls on a community the citizens are less inclined for that eternal vigilance which has truly been called the price of liberty, and they prefer to arm only one single individual to watch the city while they sleep.'

This demands a high standard of intelligence and responsibility from the electorate. Politics have become a complex business, difficult enough for the politicians to understand. Can we be sure that education has so far equipped our people to grasp the fact that much more is required of them than the casting of their votes at an election? Is there any inclination on the part of the mass of the electorate to probe beneath the surface of everyday life, to seek knowledge, to enquire the 'why' and 'wherefore' of political decisions? If there is not, then the fault is to be found in an educational system which has been more concerned with the task of equipping the young to become ledger clerks and shop assistants than with fitting them for the adventure of citizenship, or with organs of public opinion like the Press or the cinema which have been more concerned with large circulations or big box-office receipts than with making people think, or perhaps with politicians who have found it more within the limits of their knowledge and capacity to base their arguments on popular passion and prejudice.

It is clear, therefore, that if we wish for good government in a democracy we need not only sound leadership but an educated and politically conscious electorate.

This demands constant and sure guidance, and a political party in a democracy must be prepared not only to govern or to oppose government but, as the late Professor Hearnshaw held, should be ready, ' . . . to clarify political issues, to lay before the electorate carefully considered and practicable programmes, to select capable and well-qualified leaders, to instruct and organise public opinion . . . The electorate is the agent of the community, and party is the educator of the electorate. In order that party may be kept in due

subordination, it is necessary that the mass of the electorate should retain its superiority to party, and that it should be prepared with free intelligence to judge party programmes and party leaders, supporting the good and rejecting the evil, and compelling party to serve the interests of patriotism and humanity'.[1] This implies, of course, the existence of *public opinion*, a judgement of the whole nation which is not to be measured solely by the votes cast at general elections, by the strength of the parties, or by the tenor of the Press, but which is, nevertheless, a real force. Public opinion is an expression of the public will, and while Britain remains a democracy, public will is sovereign.

This is not to say that public opinion is always right, although given the facts on broad issues the judgment of millions of Britons is more likely to be right than the judgment of one man. But no judgment can be sound unless it is based upon an understanding of the facts. If people were oblivious to the dangers of German rearmament before the war and if they have been oblivious to the dangers of deepening economic crisis since, it is not because they are incapable of understanding or lack the courage to face the facts but because their government declined to take them completely into their confidence and to put off the day of awakening lest the impact of grim reality should demand a reckoning.

Between 1933 and 1939 it was clear to men of vision that Hitler would endeavour to master Europe. To the credit of the Tory Party it should be remembered that it campaigned year in year out for a strengthening of the country's defences. It was aware of the grip pacifism had secured over the intellectual life of the nation and the powerful influence it exercised on the political left. In 1933, nine months after Hitler had become Chancellor of Germany, the National Government, then led by Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, lost a bye-election at East Fulham where a Tory majority of 14,521 was converted into a Socialist majority of 4,840. The Tory candidate, said the *Daily Herald*, stood 'openly for a bigger Navy,

[1] F. J. C. Hearnshaw, *Democracy and Labour* (Macmillan, 1924), pp. 75–6.

a bigger Army and a bigger Air Force'. The issue was quite simple, it turned on preparedness or pacifism, and pacifism won. We know now that Mr. Baldwin, who was shortly to become Prime Minister, was gravely worried by the widespread pacifism in the country, was unduly influenced by the East Fulham bye-election so that by 1935 he feared he might have lost an election if he had campaigned for re-armament on anything but a modest scale and that this would have meant government by men pledged to disarmament. He may have been right, although it is fair to add that his Socialist opponents, later his most bitter critics, were wholly wrong. Too little disposition to resist the uninstructed tide of public opinion, to put off the evil day of making decisions which were bound to arouse the enmity of a section, too much moral cowardice in government, nearly brought us to disaster, when finally war came. In like fashion, the refusal of Socialist Ministers to face the grim facts of Britain's post-war position, their blind insistence upon party and doctrinaire measures irrespective of whether or not they assisted the national recovery, and their repeated assurances that all was well may have ensured successive victories at bye-elections, but at the expense of obscuring from the mass of the people the parlous state of our economic position until at length the facts of economic crisis had become manifestly plain to the simplest intelligence.

Democracy needs, therefore, strong, courageous leadership, and a politically educated electorate. To achieve the second it needs an *élite* of men and women who are prepared to dedicate themselves to the task of educating public opinion, of making the electorate aware of the facts behind the problems of government and responsible in the use it makes of the knowledge. Of course, the best way of ensuring an upright, responsible, active citizenry is by the proper education of the young. That is why teachers are among the most important members of the community, for through their hands passes the raw material of citizenship. But education does not end with the student leaving school, in the larger sense it then begins, for life itself is a school and does not always teach soundly. Education,

in the academic sense, should indeed be above party and should concentrate upon first principles, upon making the child aware of his responsibilities to the world in which he is to live and work. But there is no reason why political parties should not labour to educate both their followers and the electorate to a deeper understanding of political issues. There is a distinct difference between propaganda, which is less concerned with arriving at objective truth than with stating a case, and political education, which is concerned with making people *think* about politics, but in the atmosphere of party politics it is not always possible to separate the two.

In the Tory Party, however, considerable success has been achieved in recent years with a movement designed to give objective political education to its members and in particular to its key workers. The aims of the movement are twofold. First, it aims to equip as many as possible with the *facts* behind modern social and economic problems so that a proper judgment can be formed and the larger task of educating the mass of the electorate can be undertaken. Second, it seeks to assist the leadership of the party with a constant stream of ideas and information so that policy can be framed as closely tuned as possible to the needs and aspirations of the people. It hopes to do this, and is already doing it on a considerable scale, through the medium of discussion groups. To-day some 650 of these groups are functioning; they comprise a complete cross-section of the adult population. A typical group might include a civil servant, a doctor, a clerk, a school teacher, and a housewife, it might include trade unionists and parish councillors, Protestants and Roman Catholics, flat dwellers and house-owners, north countrymen and south countrymen, sports enthusiasts and cinema fans, employers and employees, married and single, young and old. The advantage of the discussion method of adult education is that it enables ordinary people to use with maximum effect their own knowledge and experience of life and to enrich these by the exchange of ideas with others. It enables them to express their ideas and to sharpen their faculty of criticism. But its real significance to democracy is that these groups are

invited to discuss current problems objectively *after* a study of the relevant facts, and to report their conclusions to the party leadership. By this means a vital link has been forged between the ordinary folk and their leaders with the consequence that the leadership itself is brought into closer touch with what an intelligent cross-section of the people are thinking about politics *between* elections and not just at election time. Appropriately enough the flow of ideas and information between the leadership of the party and the rank and file has been called 'The Two-Way Movement'. What Tories have done others can do. And it would be a mistake to believe that only Tories have grasped the significance of the discussion method in training people for responsible citizenship. It is already widely used by youth organisations and women's clubs and notable work is being done by the non-party Bureau of Current Affairs.

This I am convinced is the way to a truer democracy. For the ordinary man and woman there can be no escape from politics. The consequences of political action may be good and make for our happiness and well-being or they may be bad, and make for unhappiness and ruin, but there is no escape from them. Better then for the ordinary citizen to take the widest interest in public affairs and to keep an ever watchful eye upon government. Perhaps men will then perceive that in their own hands lies the chance to make of this imperfect world a better and a nobler place for their children and their children's children. Viewed in that light politics is no longer a sordid business best left to a handful of politicians but a splendid adventure for every man and every woman. Men have seen that vision before, and doubtless will again until the end of time. As Aristotle held, 'Our conclusion is that political society exists for the sake of noble actions . . . They that contribute most to such a society may have a greater share in it than those who have the same or greater freedom, or nobility of birth but are inferior to them in virtue, or than those who exceed them in wealth but are surpassed by them in virtue'.

Chapter Three

THE NATURE OF TORYISM

'In the conduct of the Tory Party . . . it appears to me there are . . . points to the furtherance of which we should principally apply ourselves: first, that the real character and nature of Toryism should be generally and clearly apprehended.'—BENJAMIN DISRAELI.

1

ROUSSEAU once said that definitions would be easy to make if we did not require words to express them. How can one compress into a single sentence a whole philosophy of life? How can a few brief words adequately express ideas which have inspired the love and hatred of men for generations? Think of the difficulty of obtaining a satisfactory definition of Socialism which embraces all schools of socialist thought. Not that definitions of Socialism are difficult to make. They abound, bewildering in their variety and contradictions. Alexander Gray tells us that '. . . The internecine feuds between the various Socialist schools and sects provide ample testimony that one man's socialism is another man's heresy, and that a dissentient comrade is usually regarded as more worthy of hatred and contempt than is the common enemy'.[1] But despite the confusion in the ranks, despite the hatred with which the Stalinist pursues the Trotskyist, and the British Labour Party pursues the Communists, the fact is that the Socialist invariably can give a clear definition of his particular brand of political doctrine completely satisfying to himself if to no one else.

Now Toryism is quite different. It is hardly a doctrine. It is not tied to any particular political theory nor is it bound

[1] Alexander Gray. *The Socialist Tradition—From Moses to Lenin* (Longmans, 1946), p. 487.

by any 'iron laws of economics'. Rather is it an attitude of mind, a distinct way of thinking, an outlook, and as such is almost as old as time itself. Perhaps this is the reason why Tories find it difficult to define Toryism, why they are quite unable to reduce the faith that is within them to a collection of slogans and why, unlike the Marxists, they are unable to confine all human experience with the narrow bounds of a single theory.

What is it that determines the Tory attitude of mind? Does it spring from certain instincts deep-rooted in our race? There can never be a completely satisfactory answer to these questions. We can recognise but rarely explain the characteristics of a people. But it is true that in all of us, whether we are aware of it or not, there is a continual conflict of mind between the instinct for *stability* on the one hand and the instinct for *change* on the other. The first prompts us to proceed carefully in everything we do, to prefer the old and tried method to the new and experimental, to preserve things we know to be good, and to respect faith and tradition. The instinct for change leads us to adventure in search of what is new and untried, to rush ahead and often to push aside and trample underfoot what we do not understand.

In most of us one or other of these instincts is uppermost, asserting itself in everything we do, or say, or think. In more mature minds a balance is struck between the two extremes. In politics, where respect for authority and acceptance of things as they are is not balanced by a disposition to cast aside outworn ideas and outmoded institutions, we get the diehard mind opposed to any kind of change. Similarly, where the passion for change at almost any price is blind to the good in existing ways and institutions, where it scorns authority and is contemptuous of tradition, we get radicalism and revolution. This kind of mental outlook finds its fullest expression in the parties of the Left, which, with varying degrees of violence and fanaticism agitate for the destruction of the old order as a necessary preliminary to the creation of their own brave new world. It is, of course, an oversimplification to divide men in this fashion. It is true that

on the Right there are some who wish to move more rapidly than others and that on the Left there are many who are genuinely apprehensive of too rapid a rate of change, but it must be emphasised that it is not the *rate* of change that is so important as its *nature*.

The path of true political wisdom lies between the two extremes. The Tory mind is one which seeks a proper balance between stability and change, order and liberty. This explains why at different stages in the history of the Tory Party it has been possible to find in its ranks champions of order such as Edmund Burke and champions of radical change such as Benjamin Disraeli. It also explains why, when the spirit of the age is one of reaction, the Tory Party will be found to be the champion of change, and when the spirit of the age is revolutionary, volatile and unsettled, it will constitute a rock of stability. It explains why it was possible for Disraeli to say, 'I am a Conservative to preserve all that is good in our constitution, and a radical to remove all that is bad'.

The radical revolutionary, whether he be a mild Socialist or a rabid Communist, is not cribbed and confined by reality. He is a theorist who distrusts and ignores the past. It is characteristic of him that of the past, which by its very nature he should know everything, he is singularly ignorant, while of the future, of which he can know nothing, he pretends to be supremely confident. As a consequence, he is contemptuous of tradition, impatient with the present and firmly convinced that the millennium is only just round the corner. Moreover, he is positive that he alone possesses the magic formula which can resolve all the ills and maladjustments of human society. He is infallible, indispensable and god-like. As a Victorian statesman once said jokingly of a contemporary, 'I don't object to his always having the ace of trumps up his sleeve, but I do object to his belief that God Almighty put it there!'

Now the Tory is less certain of himself. He does not believe that he has a monopoly of wisdom nor even of truth. Life is not divisible into blacks and whites; it is largely an indeterminate hue of grey. A really great statesman is a man who

strives to grasp essential truth wherever he may find it, and one of the merits of Toryism is its capacity to absorb the good in other political parties. The beliefs of a Tory are founded upon human nature, the frailty of which he well understands. He knows that human beings are fallible and distrusts those who pretend they are not. 'Shall we', asks Burke, 'choose for our teachers men incapable of being taught, whose only claim to know is that they have never doubted?' In the field of political action the Tory has to defend, to conserve, to move with caution. He does not live in a world of make-believe as the Socialist is apt to do, but bases his judgments on things as they really are. This has distinct disadvantages. He finds himself reluctant to make promises to the electorate; better to promise nothing and achieve a little than to promise the moon and achieve nothing. In the great political debate the Tory faces the charge of having either no policy at all or a less attractive policy than his opponents.[1] The Socialist, on the other hand, suffers from no such handicap. He promises the moon, and such is his state of mind, that he believes himself capable in all sincerity of translating the wildest promises into reality. It is perhaps a case of confusing the possession of power with the exercise of it. When Mr. Ernest Bevin boasted that a Socialist Government would build four to five million houses in a very quick time,[2] and his colleague Sir Stafford Cripps maintained that such a government would clarify the housing situation within a fortnight,[3] no doubt they believed that such promises were capable of fulfilment. The gap between the promises of 1945 and the performance of the years that followed, the gap between Socialist belief and Socialist action

[1] This is exactly what was said of the Conservative Party after the General Election of 1945. But on the eve of the election Mr. Winston Churchill had been careful to say: 'One thing I will not do, and that is to delude the country into believing that it can look for quick and simple solutions to its problems; that it can tread a broad and easy road to sunlit uplands. The path ahead is steep and rocky. . . . The Conservative Party had far better go down telling the truth and acting in accordance with the verities of our position than gain a span of shabbily bought office by easy and fickle froth and chatter'.

[2] Brentford, 17th June, 1945. [3] Bristol, 22nd June, 1945.

is not an isolated phenomenon, it is peculiar to most Left-wing governments.

Unlike the Left-wing politician who thinks of himself as being so much wiser and more experienced than his forefathers, the Tory has a very proper respect for the past, not for its own sake, but because it is folly to ignore the accumulated wisdom and experience of history which can teach us how to live in the present and plan wisely for the future. 'Experience', said Disraeli, 'is the child of Thought, and Thought is the child of Action.'

It is one of the many mistaken notions of our time that as the years roll by everything gets better as though there was some natural law which improves everybody and everything in arithmetical progression. It is a dangerous and quite erroneous belief. While man may have advanced in his technical mastery over the forces of nature there is not the slightest evidence to support the view that he is any better, kinder or wiser than his forefathers. Each age produces its own evils and our own is no exception. Indeed, when one thinks of the abominable cruelties perpetrated by governments in our time one wants to weep in despair for mankind. How markedly inferior the period since 1914 seems to the half-century which preceded it. In my grandfather's day a single act of injustice, such as the treatment of Alfred Dreyfus, was sufficient to arouse world-wide indignation. In our day injustice and persecution have been the fate of millions. For every Dreyfus condemned to Devil's Island more than half a century ago, a hundred thousand, a million, many millions have been condemned in our time to be tortured, broken and butchered in the hell of concentration camps. Let this be said for the National Socialists—they knew what they were doing and made no pretence about it. But the Communists have invented a new language to cover the monstrous crimes of the new age; murder is called 'the liquidation of fascist elements', the uprooting and forced deportation of whole populations is called 'social engineering', the expropriation of peasant communities, the deliberate use of terror and mass starvation becomes 'voluntary collectivisation'. We can judge for our-

selves how deep is the social conscience of our day when so many of the leading Socialists and self-styled 'Progressives' of our own country shut their eyes to these abominations and proclaim, as does Professor Harold Laski, that 'the solemn truth remains that in the Soviet Union more men and women have had more opportunity of self-fulfilment than anywhere else in the world'.[1]

Progress depends surely upon the ability of an age to rise and meet its problems with breadth and humanity, and upon the capacity of men to develop their personality and gifts. What self-fulfilment is possible within the Russian system, contained as it is by a rigid dictatorship? What of value has this present age to teach us? The Tory can only answer by saying that the present is the product of past ages and that the key to its understanding can only be found in the past, that all the ages are a repository of the collective wisdom and experience of mankind. Wise statesmanship recognises, therefore, that the success of what is attempted at any given time depends very largely upon whether we have learnt the lessons of the past. This historical approach has the advantage of reducing problems to a sensible proportion. As Lord Acton has said, 'History compels us to fasten on abiding issues, and rescues us from the temporary and transient'.

History is not merely a catalogue of wars and crimes nor is it entirely a record of class-conflict as the Socialist would have us believe. It is the vast book of human experience, the record of the achievements and failures of man, and if we profit from the achievements and suffer for the failures we can also profit from learning why the failures were made and avoid building on shaky foundations. The true Tory is constantly aware of the heritage of the past. 'The past', Disraeli reminds him, 'is one of the elements of our power.' It is as though while fixing his eyes on the future, in seeing before him his children and his children's children he is conscious that the past touches his shoulder, that behind him, stretching back into the dim shadows of time, stands that vast company of great men who made this nation what it is to-day. It is at once a

[1] H. J. Laski, *Faith, Reason and Civilisation*, p. 57

sobering and majestic thought that a nation is greater than time, that it is composed not only of the living but of the dead and the still unborn. This is a concept of society which brings men to a proper sense of humility. And since it lays emphasis upon duty and responsibility it is a valuable corrective to the notion some politicians have of their own importance in the scheme of the universe. It is a reminder, too, that expediency, the making-do for to-day and letting to-morrow go hang, is a bad servant, for time takes little account of yesterday's excuses. It is this concept, not the fear and hatred of change, which leads the Tory to adopt a *conservative* attitude, which makes him careful to preserve and hesitant to destroy. His sense of history tells him that the structure of human society is always delicately balanced and that it is much easier to pull down than to build, that revolutionary or ill-considered change can destroy in a few short weeks the heritage of centuries. But his sense of history tells him something else. The nation is an organic growth, and its health and vitality are dependent upon the health and vitality of its constituent parts. The historic function of Toryism is to labour for steady, uninterrupted growth, for the bringing into harmony of all the elements that make up the body of the nation. Neither *laissez-faire* capitalism nor Socialism could succeed in doing this, for the first created the class war and the second depends for its success upon exploiting the class war and producing chaos.

In his haste to establish the perfect state the radical is prepared to ignore the lessons of history. Change is desirable —let us accelerate it, he argues, by revolutionary action. Yet history repeatedly demonstrates that those who ignore its lessons are condemned to relive the past. It demonstrates too that revolution and violent change do not bring greater liberty, but its annihilation; do not make for equality, but the raising of one man or a group above all others; do not promote fraternity, but cause every man to go in fear and trembling of his fellows. History shows also that revolution releases destructive forces which may well destroy the first wave of revolutionaries themselves. Like a river in flood, the

pent-up forces of revolutionary action burst the banks of reason and logic and the rapid rush of waters sweeps away indiscriminately the fine and the noble with the decayed and the rotten.

History shows too that more often than not revolution is merely an abrupt change in the form of misgovernment, a shifting of the burden of tyranny from one pair of shoulders to another. Just as the destruction of Louis XVI produced Robespierre, so Robespierre produced Bonaparte, and the doctrine of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity which had sent a whole class to the guillotine was to lead to more than twenty years of bloody warfare imposed upon Europe by the ambitions of a despot who was himself the offspring of revolution. Violence, of course, begets violence. Behind each revolutionary is another anxious to trip him up. Behind the Girondin stands the Jacobin; behind Kerensky stands Lenin, behind Trotsky stands Stalin. The lesson of revolution is surely that Jacobins and Bolsheviks must be destroyed or else they prevail, and if they prevail the pace of change is not accelerated, rather is reaction generated. It may well be in our time that a revolution is no longer practical politics, for to-day no revolutionary movement can have any chance of success against the apparatus of government of the modern State unless it can be sure of assistance from a foreign power. Thus, revolution nowadays is likely to come only as a result of disguised international war, as in the case of Greece, or will itself lead to the outbreak of international war. Since the nature of modern war is such that the total annihilation of man is a distinct possibility there is a brake on revolutionary action that never existed before.

A further lesson to be learned by revolutionaries is that however noble or inspired they may be, there is always the danger that in the struggle they may be devoured by those who share neither their ideals nor their scruples. 'Every revolution', wrote Ernst Toller, the German Communist, 'attracts people who have not the slightest sympathy for the revolution, but who join it out of lust for adventure, out of muddled, confused moods, out of joy in mere action, out of a passion for self-intoxication, an aimlessness which believes

that it has finally found an aim, and from motives whose "filthiness" I do not want to describe.'[1] In no social revolution have the idealists out-numbered the sadists and the robbers. Revolution means liberty to kill, torture, plunder, burn and destroy. A love of destruction is the bond of unity between revolutionaries. 'We will make a cemetery of France', raved the infamous Carrier, 'rather than not regenerate it after our own fashion.' In his revealing essay on Karl Marx Professor Laski tells us: 'Revolution, in fact, demands of the revolutionary class that it secures its purpose by every method at its disposal. It has neither time nor opportunity for compassion or remorse. Its business is to terrorise its opponents into acquiescence. It must disarm antagonism by execution, imprisonment, forced labour, control of the Press . . . Revolution is war, and war is founded on terror'.[2]

It is not sufficient to say that revolution is harmful and to leave it there. It is clear that weak and ineffective government which has got out of tune with the social temper of the times invites the desperate remedy of violence. Both the French and Russian Revolutions were spectacles of oppressed nations rising against decay. In both instances revolution had become a historic necessity. In the middle years of the nineteenth century Disraeli, for one, could see the makings of revolution in the conditions under which the many laboured and lived. He saw with unerring accuracy that discontent in a people was bred of poverty and misery and that unless these twin evils were tackled boldly, men would be driven to desperate measures. 'We ought to enquire', he said, 'into the causes of the insurrectionary spirit and to find out whether the *conduct of government* is concerned in that insurrectionary spirit.' With rare vision he sought to create a political party which could preserve the framework of society, give it a satisfactory purpose, ensure continuity, yet ameliorate the social evils to which *laissez-faire* capitalism had given rise, even if this meant challenging the existing social order. 'In a progressive country', he declared, 'change is constant and the great question is

[1] Ernst Toller, *Letters from Prison* (John Lane), p. 83.
[2] H. J. Laski, *Karl Marx—an Essay* (Fabian Society), p. 36.

not whether you should resist change which is inevitable, but whether that change should be carried out in deference to the manners, the customs, the laws, the traditions of the people, or in deference to abstract principles and arbitrary and general doctrines.'[1] He thus consciously applied himself to the removal of the causes of revolution, threatening to withhold his support from any ministry which declined to improve the living standards of the people.

Toryism is not therefore concerned with the defence of the existing social order. In the mid-nineteenth century it attacked the selfishness and complacency of the existing scheme of things. Both Burke and Disraeli taught that society was *continuing*, that the past determined the present and the use which each generation made of its opportunities determined the shape of the future. Both taught that there could be no rights without duties. Disraeli went further. If property had rights then so had working men and 'all this misery and all this suffering' he saw in industrial England 'has arisen because property has been permitted to be created and held without the performance of its duties'.[2] If an existing social order is indifferent to human misery and shuts its eyes to human degradation, if it cares not one jot for its social outcasts, if its cares nothing for the mental and physical health of the greater part of the community, then it piles up a debt which has to be met by succeeding generations. If the debt cannot be settled justly a materialist society will find in the long run that it is self-destructive. Disraeli well understood this. In the 1840's he spoke of the rotteness 'in the core of the social system'. He held that the State should be armed with the right to prevent the exploitation of 'its own alienable and untransferable property—the health, strength, honesty and filial love of its children'.[3]

Consider the facts. *The existing social order in the* 1830's *for example, required the labour of small children in the cotton mills and textile factories of Lancashire.* It was Michael Sadler, Tory member of Parliament for Newark, who introduced a

[1] Monypenny and Buckle, *Disraeli*, vol. iv, p. 557.
[2] Ibid., p. 142. [3] Ibid., p. 231.

bill for the limiting of the hours of work of all children between the ages of nine and eighteen to ten hours a day. A select committee was set up to investigate the abominable exploitation of child labour which Sadler had uncovered, he was appointed its chairman, and its subsequent report revealed a tragic state of cruelty and misery. Sadler lost his seat to a Liberal in the General Election of 1832 and the new Liberal Government held that his report had been too partial to the workers and unfair to the employers. Nevertheless he had lit the torch and pointed the way. His work was carried on by the Tory, Lord Shaftesbury, who was largely responsible for the Act of 1833 under which the Liberal Government were constrained to limit the labour in textile factories of children under thirteen to eight hours a day while prohibiting the employment of children under nine.

The existing social order required six-year-old boys and girls to slave in coal mines for twelve hours a day. Shaftesbury's tireless exertions led to a Royal Commission being appointed in 1840 to investigate these conditions. Tory legislation followed as soon as the Liberals were defeated at the polls and the Coal Regulations Act of 1842 put a stop to the underground employment of women, and boys under ten years of age! Yet this measure—the first major reform in the mining industry—excited the bitter opposition of such enlightened progressives as Gladstone and Bright.

The existing social order cared little for the thousands of destitute and orphan children that roamed the streets of every town and city. It was left to the Tory Shaftesbury to organise his Ragged School Movement through which new life and hope was to be given to many of the nation's lost children.

The existing social order took little note of the long, wearying hours to which men, women and children were condemned to toil in the 'dark Satanic mills' of Blake's vision, in bleak, insanitary and unwholesome surroundings. In 1844, Sir Robert Peel's Tory Government limited the hours of women and young people between the ages of twelve and eighteen to twelve a day or sixty-nine a week, while no child under eighteen

was to be employed for more than ten hours a day. Again the opposition came from the Liberals. Mr. Gladstone voted against the ten hours clause, and Mr. Bright described the measure as 'miserable legislation on principles false and mischievous'. In 1847 after a long battle with the Liberals the Tories further reduced long hours by the Ten Hours Act which limited the normal working hours for all young persons under eighteen and all women workers in textile factories to fifty-eight a week.

The existing social order was little concerned with the health of the people. Between 1866 and 1867 the Tories, in office for only a short period, took steps to ensure standards of cleanliness and ventilation in factories, to regulate the hours of women workers, to still further limit the hours worked by young persons and to pass the first Public Health Act.

But the great opportunity to identify Toryism with practical social reform came in 1874 when after a long period of Liberal rule the country returned a Tory government. The next few years saw a new Public Health Act, which was to be the foundation of all subsequent public health administration, a measure to prevent the adulteration of food and drugs, the granting of the right to strike in furtherance of an industrial dispute and the Employers and Workmen's Act of 1875 which placed workmen on an equal footing before the law with employers in cases of breach of contract. The first attempt was made to improve the housing of the poor by the Artisans Dwellings Act, thrift was encouraged and safeguarded by the Friendly Societies Act, considerable privileges were conferred upon Co-operative Societies, and the Merchant Shipping Act of 1876 provided for the safety and protection of seamen. Finally, the Education Act of 1876 made education compulsory throughout England and improved the existing education system. All these reforms and others led Alexander Macdonald, a Labour member of parliament, to declare in 1879 that the Tories 'have done more for the working classes in five years than the Liberals have in fifty'.[1]

[1] Monypenny and Buckle, *Disraeli*, vol. v, p. 369.

It is not part of my purpose to catalogue the achievements of the Tory Party in the field of social progress; such achievement has been the mark of every Tory government since Disraeli's day. Nor would I wish to suggest that social progress has stemmed solely from the Tory Party. From the turn of the century the Liberal Party turned its back on *laissez-faire* and was responsible for a number of important reforms. The positive results of the abandonment of *laissez-faire* are to be seen on every hand. Between 1910 and 1938 the expectation of life of a new-born baby rose by nine years, child mortality fell by half and mortality from tuberculosis fell by more than 40 per cent. During the same period standards of nutrition rose sharply, there was an average increase in expenditure on milk of 12 per cent, on cheese of 35 per cent, on butter of 57 per cent, on eggs of 129 per cent and on fruit and vegetables, other than potatoes, of 72 per cent. Slum clearance—slum dwellings were the legacy of *laissez-faire*—was progressing in 1939 at the rate of a thousand people every day. Between 1919 and 1939 4,200,000 houses were built in England and Wales, or half as many as the total number of houses in the country in 1914. Wage-levels steadily rose and hours continued to fall. Savings of all kinds increased, but most remarkable of all working-class savings increased from £508,700,000 in 1913 to £2,917,900,000 in 1938.

It is clear, at least to those who are willing to face the facts, that the key to the social progress of the last hundred years lies largely in the triumph of Disraeli's outlook and method. It was the Tory insistence that government should ensure justice between all sections of the community, which more than any other factor succeeded in keeping this country immune from the violent social unheavals and bitter class strife which other countries have experienced. To hear the untutored but self-righteous critics of the Tory Party one would imagine that they alone possess a social conscience and a monopoly of achievement in the field of social reform. All history gives them the lie.

Despite all this the Tory does not believe in the inevitability

of progress and is always suspicious of the self-styled progressive. 'What is progress?' Disraeli asked that question in 1849, 'progress where? Progress to Paradise or progress to the devil?'

Every citizen should be warned against parties or groups which label themselves 'progressive'. Such men are doubly dangerous, for their notion of progress is compounded of error and sentiment. There are two schools of progressives, diametrically opposed yet both of opinion that if all is left to them the future must be infinitely better than the past. There were those whom Disraeli abhorred, the Liberal 'progressives' who believed that if man were but free to pursue his natural advantage, untrammelled by any external law or regulation, the result in the course of time would be such a vast expansion of wealth with its material blessings, that poverty, war, which springs from poverty, crime and disease would be banished from the face of the earth. And then on the other hand there are those who plague our own times, who deafen our ears with their denunciations of the past and their promises for the future. These are the Socialist 'progressives', the most advanced of which are the Communists, who believe with childish faith that man is evolving through successive phases of economic development, that with capitalism he has reached the final stage of pre-Socialist development, and that he is now ready to enter the glorious Socialist Millennium. Admittedly, to ensure that future generations will enjoy the happiness and harmony of Socialism, the present generation must endure the cruelty and bitterness of class war and the privation and regimentation of dictatorship. True, before the millennium arrives one must first have a revolution followed by terror and concentration camps, but in the course of time all this will pass. Lenin tells us hopefully that 'when *all* have learned to manage . . . social production by themselves, keeping accounts, controlling the idlers, the gentlefolk, the swindlers and similar guardians of capitalist traditions then the escape from this national accounting and control will inevitably become so increasingly difficult, such a rare exception, and will probably be accompanied

by such swift and severe punishment . . . that very soon the *necessity* of observing the simple fundamental rules of everyday social life in common will be a *habit*. The door will then be wide open for the transition from the first phase of Communist society to its higher phase and along with it to the complete withering away of the State'.[1] What Lenin (and Marx before him) forgot was that the violence necessary to achieve the Communist revolution and the methods of terror and dictatorship required to be employed after the revolution 'would be the one kind of existence in which the impulses demanded by a Communist state had no hope of emergence. For the condition of Communism is the restraint of exactly those appetites which violence releases'.[2] If men are taught that to lie and deceive, to bully and torture are justifiable means to an end, how can one expect them, or a generation bred from them, to act nobly and selflessly, with compassion and gentleness to their fellows? Can one gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even if it be true that capitalism contains within itself the seed of its own destruction, Marxist Socialism carries with it the certainty that pure Communism can never be realised.

These 'progressives' leave out of their calculations the true nature of man. Nor do they understand the nature of 'progress'. If by progress we mean the increasing power of man to master *things*, then, by all heaven, the world is progressing. We master the secret of the atom and it is used to blast into eternity the citizens of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. We discover the secrets of disease and scientists prepare to launch bacillic warfare so that whole populations will succumb to plague. The Tory treats this kind of progress with contempt. Better by far that man remained ignorant than that he should use his knowledge for the purpose of violating moral law. Better by far that man remains ignorant until he learns how to control the evil within him. If sometime the Tory laments for the more spacious and kindlier days of his grandfathers, call him a reactionary if you please, but let us hear no more of

[1] Lenin, *The State and Revolution* (Little Lenin Library), p. 78.
[2] H. J. Laski, *Karl Marx—an Essay* (Fabian Society), p. 42.

these 'windy phrases of progress' as Disraeli described them. Let the self-styled 'progressives' of our age be rebuked by a contemporary of Karl Marx, the great Joseph Mazzini, Italian patriot and Christian gentleman, republican and social revolutionist. 'Those only should utter the sacred name of progress whose souls possess intelligence enough to comprehend the past and whose hearts possess sufficient poetic religion to reverence its greatness.'

The true measurement of human progress, therefore, is the ability of man to master himself, to become 'the captain of his soul'. It is in the passions of the human heart, the weaknesses of human nature that the key is to be found to the history of man. Where men are kept within the bounds of a strict moral discipline and their hearts are deeply moved by compassion society takes a forward leap, but when the moral discipline is weak, when compassion is drowned in self-pity, when men live unto themselves alone, when the pubs and cinemas are full and the cradles are empty, then society moves back. Such a period was that between the two wars, and it gave birth to greater evils than any since the Dark Ages. The secret of good and evil lies in men's souls. Yet Lenin and the abominable tribe of 'progressives' believed that by revolution, iron dictatorship armed with the bloody sanction of swift and severe punishment man could be bludgeoned into readiness for the fullest freedom. What hypocrisy is this! What criminal folly!

Let us be careful not to confuse progress with movement. Speed does not necessarily make for progress. To be able to travel at great speed along arterial roads lined with neat rows of dull-looking houses and poster hoardings does not constitute a very great advance on the days when we jogged along leafy lanes, when it took days instead of hours to travel from one side of the country to another. Our technical advance, in my lifetime alone, has been phenomenal, breath-taking, but has *humanity* advanced at all? Are people happier and more contented? Can they think and reason more deeply? Do they get more joy out of living? Do they feel a greater sense of purpose in living?

It is of course *convenient* to travel at 70 miles an hour

along a straight road—we reach our destination more quickly. But are we any better for it? Are our minds and bodies more refreshed? Are our thoughts richer? Do we make the best use of our increased leisure? The very speed of modern life leaves us bewildered, often unhappy, nerve-wracked, and strangely empty. That is part of the price we have had to pay for the mechanical benefits of industrialism. Too often 'progress' means movement, not forward, but round and round in ever-narrowing circles. The real test is whether change assists in the enlargement of human happiness and the expansion of human personality. If it does that it is welcome. If it impairs these things it is harmful and to be condemned. The historic task of Toryism is not to help the nation in a mad rush forward to new techniques, new forms of government, but to keep techniques and forms of government in tune with the heartbeat of the people, to ensure that the apparatus of living, that is the institutions of the State and the industrial machine, serves the people and does not become their master.

Genuine Toryism is no more to be identified with the view of those who hold that any change at any time for any purpose is to be greatly deprecated than it is with the view of those who advocate indiscriminate change for almost any purpose and at any time. The Tory agrees with Edmund Burke, who described tampering of this kind as 'the odious vice of restless and unstable minds', but who also held that 'the State without the means of some change is without the means of conservation'. While standing for peaceful and gradual change the Tory attitude in this matter is expressed perfectly by Andrew Bonar Law's injunction, 'Do not touch anything unless you are quite certain that you are going to improve it'. Life is shaped by a constantly changing series of circumstances and around us there is working a process of eternal change in the economic, social, political and psychological pattern of our society. A nation's life is, and always must be dynamic. 'Those who resist indiscriminately all improvements as innovations', said George Canning, 'may find themselves compelled to submit to innovations although they are not

improvements.' From Burke onwards Tory thinkers have understood that a rigid adherence to outworn forms and a refusal to face facts squarely or to frame new policies to match the needs and aspirations of the people are as dangerous to the life of a nation as the crackbrained experiments and violent methods of radical reformers and extremist governments, for both extremes will in the end destroy the society which they are designed to preserve or to transform. Toryism is therefore a dynamic creed, which, in the field of action, moves forward steadily, and smoothly, absorbing and tempering new ideas, not shifting its foundations, but expanding them. Sometimes it has been strong, sometimes weak, and it has always been weakest when it has forgotten its principles, but its very ability, most noticeable in times of political defeat, to rethink its policies and to adapt itself to face constantly changing circumstances, has kept it a living vital force in British politics. It has seen the downfall of Whiggery, the passing of the Liberal Party, the period of Communistic revolutionary activity that followed the first world war, the advent and death of Fascism, and the rise and decline of Labour—Socialism. It has survived them all, as it will survive the Socialist Party, drawing its strength not from the defeat of its opponents, but from the eternal principles of life and politics upon which it is founded.

Chapter Four

THE PRINCIPLES OF TORYISM

'The Tory Party is only in its proper position when it represents popular principles. Then it is truly irresistible. Then it can uphold the throne and the altar, the majesty of the Empire, the liberty of the nation, and the rights of the multitude. There is nothing mean, petty or exclusive, about the real character of Toryism. It necessarily depends upon enlarged sympathies and noble aspirations, because it is essentially national.'—BENJAMIN DISRAELI.

'At the head of the book of human government two words are written, Justice and Continuance. These are the Alpha and Omega of the Conservative faith.'—ARTHUR BRYANT, *The Spirit of Conservatism.*

1

POLICIES, as we have seen, are determined by the circumstances of the age, by the changing needs of a people; they may carry a political party to victory or bring it to defeat. When a nation faces deep historic crisis, when the very fundamentals of its existence are threatened, then to understand the causes of reigning discontents and to grapple effectively with impending ruin it is necessary to have recourse to principles. Principles are eternal, unchanging with the years. When they are held strongly they determine our conduct and help shape our destiny. When they are held weakly or not at all we are like rudderless ships, battered by the storm. To understand Toryism, therefore, one must understand its underlying principles and the influence they have exercised on the minds of great men down the ages.

The first great principle of Toryism, and from which spring all others, is the belief in the infinite value of the personality that is in every man. Toryism refuses to regard man as being motivated in all his actions by purely economic

considerations as the *laissez-faire* capitalist school held. Such a materialist view is incomplete, for it excludes all reference to the spiritual nature of man. It does not allow that kindness, charity and unselfishness have any place in the human heart. It does not recognise that there are more important things than the accumulation of wealth and that material progress contributes little to civilisation unless it is accompanied by a heightening of moral purpose. Nor does it take any account of the fact that each man is an inheritor of the past and, through his children, a determinant of the future. 'The spiritual nature of man', said Disraeli, 'is stronger than codes or constitutions. No government can endure which does not recognise that for its foundation and no legislation can last which does not flow from that foundation.'[1] Elsewhere he tells us 'that a people who recognise no higher aim than physical enjoyment must become selfish and enervated'.

Man is individual. In the Tory view his personality is capable of infinite development. But men are not cast in a single mould and the contribution each makes to society during his span of life varies with his natural gifts and scope of opportunity. There must always be an inequality of talent and skill just as there will always be those who lead and those who are led. All human experience proclaims that an equalitarian society in the purely economic sense is an illusion. Let us imagine that by some political alchemy it has been possible to make all men equal, to abolish all class distinctions, to pay equal wages and to accord each man complete freedom of action. Within a very short space of time this new equality will have vanished into the mist. Some men will be rich, some will be poor. Some will be masters, some will be servants. A few will lead, the rest will follow. In a free society material inequality is natural and fundamental. Material equality would be a drag upon progress, for progress would be dependent upon the pace of the slowest. This is not to say that society should not endeavour to redress the balance for each new generation. It must always endeavour to counteract the effects of inequality—this is what Mr. Winston Churchill means when he speaks of 'a

[1] Monypenny and Buckle, *Disraeli*, vol. v, p. 265.

basic minimum standard of life and labour below which a man or woman of goodwill, however old or weak, will not be allowed to fall'. The alternative is an equalitarian society imposed by force. History affords us an example in the attempt which was made in Russia after the Communist Revolution. Trotsky demonstrates in his 'Defence of Terrorism' that there was no other way 'of breaking the class-will of the enemy' and thereby bringing all men down to a common level of misery except by the systematic and energetic use of violence. How many people who, reading of the trials at Nuremburg, where the shabby miserable leaders of the Nazi Reich answered to the world for their monstrous crimes, remembered whence these men borrowed the technique of mass murder? 'We are not waging a war against individuals,' declared a leading Russian Communist in 1918, 'we are exterminating a class.' Priests, doctors, intellectuals, all whose existence menaced the new equalitarian society were swept away. Ralph Fox tells us calmly that Lenin, developing Marx's teaching that the development of the class struggle inevitably leads to the dictatorship of the proletariat, knew that ' . . . only a relentless war, *after the revolution*, against the relics of the defeated classes and their allies, rooting up the very last remnants of resistance, can finally clear the way for the abolition of classes and of the habits of mind and action engendered by the old society'.[1]

But such is the perverse nature of man that this enforced equality could not last long and out of the debris of the old classes there arose a new class structure, the top layers of which embraced the commissars, the generals, the technicians, and the privileged workers indispensable to the working of the new system. Between these new classes and the greater part of the population there is a great disparity in income and material rewards. That this is a deliberate policy is revealed by Stalin's description of equality of rewards as the 'petty bourgeois views of our left-wing scatterbrains'. The price of entry into the privileged classes of the new society

[1] Ralph Fox, *Communism and a Changing Civilisation* (John Lane, 1935), p. 93.

was not the possession of superior culture or natural gifts so much as possession of the party ticket and a disposition to accept, with unquestioning faith, the party line with all its deviations and contradictions. Thus, far from producing the classless society, Communism has produced a class system even more rigid than that which it had swept away. Therein lies a moral for our own country and our own generation. Already the shape of the society which will develop under our milder and less ferocious brand of Socialism can be discerned. Already it is clear that the vast patronage, which a Socialist government will be able to exercise once complete economic power is in its hands, will be used to reward the faithful rather than the able. Nor is this surprising, for it is inevitable in any totalitarian society that the rewards should go to those who can keep their mouths shut and their consciences untroubled. In the modern totalitarian state the governing classes are as sharply divided from the mass of the people as are Brahmins from untouchables.

There is, however, an even more sinister feature of the new society which is shaping in this country. The Socialist Party clearly hopes that wholesale nationalisation, to which Tories are opposed, will result in the workers in nationalised industries voting solidly for Socialism *for fear of losing their jobs*. 'Conservative policy at the moment', wrote Mr. John Parker, M.P., in 1947, 'fails to recognise the electoral strength of the workers in the industries being nationalised. *Even if many of these had opposed nationalisation at the last election and may be critical of some aspects of it when the schemes are going through, they are almost certain to rally in defence of the new status quo once the schemes are through.* . . . The acceptance of nationalisation, if it gives the promised scope for able administrators and technicians in the industries concerned, will undermine the loyalty to the Conservative Party of similar groups in other industries. . . . The Tories naïvely overlook the widespread desire in the lower middle class and upper sections of the working class to secure posts in the Civil Service. Fears of losing their jobs are thus likely to rally the *growing* number of Civil Servants and Co-

operative employees against the Conservative Party'.[1] How little does Mr. Parker understand either the Tory Party or the nation. 'I must confess my deep mortification', Disraeli told the House of Commons in 1846, 'that in an age of political regeneration, when all social evils are ascribed to the operation of class interests, it should be suggested that we are to be rescued from the alleged power of one class only to sink under the avowed dominion of another.'[2] To-day the moral still stands, but the danger is far greater than it was a century ago. Once the Socialist plan is complete, Britain becomes not only a state in which one class dominates over all others but one in which a single party holds undisputed sway.

Socialists are always ready to assert that Toryism supports a class society and thrives on privilege. Where is the evidence? On the contrary, if there has been a steady trend in the last hundred years towards the levelling of class differences and the humanisation of social relations, if there has been any advance in the provision of social services which are a means of redistributing wealth and of making the amenities of civilisation available to all, if there has been a steady advance in the standards of life of the lower-paid workers at the expense of the rest of the community, it has been due in large measure to the social legislation enacted by successive Tory Governments since that of Disraeli.

Economic equality is not, therefore, the natural state of man. Yet both *laissez-faire* Capitalism and Marxist Socialism—the first vaguely, the second with all the certainty in the world—held out to men the prospect of achieving economic equality. Under capitalism, it was argued, every man had the equal right to gain wealth and position for himself, and the system would so enlarge the boundaries of opportunity that no man worth his salt could fail to benefit. Under Marxist Socialism, on the other hand, all would labour for the good of the community, give of their best and receive rewards 'according to their needs'. The essential requirement in the one case

[1] John Parker, M.P., *Labour Marches On* (Penguin Books, 1947), pp. 187–9 (italics are mine).

[2] Monypenny and Buckle, *Disraeli*, vol. i, p. 369.

was obedience to economic laws, in the other, obedience to the omnipotent State. But in neither case was it ever possible to provide economic equality or anything approaching it.

The error of both *laissez-faire* capitalism in the past and socialism, as it is practised to-day, lies in the failure to recognise the spiritual nature of man. As a consequence neither capitalism nor socialism have succeeded in providing a satisfactory social philosophy. Both the exploitation of men by the early capitalists, and the slavery of Socialist totalitarianism, were crimes against the human soul. Both degraded the human being and in so doing violated that fundamental principle of Christian teaching which holds that the individual, however humble, is the instrument through which God chooses to work. This implies that all men are equal in the sight of God, have equal rights in God and being instruments of the divine power, are equal in their duties. Brotherhood *is* a reality, the evidence for which lies within every man. The simple truth was expressed by John Donne, 'No man is an island entire of itself. Every man is a piece of the continent . . . and if a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less. . . . Any man's death diminisheth me, because I am involved in mankind'.

The burning question of our age is whether economic freedom which spells inequality can be reconciled with the essential dignity of man. Is it possible to reconcile the apparent conflict between the *fact* of spiritual equality and the *desire* for economic equality? The answer is not to be found in Socialism. It is more nearly to be found in the Tory concept of an organic society wherein class is a difference of function not of caste and wherein all men are equal in the direction of their government, equal before the law, and equal in their scope of opportunity. Within such a society all men, whatever their function, are worth while; all men possess not only equality of opportunity—the prizes of which can go only to the especial and talented few—but equality in the heritage of civilisation. The distinction is one of importance. It is of vital moment to all humankind that the *uncommon* man is given every opportunity to rise and to make the best use of

his gifts. Without that upward movement of genius our society would become sterile and would perish as soon as it came into conflict with a more virile form of civilisation. There is always a danger that too indiscriminate a levelling will substitute the mediocre for the great, will lay emphasis upon utility rather than beauty, upon average intelligence rather than genius, upon the vulgar and common-place rather than the unusual. It is bound to make for an incredibly dull society (as long as it lasts) although such a society will possess the saving grace that few within it will have the capacity to understand how deadly dull it really is. The *common* man, on the other hand, is little interested in fame or greatness. His talents may be few, his tastes simple. He usually lacks ambition except perhaps for his children. But he has a right to equality in the enjoyment of living. He has an inalienable right to life, freedom and the pursuit of happiness. He should have the right to the basic requirements of food and shelter, to good health and education and to adequate safeguards against the hazards of unemployment, sickness and old age.

Few would dispute this today. Yet a century ago it would have been hotly contested by the 'progressives' of the time. In the 1840's—in the expanding age of *laissez-faire* capitalism —the social injustices bred by a doctrine which accorded full freedom to the strongest to get to the top of the economic ladder and which let the devil take the hindmost, was productive of appalling evils. Illiteracy and poverty were widespread. In Manchester one-tenth of the population lived in cellars and only four out of every ten children born in that city ever reached the age of five. Tuberculosis, typhoid and smallpox were rampant. The average span of life in 1835 was forty years—to-day it is more than sixty. Women and children were working twelve hours a day in the coal mines. Wages were low and there were none of the safeguards for workers that exist to-day. Trade Unions, as we know them, were illegal. There was no social insurance against unemployment, ill health and old age, no workman's compensation, no holidays, no hospital system, no insistence upon pure food and no internal water system.

The 'progressive' and enlightened Liberal view of the day was that man should be free to seek what he wanted out of life without let or hindrance from anyone. If he went down in the process it did not matter. Others would rise in his place. And as the system produced more and more abundance the worst social evils would pass as morning follows night. But any interference with the laws of economic progress, with the freedom of the individual to make wealth, irrespective of the methods he employed, would hinder the process. An elementary text-book of the period expresses this point of view perfectly: 'It is curious to observe how by the wise and beneficent arrangement of Providence men thus do the greatest service to the public when they are thinking of nothing but their own gain'. All this was anathema to the Tory mind, and in all justice and truth, after a quarter of a century of Socialist propaganda identifying Toryism with the worst features of the capitalist system, without ever mentioning mid-nineteenth-century Liberalism, it should be recollected how the young Disraeli denounced these very features and led his party into battle against them. 'Since the passing of the Reform Act', he wrote in *Sybil* in 1845, 'the altar of Mammon has blazed with triple worship. To acquire, to accumulate, to plunder each other by virtue of philosophic phrases, to propose a Utopia to consist only of Wealth and Toil, this has been the breathless business of an enfranchised England . . . until we are startled from our voracious strife by the wail of intolerable serfage.' This was much more than a protest. It was a trumpet call to battle. The way was hard. Disraeli was derided, laughed at, and spent long years in the political wilderness. He never ceased to argue that the first duty of 'government' was to look to the health and well-being of the people. 'It must be obvious', he told the House of Commons, 'to all who consider the condition of the multitude with a desire to improve and elevate it, that no important step can be gained unless you effect some reduction of their hours of labour and humanise their toil . . . I ventured to say a short time ago that the health of the people was the most important subject for a statesman. It is a large subject. It has many

branches. It involves the state of dwelling of the people of which the moral consequences are not less considerable than the physical. It involves their enjoyment of some of the chief elements of nature—air, light and water. It involves the regulation of their industry, the inspection of their toil. It involves the purity of their provisions and it touches upon all the means by which you may wean them from habits of excess and brutality. . . . Well, it may be the policy of sewerage to a Liberal Member of Parliament. But to one of the labouring multitude of England, who has found fever always to be one of the inmates of his household—who has, year after year, seen stricken down the children of his loins, on whose sympathy and support he has looked with hope and confidence, it is not a policy of sewerage but a question of life and death.'[1] There is very little that is new, therefore, in the Tory demand that government should ensure equality for all men in the sharing of the benefits of our common civilisation.

2

From this conception of society flow all the guiding principles of the Tory faith. Toryism is, in fact, the doctrine of continuity and conservation seeking to preserve those institutions and ways of life which successive generations have developed and have found beneficent.

The institutions which serve an organic society cannot be superimposed from above. They must grow from the people and evolve naturally through time. It is no accident that the British constitution is unwritten and that it has survived the test of time while the near-perfect written constitutions of other countries have been short-lived. Our constitution has survived the test of time precisely *because* it is a natural growth, dependent much *less* upon outward forms than upon the spirit with which it is operated. 'The virtue, spirit and essence

[1] Speech at the Crystal Palace, 24th June, 1872.

of a House of Commons', said Burke, 'consists in its being the express image of the feelings of the nation.' That is at least as true to-day as it was in the eighteenth century.

Toryism, therefore, encourages respect for our ancient monarchy, which is at once the focal-point of our national and imperial loyalties, for parliamentary government in which our liberties reside, for religion which is the core of our national way of life, for the family which is the basic unit of our society, and for the British Empire which, in all humility, it regards as the greatest contribution ever made to ordered civilisation by a single people. When the Tory Party first called itself Conservative in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, all these things, which, down the ages, it has sought jealously to guard, were thought to be imperilled. Conservatism does not mean the conservation of privilege, nor exclusively of material things. On the contrary, it stands for the conservation of the national inheritance in which must be included those institutions of State which ensure the continuity of our way of life and the safeguarding of our ancient liberties. There is no better example of this than the Crown itself. 'The King is dead, long live the King' is not a contradiction in terms or a play on words but a solemn declaration of continuity, a reminder that while men are mortal, the nation as symbolised in its institutions lives on, renewing itself in each successive generation.

Perhaps the most important principle which flows from the Tory concept of an organic society is that of national unity. The nation is not just the sum-total of the individuals who compose it; it is a web of families derived from common stock, just as the British Commonwealth is a web of nations bound together in common sympathy and interest. Herein lies a vital principle of government. Toryism can never be concerned with classes as such, but only with causes common to all classes. Since the eighteenth century the Tory Party has been consistently obedient to this principle. 'If the Tory Party is not a national party,' said Disraeli, 'it is nothing.'[1] And when he railed against the 'two Englands' into which nine-

[1] Monypenny and Buckle, *Disraeli*, vol. iv, p. 415.

teenth-century industrialism was dividing the people, when he perceived on the one hand the new rich, whose wealth was not accompanied by a sense of social responsibility, and on the other, the new poor, a class of grey-faced men and women, divorced from the soil which had nurtured their ancestors for countless generations, and who were now crowding into stinking slums, he saw with clarity, as did Marx, that the economics of *laissez-faire* capitalism would lead inevitably to class conflict, social revolution and the destruction of the nation.

Half a century earlier, Edmund Burke had expressed perfectly the idea of *one* nation when, speaking of the role of Parliament, he described it as ' . . . not a congress of ambassadors from different and hostile interests, which interests each must maintain . . . ' but 'a deliberative assembly *of one nation, with one interest, that of the whole*'. The moment a government succumbs to the temptation to favour a particular class to the detriment of the whole, the nation is doomed. Government is then subjected to constant pressure from class or sectional interests. Opposition, if it is allowed to flourish, will tend to become identified with those classes which consider their existence threatened. Thus men will not vote according to their conscience as to whether a particular government or policy is good or bad, but according to what they conceive to be their *class interest.* Democratic government would be impossible under such conditions.

However ineffective our first post-war Socialist Government may be, it has made one thing abundantly clear and that is that the middle classes of Britain stand in the way of Socialism and must be crippled before any substantial advance can be made. Belfort Bax put the issue simply when he said many years ago that the middle class ' . . . will have to be suppressed before we can hope to see even the inauguration of a consciously Socialist policy. It must be destroyed or materially crippled as a class before real progress can be made'.

Let us be quite clear about class warfare. It is the child of

the warped intellect.[1] It is born of the desire to hate and destroy. It aims not at the construction of something new and better but at the destruction of what already exists, and its main appeal lies in envy and hatred not of a class as such, but of a cultural superiority. And as both Fascists and Communists well understand, nothing succeeds in welding ignorant men together better than envy or hatred. But who directs the appeal? Working men who burn with a sense of injustice? By no means. The politically conscious working class is but the instrument by which capitalist society is to be overthrown. Engels, the employer of sweated labour, writing to Marx, the petty bourgeois, in December, 1851, put the matter plainly when he enquired contemptuously, 'What is the rabble good for if it forgets how to fight?' To whom go the prizes of Socialist struggle? Certainly not to the workers. As socialist working men found out in Russia twenty-five years ago, as they are finding out in the nationalised industries of Britain to-day, the transfer of ownership of the means of production from the boss to the State brings about no change in the *status* of the worker. The prizes of Socialist struggle go to the *déclassé* intellectuals and professional revolutionaries who are to be found at the head of every so-called workers' party in the world, and for confirmation of which one can find on the Socialist benches in any parliament or national assembly. But whether British Socialists are seriously determined to preach class hatred or not, and it is clear that they are somewhat divided on the subject, it is equally clear that there could be no more effective way of destroying our country from within.

It must be emphasised, however, that the task of those who wish to fan the flames of class war in this country has been made infinitely more difficult by the way in which the class structure of our society has obstinately refused to conform to Marxist prophecy. To wage the class war with

[1] Joseph Mazzini said of Marx, 'Hatred outweighs love in his heart.' This might equally have been said of one of Mr. Attlee's colleagues who has publicly stated his 'deep, burning hatred' of millions of his fellow-countrymen.

any degree of success there must be a clear line of demarcation between the 'exploiters' and the 'exploited', between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat (nothing demonstrates the alien origin of Socialism more clearly than the use of these foreign terms which have no counterpart in the richest of all languages). But in Britain no such line exists. 'Bourgeois', Lenin conveniently explains, 'means an owner of property . . . A big bourgeois is the owner of big property. A petty bourgeois is the owner of small property.' How then do we define a working-class family with £250 in savings certificates? How do we define the workman who owns his own house? What of the smallholder? What of the bricklayer whose sons are respectively a school teacher and a publican? What of the working-class girl who marries a small shopkeeper? These examples are of general application. But we can go further. From miners' cottages in South Wales and humble crofts in the Western Isles has flowed a steady stream of brilliant young men to enrich the professions and swell the ranks of what Marx and Lenin contemptuously termed the bourgeoise. Our society is not static. There is a constant movement up and down the social scale which over several generations will elevate the best and humble those who cannot or will not take advantage of what life offers. In such a society there can be no rigid class distinctions and the class war loses all meaning; but those who continue to preach it—and they abound in the Socialist Party—are like vermin gnawing away at the roots of the nation, disseminating social poison and wasting political energy which might be better directed to the proper government of the people.

It is not what men may say or even what they mean to say that really matters. It is by their deeds that they are judged. And the deeds of British Socialism point unmistakably in the direction of less not more freedom, of less not more efficient government and of less not more national unity. The sense of corporate unity was never higher in Britain than when the Socialist Government took office in 1945. For the previous five years the spiritual and martial unity of the British people, fighting the battle of their lives, astonished

the world and commanded its admiration. 'We are the most united of all the nations,' said Mr. Churchill in August 1940, 'because we entered the war upon the national will and with our eyes open, and because we have been nurtured in freedom and individual responsibility and are the products, not of totalitarian uniformity but of tolerance and variety.' In an earlier age Ralph Waldo Emerson had observed the 'solidarity, or responsibleness, or trust in each other' displayed by all classes of the British people, 'the difference of rank does not divide the national heart'. But since 1945, this great spirit of unity, this underlying brotherhood, has been assailed by the deliberate fostering of class strife and sectional interest. And with Socialists in the saddle it is inevitable that it should be so. There can be no other way of constructing Socialism save through class warfare.

The principle of national unity embraces also the idea of patriotism. Love of country is after all an instinct as deeply rooted in a race as maternal love is rooted in a woman. It can be foolish, it can be blind, and it can be a great and imponderable force binding a people together in misfortune, uplifting them in despair and inspiring them in struggle. But whatever it is, it cannot be explained away. It was not the class war nor the United Nations which proved to be the central idea around which the resistance movements rallied against the Nazis. It was primarily the idea of nation, the concept of a free France or a free Poland. Mr. Keith Feiling tells us: 'No formula for men's life has yet appeared so strong as race and none so searching as home . . . and for one man who thinks of England in song or in her might on the sea, there are twenty to whom mention of her name sends a picture from heart and brain to the eye, of a few human beings in a narrow street . . . this love of English earth spreads to what England has made of herself and others.'[1]

It would be quite wrong to claim a monopoly of patriotism for men and women of Tory persuasion, but there can be

[1] Keith Feiling, *What is Conservatism?* (Criterion Miscellany, Faber and Faber), pp. 19–20.

little doubt that patriotism has no place in the Socialist scheme of things. For while Socialism looks ultimately to an international brotherhood of men, it is prepared to achieve this desirable end by setting class against class, and, in the view of the patriot, brother against brother. Socialism taken to its logical and communist conclusion, hopes to achieve the unity of the world through the division of nations by civil war and by marching whole generations through the bitter vales of tears, fratricidal strife, terror, famine and desolation. Hatred is sterile and the kingdom of God upon earth will never be built upon such foundations. In the more practical Tory view, good citizenship, like charity, must begin at home, and unless men have learnt to love their country and to revere its history, to have pride in their heritage and in themselves, they will never be good citizens of the world. Nor will they ever be good citizens of the world until they have first learnt the meaning of justice, for the true patriot is he who loves his country enough to ensure that she pursues the path of the just. 'Patriotism', wrote the Tory Bolingbroke, 'must be founded on great principles and supported by great virtues.'[1]

The ordinary Englishman possesses a quiet patriotism. He does not talk about it nor is he particularly conscious of it, but it is in ill-accord with the sentiments of those whose political thinking leads them to decry their country and open its gates to the enemy. Those of us who believed in *one* nation and who saw its existence threatened before 1939 by the warlike preparation of the totalitarian states, who found when the battle was joined a common brotherhood in arms, cannot lightly forgive Socialist opposition to all forms of national preparedness nor easily forget that the Left was the breeding-ground of pacifism in both world wars. 'Every possible effort should be made to stop recruiting for the Armed Forces', wrote Sir Stafford Cripps in 1936.[2] 'The Labour Party should oppose the Government arms plan root and branch', wrote

[1] Disraeli termed patriotism 'the noblest of human sentiments'. Monypenny and Buckle, vol. vi, p. 495.

[2] *Forward*, 3rd October, 1936.

Mr. Aneurin Bevan in 1937.[1] 'I will do all I can to get not only the engineers on the Clyde, but the engineers throughout Britain, to down tools against conscription', said Mr. Kirkwood in 1939.[2] Throughout the locust years woven with the weft of Socialist foreign policy was the warp of class war. If some Socialists were unable to make up their minds as to whether Hitler and Mussolini or the British middle and upper classes were the greater enemy, Sir Stafford Cripps was quite clear on the subject. In 1936, when National Socialism had been in the saddle in Germany for three years, he said publicly: 'If Germany should defeat Great Britain in a capitalist war, I do not believe it would be at all bad for the British working classes'.[3] The year before, he found it possible to say, 'You have only got to look at the pages of British Imperial history to hide your head in shame that you are British'.[4]

However sincerely such views might be held they were not the views of patriots and they served only to exploit the ignorant at home and to encourage our enemies abroad. How could such men ever claim to speak for an England whose history they despised and for whom some of them were not even willing to fight? But let it be said that while ideological passion had deprived these men of a sense of duty towards their motherland, had twisted and deformed their judgment, nothing they have ever said can disturb the deep love of country which is fundamental in our people, or can obliterate the pride Britons feel in the heroic feats of great men in little ships, and of those who, in countless battles down the ages, at Mons, on the beaches of Dunkirk, at Alamein and in the jungles of Burma have sacrificed and perished so that others might live. Nor can anything obliterate from a man's senses the noble sweep of our native downs, the scent of our fields after rain, the tranquillity of our countryside or the grimy beauty of our cities. These familiar things are part of us. Love of England is a quality to be conserved

[1] *Tribune*, 19th February, 1937.
[2] House of Commons, 4th May, 1939.
[3] *Manchester Guardian*, 16th November, 1936.
[4] Bristol, 20th October, 1935.

and to a Tory patriotism is a natural healthy instinct and not a political formula.

3

I have said that the essence of democracy is that all men should be equal in the direction of their government. But how can this be assured? How can we guard against the misuse of power by those who wield it?

Let there be no mistake about this, for it is the heart of the problem. All history proclaims that power is corrupting. 'Power', said Edmund Burke, 'gradually extirpates from the mind every humane and gentle virtue.' The concentration of political power in the hands of one man or a few is always liable to be misused *unless such men are made to answer for its use.* Therein lies the reason why all dictatorships, even those which begin with the noblest of motives and the highest of ideals, have recourse ultimately to the use of force to ensure the subjugation of the governed to the will of the governors. There is but one answer to this problem. Political liberty can only be ensured by the widest possible diffusion of political power over the nation as a whole. We remain a free people as long as we have free speech, as long as the Press is free from government control, as long as the executive has to answer for its actions to the elected representatives of the nation, as long as we can exercise the right to choose who shall represent us in the parliament of the nation and to correct or endorse our choice at frequent intervals, as long as we are free from political and industrial intimidation *and not for one moment longer.*

The central problem of good government, then, is how to reconcile the need for order with the need for freedom. Good government requires to bring into balance the rights of the individual citizen with the duties which the State must expect from him. It has to provide adequate safeguards to ensure that such freedom as exists is protected against invasion by

parties or groups. And to these ends it should protect itself against the too hasty assumption of new powers, even though a critical situation may demand quick decisions and the use of arbitrary power.

Where shall the line be drawn between the power of the State and the freedom of the individual? It is characteristic of our age that most politicians start by discussing what power the State should exercise, an approach to the problem which suggests that power is derived from above and that the individual may be permitted to enjoy a little liberty only if the State so decrees. But that is quite contrary to the Tory view. Sovereignty is derived from the people. The State has no meaning in Britain if it is divorced from the people. Liberty starts with the individual citizen. 'Whatever each man can separately do, without trespassing upon others,' said Burke, 'he has a right to do for himself.'

This calls for a definition of liberty. We have seen that Toryism never accepted the nineteenth-century Liberal view of unrestricted freedom. We have seen how that doctrine applied in the economic field led to the exploitation of human beings and the appalling social conditions which filled Disraeli's heart with such indignation. Where unrestricted freedom is permitted there is nothing to restrain the evil that is in every man, and it will lead inevitably to the destruction of freedom itself. 'In truth,' Plato tells us, 'any kind of excessive action is wont to lead to excessive reaction. This is true of the weather, of plants, and of bodies and, not least, of constitutions . . . Excessive liberty, then, is likely to give place to nothing else than excessive slavery, both in individual and State.' It was the liberty enjoyed by the few under *laissez-faire* capitalism which produced the excessive slavery—the intolerable serfage which aroused Disraeli's compassion—out of which Marxist Socialism sprang. The 'progressives' of the nineteenth century were for unrestricted individual liberty. The 'progressives' of the twentieth century are for the subordination of individual liberty and the centralisation of all power in the hands of the State. Is it to be the fate of successive generations to be ground down by these rival theorists, unable to find the path

of moderation and wisdom and therefore fated to swing wildly from extreme to extreme? Or are we to seek a middle course which brings the claims of order and freedom into proper balance and which permits the steady growth of society?

Liberty is not licence. It is the condition under which a man can exercise freely his right to work and to reap a just reward for his labour, his right to improve his lot by perseverance and industry, his right to possess his own ideas and opinions, in short, his right to do anything which does not interfere with the happiness and security of his fellows. Edmund Burke added to these, long before anyone thought of social services, the right of a man 'to a fair proportion of all which society with all its combinations of force and skill can do in his favour'. In our age we have interpreted this to mean that man has a right to as much security as government can devise against want, ill health and unemployment, for just as a plant needs air and sunlight to grow so man cannot develop his personality, enlarge his experience and live a full life unless his material environment is satisfactory.

Freedom is not therefore an absence of tyranny and restraint —it is a positive condition which ensures the maximum scope for the development of the inherent capacity of man. The essential difference between the restraints which obtain in a free society and those which are *imposed* by the totalitarian state is that, in essence, they are *freely assumed* by society for its own protection.

But freedom has a special meaning for Britain. It should be understood that the form of government is less important than the *spirit* which pervades and animates it. Government should be designed to allow us to be *ourselves*. And what are we in this country if we are not strangely obstinate, individualistic folk chafing at restrictions and contemptuous of slavery. Nothing destroyed Mosley's Blackshirts more effectively than the laughter of their fellow countrymen. We want freedom here because our peculiar way of life demands it. 'What governs the Englishman', wrote Santayana in a beautiful essay on our race, 'is his inner atmosphere;

the weather in his soul . . . the love of a certain quality of life, to be maintained manfully.'

We hold, therefore, that the individual is not free to do just what he pleases nor to interfere in the freedom and happiness of others. If he has *rights* historically derived from the community he also has *duties* owed to the community. Only by the individual freely accepting these duties and recognising that he owes the community something in return for the rights and privileges he enjoys can he learn the art of individual self-government. And only he who can govern himself is fit to share in the governing of others. As Wordsworth tells us,

> The discipline of slavery is unknown
> Amongst us; hence the more do we require
> The discipline of virtue.

It is this which makes democracy the most difficult form of government to operate. It cannot function effectively unless all men and women feel alike their responsibility to the nation, do their duty and try to choose the men who will do theirs. It cannot function at all if the nation loses its sense of responsibility. The great civic virtue of our people in the past has been their cool-headed acceptance of responsibility, their resoluteness in the face of difficulties. But if this quality of social discipline became sapped by long years of privation and disaster, and we permitted ourselves to lose our individual qualities of self-reliance, then rest assured our greatness would vanish, our form of government would perish and a race of free men would become an enslaved tribe. Individual responsibility implies a readiness to catch hold of life cheerfully, to disdain dependence upon government or upon one's fellows, to work hard and give of one's best, to be thrifty, to care for one's family and home, to take an interest in the affairs of one's town or village, to use the privilege of the vote conscientiously, and above all to be a good neighbour and to have an enduring pride in being British. Individual responsibility lays an injunction upon a man to make the best use of what talent and skill God has

given him and to try to leave the world a better place than he found it. 'We are born only to be men,' said Burke, 'we shall do enough if we form ourselves to be good ones. It is therefore our business carefully to cultivate in our minds, to rear to the most perfect vigour and maturity, every sort of generous and honest feeling that belongs to our nature. To bring the dispositions that are lovely in private life into the service and conduct of the commonwealth, so to be patriots and not to forget we are gentlemen.'

Toryism demands, therefore, a voluntary social discipline based upon *individual* self-government and a disposition to serve. While service in the totalitarian state is rendered under compulsion, while duty is extracted by force, democracy needs for its very existence the growth of a self-reliant, self-respecting and responsible citizenry. It is for this reason that in the past Tories have laid little emphasis upon the radical cry for Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. These are rights which become empty slogans if they are not accompanied by duties; with liberty must go responsibility, with equality must go authority and with fraternity must go reverence.

Socialism, on the other hand, lays emphasis on duties to the exclusion of rights. It results in a reverse of what it sets out to do since the abolition of rights results only in the failure of duties. Everyone is encouraged to believe that in the Socialist state everything will be done for him that he is not willing to do for himself. Indeed, a good definition of Socialism has been given as 'the cry of adult babyhood for public pap-bottles and public nurses'. The spirit of sturdy independence which bred men like John Hampden, the obstinate, rugged individualism of millions of Britons, and the deep-rooted desire to own and manage property, all these stand in the way of Socialism and must be ruthlessly uprooted. It is for this reason that Socialism in the long run will make democracy unworkable. *Socialism is subversive of character, for it is destructive of the very qualities that distinguish men from dumb cattle.*

Toryism, on the other hand, aims at encouraging men and women to stand on their own feet. It abhors the idea of the

Socialist ant-hill wherein men are told where to live and work and where every waking hour is controlled and directed by men who, for the most part, would have been undistinguished in any other walk in life except politics. Such a form of society requires something less than men. It may indeed be suitable for Russians or Germans, for slavery, as Burke reminded us, is a weed which grows in every soil. But freedom is a word which has an English ring about it and the ant-hill is not suitable for men and women of English metal.

It is not difficult, therefore, for the Tory to say where the line should be drawn between the power of the State and the freedom of the individual citizen. Three centuries ago the great poet John Milton expressed the view of not only his own but of all generations of his countrymen when he wrote, 'Twenty capacities, how good soever, are insufficient to contain all the invention, the art, the wit, the grave and solid judgement of England . . . Neither is God appointed and confined where and out of what place these his chosen shall be first heard to speak'. The history of England is the story of struggle against tyranny in all its forms. The exercise of arbitrary power is a violation of the spirit of English history. But it is by no means alien to the spirit of Socialism. Mr. Attlee has never repudiated the views of his fellow-collaborator of 1933, Mr. G. D. H. Cole, who tells us: 'We cannot put limits to the pace at which we shall have to proceed when once we set our feet upon the way; nor can we put limits to the degree of administrative power which, under stress of the emergency, our Socialist government may have to assume'.[1]

The dilemma in which so many of our Socialists find themselves is that most of them can never make up their minds as to how far their leaders may have to go, and whether the end really justifies the means. If through the medium of parliament in a 'bourgeois state' they can realise some measure of Socialism, then some Socialists would rest content, and doubtless, would even be prepared to play the parliamentary

[1] G. D. H. Cole, *Problems of a Socialist Government* (Gollancz, 1933), p. 184–5.

game, alternately forming the government and the opposition. But others, who are not afraid to take their Socialism to its logical conclusion, know that it must end in the single party state and a steady diminution of liberty during the transitional period. Who will win, the gradualists or the totalitarians, is not at all clear. The British people may themselves decide the issue for a generation by rejecting the totalitarians at the polls. In the meantime, however, the arrogant tone of certain Socialist ministers, their contempt for public opinion, the occasional dark hint that the Press enjoys too much freedom, the whole policy of nationalisation, the forcing of the 'closed shop' upon industry so that in many cases a worker must not only belong to a trade union in order to get employment, but must belong to one affiliated to the Socialist Party, all these are indications of the underlying desire of our Socialist would-be masters to acquire permanent and arbitrary power. They do not wish to be dictators, but if the necessity were thrust upon them they would prefer to be dictators rather than have to surrender to the Tories. '. . . a dictatorship of the Left based upon a majority in favour of Socialism would be the better of two bad alternatives', is a view Sir Stafford Cripps once held and has never repudiated.[1] No doubt the other alternative he had in mind was a defeat of a Socialist government at a general election and the return of a Tory administration.

Recent history demonstrates that any society in which opposition and criticism are stifled, personal liberty is restricted and the exercise of private initiative and enterprise —the mainsprings of our civilisation—are suppressed, must in the long run come to ruin. Any society in which the most competent, ambitious and energetic of its citizens are brought down to a common level of mediocrity by deliberate legislation and class discrimination, even if this is to serve some beneficial social purpose, will find that with mediocre men very little of value can be accomplished. Human progress has always been most rapid where men have felt most free, and where

[1] Sir Stafford Cripps, *Problems of a Socialist Government* (Gollancz, 1933), pp. 15–16.

human thought is not driven into a narrow channel and there confined by fear.

Here perhaps we can put a sure finger upon a fundamental difference between the two main parties in Britain. On the one side there are those who hold that where a degree of competition or rivalry exists, men become stimulated, alert and active, and that it is no accident that the highest standards of living prevail in those parts of the world where there is the maximum encouragement for initiative and enterprise. This school of thought maintains that where Government deliberately tries to reduce the pace of the quick and industrious to that of the slowest and least public-spirited, where it vilifies the natural desire of men to profit from their work, apathy and indifference result. And it must be said that all previous human experience supports that view. Writing of an earlier civilisation which crumbled as ours is beginning to crumble now, the eighteenth-century historian Gibbon said, 'The uniform government of the Romans introduced a slow and secret poison into the vitals of the Empire. The minds of men were gradually reduced to the same level, and the fire of genius extinguished'.

On the other side are those who believe that men can be so conditioned by control and direction that they can be made to produce a more perfect society than we have known in the past. But man is a stubborn animal and will rarely allow himself to be conditioned by a political system without a struggle. Marxism has the courage to admit that this is so, and that relentless war must be waged against all recalcitrant elements, whether they be bourgeoisie, peasants or industrial workers. This means dictatorship and the complete subordination of the individual to the will of the dictators. From Machiavelli onwards the totalitarians have argued that 'men never do good except by necessity', that men are naturally '. . . ungrateful, voluble, deceitful, shirkers of danger, greedy of gain, and less respectful to a Prince who makes himself loved than to one who makes himself feared, because fear is held by a dread of punishment'. The totalitarian does not believe in his fellow-men, does not believe that they can be

guided by reason. 'My task', Hitler admitted to Dr. Rauschning, 'is not to make men better, but to use their weaknesses.' 'You can lever up men', said Mussolini, 'as you can lever up inert matter. Human masses have the same inertia as inorganic masses. The saying "Give me a point of support and I will raise the world" is true. . . Our problem is to find a point of support.' Men, therefore, do not know what is good for them and must be directed into betterment. Naturally the degree of direction varies with the degree of fanaticism of the directors. Lenin and Trotsky used the weapon of terrorism—oppression from above, terrified submissiveness from below—while Hitler and Stalin copied their technique and brought it to a fine art. One must be charitable enough to allow that our own would-be totalitarians have no desire to proceed to such lengths. At this stage they wish to apply only a limited number of restrictions to our liberty. They feel that the good sense of the British people and their inherent respect for the rule of law will permit revolutionary change to take place without violence and with the full sanction of the law; they are even prepared to agree that providing the Press does not criticise them too often it shall be accorded considerable freedom to comment. After all, the power to criticise government can always be controlled through the medium of reducing the allocation of newsprint, ostensibly to save dollars. 'Necessity', the younger Pitt reminded us, 'is the plea for every infringement of liberty; it is the language of tyrants, and the creed of slaves.' Be well assured that British totalitarians would always find the necessity and clothe it in the high-sounding language which crafty politicians have found most effective in overcoming the doubts and fears of a people.

But whatever the technique of tyranny employed it is essential to the success of totalitarian Socialism or Communism or Fascism that a rigid social discipline be fastened upon the people, and it matters little whether the people accept the imposition voluntarily by voting for a totalitarian party at the polls or whether it is fastened on them arbitrarily *after* elections have been fought on other issues.

Accordingly the first step is to achieve power. This is done

by the use of every form of misrepresentation, distortion of truth, and cajolery, by the stirring up of class strife, the offering of bribes and false pledges. The Socialist appeal in particular is always directed to the most gullible, the weak, and the simple-minded. It was the Socialists after all who taught the Fascists and the Nazis that men could best be aroused by appealing to hatred and envy, and in this respect our own Socialist movement has not escaped infection.

Once power is attained the process towards Socialism begins, respectably enough, with the elimination of private enterprise, the gradual restriction of individual liberty, and the veiled extension of State control. To this there is bound to be a rising tide of opposition. It will become necessary for a Socialist government, therefore, to assume emergency powers. Sir Stafford Cripps told us not so very long ago that if a Socialist government was unable to maintain its position of control it might have to adopt ' . . . some exceptional means such as the prolongation of the life of Parliament for a further term without an election'.[1] We have already seen that in the view of some Socialists there can be no outstanding advance to Socialism without a considerable reduction of the powers of parliament and their concentration in the hands of the executive. If, indeed, parliament is permitted to exist at all in the Socialist State, it will be limited to laying down the general framework of policy, with most of its powers delegated to officials who of course must be faithful interpreters of the party line and whose decisions must be incapable of challenge by the judiciary. Real Socialism and democracy are therefore quite incompatible. In this connection it is curious to observe how much timeless wisdom is enshrined in Tory principles. More than a century ago Disraeli foresaw the possibility of a ruthless parliamentary majority destroying the very foundations of the national liberties. In an early election address he wrote, 'I will allow for the freedom of the Press; I will allow for the spirit of the age; I will allow for the march of intellect; but I cannot force from my mind the

[1] Sir Stafford Cripps, *Problems of a Socialist Government* (Gollancz, 1933), p. 39.

conviction that a House of Commons, concentrating in itself the whole power of the State, might . . . establish in this country a despotism of the most formidable and dangerous character'.

It is abundantly clear that the process towards this kind of government has already begun and is gathering momentum. By using the device of the 'guillotine' whereby discussion on contentious legislation can be restricted at will, and by means of the growth of ministerial power in the form of delegated legislation which cannot be challenged in the courts of the realm, a Socialist Government has steadily diminished the authority and vigour of Parliament and has sought to reduce the House of Commons to the level of a Reichstag.

One of the bitter lessons our generation should have learnt is that it takes but a single step from being a Socialist minister to becoming a Fascist or Communist leader, and that the Socialists Mosley, Laval, Quisling, and Mussolini could and did become Fascists overnight. Professor Hayek tells us with sombre truth that democracy was already dead in Germany by the time Hitler had come to power, and that the Socialists themselves had killed it! It was, after all, the Socialists who first thought of organising their followers in 'cells'. It was not the Fascists but the Socialists who first organised private armies and who recruited young children into their ranks in order to indoctrinate their minds. All that the Fascists did was to improve the technique. *It is abundantly clear that Socialism is but a phase, that by its centralisation of authority and suppression of freedom it paves the way to dictatorship.*

In our own country the preliminary phase is developing, though in more gradual fashion. We see the centralisation of economic power in nationalisation. We see the introduction of industrial conscription. We see the limitation of foreign travel, the censorship of letters, the restriction of newsprint and the steady growth of an army, now more than 10,000 strong, of enforcement officials of all kinds. We see petty officials armed with the power to enter our homes without a magistrate's search warrant and local authorities being empowered to dismiss workers who do not wish to join a

particular union. We see, too, the authority and scope of local government deliberately restricted. We see the disappearance of nearly all the rights of property. We see the deliberate frustration of those who wish to start a business of their own. We see the State taking more and more of the people's money in the form of taxation. To all these developments Toryism is relentlessly opposed.

There can be no compromise with the enemies of freedom, whether they be rabid Communists who would not shrink from any crime if it advanced their cause and who at least have the merit of making it plain where they stand, or Fabian Socialists who may be the mildest and most respectable of men and therefore the most dangerous.

The Tory Party has already endorsed a suggestion that a Charter of Civil Liberties should be drawn up guaranteeing the age-old freedoms of the nation.[1] Such a Charter should call for a check to be put upon delegated legislation and the powers of individual ministers; should define clearly what officials can enter private premises and for what purposes; should end the pernicious practice of the 'closed shop' in industry; should stop the extortion of a political levy from trade unionists; should ensure that the State is not the judge of its own case, where (in the national interest) it deprives a man of his property or livelihood; should guarantee the secrecy of the ballot, the freedom of the Press, the right to free speech; and should safeguard the King's subjects of whatever creed, colour or race against racial or religious discrimination and persecution.

I, for one, would demand that henceforward every infringement of personal liberty, every measure which weakens the authority or vigour of parliament, every step towards the setting up of totalitarian government, should be resisted with every form of public protest, with every ounce of energy that can be mustered, continuously and relentlessly, in parliament, in the workshops and in the streets. They who are not prepared to defend liberty deserve to be slaves.

[1] At the 68th Annual Conference, Brighton, 2nd October, 1947.

Chapter Five

THE BATTLE OF POLITICS

'Those whose principle it is to despise the ancient, permanent sense of mankind, and to set up a scheme of society on new principles, must naturally expect that such of us who think better of the judgment of the human race than of theirs, should consider both them and their devices as men and schemes upon their trial.'—EDMUND BURKE.

1

IT may be remarked that I have written of principles and have said nothing of policies. This I have done deliberately, for in this age of fading morals and political expediency government seems to be based more and more upon the principle that there shall be no principle. To me, as a Tory, it is more important to understand the underlying principles of my political faith than anything else. That is not to say that clear and comprehensive policies are unnecessary to a political party but rather that policies are dictated by the needs and pressures of the moment while principles are eternal. Policy is a proposal to *do* something and its success will depend upon its relevance to the facts of a given situation and the courage and firmness of those who shape and operate it. Moreover, if policy is to be sound, that is both beneficial and effective, and valid beyond the hour of its application, it *must* be based upon clearly defined principles of life and action.

Let us apply the test of principle to the great political debate between the parties in Britain to-day. The differences are legion and the simplest issues are made obscure by the passions and prejudices of faction. But once principles are

understood, it is less difficult to make up one's mind as to the right course of action where the great controversial issues of the day are concerned. Should private enterprise be stamped out and the State become the sole employer? Should there be direction of labour? Should industry be a 'closed shop' with the big trade unions exercising power to coerce into their ranks not only those who have a conscientious objection to belonging to a union but other trade unionists who belong to unions not affiliated to the T.U.C.? Should the State sap the independence of local government? Should it restrict the liberties of the Press? Should it take out of the hands of parents more and more of their responsibility for the upbringing, education and feeding of their children? Should we own our own homes or should we be council tenants? Should regimentation and controls of all kinds be increased rather than diminished? Upon such questions as these the Tory can give a clear, unequivocal answer.

The Socialist who possesses the courage of his convictions and who is not troubled, as are a growing number, with misgivings as to the merits of a completely socialised state, answers, 'Yes—it is both desirable and practicable that these things be done; they are the necessary prerequisites of a Socialist society'. And he expects a Socialist government to take all steps to ensure that the maximum is done in the shortest possible space of time so that whatever the political future holds for the Socialist movement the country will be so far committed to State Socialism that there can be no turning back.

The Tory is equally emphatic. He answers, 'No—these things are neither desirable nor practicable'. In the matter of enterprise, for example, he believes that the conduct of business is best left to the accumulated experience of each industry and the guidance of those who have spent a lifetime in its service. He considers that our prosperity, our very existence, rests upon a system of enterprise which gives full play and opportunity to individual initiative. He does not believe that the individual skills of business can be replaced

or even directed by bureaucratic control from Whitehall. He views with horror the concentration of all economic power in the hands of the State, first, because over-centralisation of authority does not make for greater efficiency, and second, because the concentration of economic power must inevitably be accompanied by the concentration of political power in the hands of those who direct the State.

This does not mean that Tories are opposed to planning, if by planning one means the conscious direction by government of the national resources into the most productive and socially useful channels. The choice before us is not between a planned state and chaos, between having rules about everything and no rules at all, but between the rigidly planned totalitarian state and a democratically planned society in which the framework of the economy is sufficiently flexible to permit the expansion and just distribution of wealth.

Yet the Socialists seem to argue that before 1945—the Year One of the glorious Socialist era—there was no planning in Britain and that all was chaos. This is manifestly untrue. From the middle of the nineteenth century government in Britain has gradually taken to itself powers to plan and control while leaving the economic system sufficiently flexible to enable it to pass successfully through the two greatest wars in our history and to recover, more speedily than most other countries, from the economic depression of 1929–31. Of course there must be planning, but of what kind?

The Socialists confuse planning with control. To achieve their desirable State, they are obliged to draw up a master plan which will effectually put in their hands not only control over all the economic resources of the nation and their use but a meddling control over the smallest economic activities of the individual citizen, depriving him of the right to take decisions on his own initiative, whether these are concerned with the improvement or expansion of his business or his right to exercise consumer choice. The logical end to a policy of rigid control is the nationalisation of much more than the means of production. If the film industry is nationalised,

for example, government then possesses an effective means of *consciously directing the thought and habit of the people along carefully predetermined lines.*

Another aspect of the problem is that Socialist planning is clearly designed to mould the existing economic system and, where it declines to be moulded, to bludgeon it into a Socialist system while at the same time the existing system is expected to function effectively. Such a situation gives rise to confusion and muddle in both method and aim. All games are governed by rules and without rules no game would be worth playing. But what view would the players take if the rule-making body perpetually interfered with the *way* in which they played the game? Imagine a minor official of the M.C.C. interrupting a game of cricket at Lord's to instruct the captain of the fielding side how to place his field or the batsman how to hold his bat? Under such conditions the players would be justified in refusing to play. It is even possible that they would make arrangements to emigrate to other lands where they could play cricket, in accordance with the accepted rules of the game, but without constant interference with their judgment as players. Yet, it is under such conditions that a free people and a diverse economy is expected by a Socialist administration to operate with efficiency and self-confidence!

It is not sufficient for the Socialists to argue magnanimously, as do some of their spokesmen, that there will be room in a socialised economy for free enterprise to operate. If they say this then no doubt they consider it expedient that not all the eggs of enterprise should be in one basket. But they are supremely optimistic if they believe that free enterprise could flourish under such conditions. In the Tory view the survival of the nation in the grim economic battle of the post-war world is dependent not only upon Government allowing free enterprise to function but upon its ensuring the requisite conditions—adequate reward for risks, confidence and monetary stability—under which free enterprise can function successfully.

Economics consists, of course, of two branches, the

economics of *production* and the economics of *distribution*, and these are often confused. On the side of production there can be little doubt that great benefits flow when the producer is allowed the maximum freedom to produce and make a profit, subject only to the payment of fair wages, and the provision of decent working conditions. Clearly the greater the volume of production the greater will be the increase in the total volume of the national wealth. Moreover, there can be no profit where production is not geared to meet the wishes of the consumers (except where monopolies have the whip-hand), and profits are therefore a reflection of the degree of success the producer has had in meeting consumer demand.

Where distribution is concerned, unless there is sufficient purchasing power in the pockets of *all* consumers the effective demand will be heavy from certain classes, whose choice will naturally determine what is produced, and insufficiently great from other classes. Of course, in any system of unequal remuneration, where incentives are given for extra effort, it is not unnatural to expect that the higher income groups will exert a greater pull on the market than the lower income groups and will therefore have a greater influence in determining the pattern of production. It is true that a great inequality of incomes has meant in the past that a large part of the population has had insufficient purchasing power.[1] But such a state of affairs can be remedied by Government action in a number of ways without the necessity of introducing Socialist control over production. Heavy direct taxation in recent years has brought about a substantial redistribution of real net income among the population as a whole. In 1938, for example, there were 105,000 incomes over the surtax limit of £2,000. After tax had been paid these represented 7.2 per cent of the national total of incomes. In 1945, however, the number of incomes in this same class had risen to 132,000,

[1] Mr. Churchill has confessed that '. . . the inherent vice of capitalism is the unequal sharing of blessings'. But he has been quick to add that 'the inherent virtue of socialism is the equal share of miseries'!

but after tax on these had been paid they represented only 3.3 per cent of the national total of incomes. If all incomes over £2,000 a year were arbitrarily confiscated and the amount was equally divided it would give to each person in the country no more than 25/- a year for the first year only, since in subsequent years the deterrent to the earning of amounts above £2,000 would be so great that the total amount to be divided would be reduced. Even the busy bees will stop making extra honey if it is to be taken away from them year after year; it may even occur to them to fly away and hive elsewhere and give some kinder master the sweet benefit of their industry!

To-day there is already a virtual ceiling on incomes—a single man earning £50,000 a year enjoys a net income of no more than £4,975—below which there has been a considerable shifting of purchasing power from the higher to the lower income groups. For example, between 1939 and 1948 the average salary has fallen in real net purchasing power by 20 to 30 per cent, the real net value of incomes from profits has fallen by 25 per cent, and incomes from gilt-edged securities and rents even more sharply. Against this decline in the purchasing power of the middle classes we have seen in the same period a rise of 60 per cent in the total amount paid out in wages after deduction of income tax, whilst the real net income of wage earners has risen by 10 to 35 per cent. This means that the wage-earning classes have improved their position at the expense of the salaried classes.

No reasonable person could fail to welcome a general raising of the minimum standards of the people. But that this is being done, not by the production of new wealth, but by the sapping of the economic stability of the middle classes, is hardly a tendency which thinking men can view with complacency. It should not be necessary to reduce the incomes of the middle classes in order to increase those of other classes. During the past hundred years the great rise in the standard of living enjoyed by the mass of people in Britain and America did not come from a mere redistribution of existing wealth, but from the creation of new wealth, from the vast expansion

of productivity in the two countries. The way to a full, rich life for all our people does not lie in robbing Peter to pay Paul, but in the expansion of productivity. There are dangers, too, in any excessive levelling-out of incomes which demands the crippling of a particular section of the community. Not the least of these is the effect that impoverishment will have upon a middle class from which come the greater part of the nation's executive, technical and professional brains. No lasting advantage to the community as a whole can ever be gained from discouraging the more able to give of their best.

This process of raising minimum standards by a redistribution of wealth has been effected through the instrument of taxation and the payment of social benefits, and it is pertinent to recall that it was the Tory 'Caretaker' Government of 1945, not its Socialist successor, which implemented the wartime Coalition Government plan for family allowances whereby a cash increment was made to the purchasing power of every family with more than one child. An interesting precedent was established, for there seems to be no valid objection to the State correcting any future marked deficiency in the purchasing power of certain classes (such as would occur to old age pensioners and lower-paid workers if, for example, food subsidies were removed or reduced and the price of food rose in consequence) by means of increased social benefits, either in the form of money or vouchers entitling the recipients to a free issue of specific necessities such as milk or fuel. But no Tory has ever considered that such devices for the raising of the purchasing power of the poorer classes of the community should stand by themselves. If they are to be effective in the sense that they bring lasting benefit, then the State must encourage the production of new wealth.

Thus the problem of ensuring that no individual is deprived of the necessities of life through insufficient purchasing power is not insoluble and certainly does not require Socialism for its solution. Social justice demands that we establish a minimum standard of life below which no citizen shall be allowed to fall. The problem of the aged and the destitute—and they are to be found everywhere if one has the heart to search

and the eyes to see—is one which should constantly engage the attention of a civilised community.

2

To the Tory the function of Government in relation to industry is clear enough. 'Our attitude', runs the Conservative Industrial Charter, 'is quite different from that of our opponents. Their aim is to nationalise all the means of production, distribution and exchange. They are leading us rapidly into the economy of a Socialist State where co-operation with independent industry will disappear as one undertaking after another is converted from partner with, to creature of the Government. They have confused the real meaning of "central planning" by associating these words, in people's minds, with all-round meddlesome interference and no proper sense of central direction. The strategy of a campaign is conducted by the general staff, the tactics by the commanders in the field. Both should be strong in their own sphere, but the general staff should never interfere with the detailed commands given by an officer to his unit. We desire to confine the powers of Government to those major decisions which should be taken by the central administration. In economic matters the Government has very important functions. Foremost among these are its general powers to collect and distribute information to an extent beyond that of any private undertaking, its duties to take decisions on the scale of national expenditure and taxation, its power to control monetary policy and to guide overseas trade. It has responsibilities for stimulating industrial efficiency, in particular by assisting research and making the results more readily available to small firms. But perhaps its greatest duty is to ensure that such main priorities as the maintenance of employment and our well-developed social services are fulfilled before subsidiary objectives are sought and that the tasks set are not beyond the capacity of the resources available. . . . There must be strong central guidance.'

There is considerable difference between 'strong central guidance' and the State itself operating great industries. The Tory envisages Government laying down aims and defining responsibilities for industry, and providing the necessary stimulus of incentive. In return, he expects from industry the exercise of initiative in carrying out the aims and the acceptance of responsibility to the nation as well as to workers and shareholders. He envisages a partnership not only between management, workers and capital *within* industry, but between industry and government, a partnership in Mr. R. A. Butler's words, 'based on a clear division of functions, of strong guidance at the centre and enterprise at the circumference'. Nationalisation, on the other hand, means the co-ordination of all the firms in an industry into one gigantic State monopoly controlled rigidly down to the last detail. In a democracy there are many objections to monopoly control of any kind, but the major objections to the wholesale transfer of industry to public ownership and State control are the following:—

i. Since industry is the means whereby our population lives, the health and efficiency of its organisation is more important than the nature of its structure. The form of organisation of any industry should be considered, therefore, on its merits and not be decided arbitrarily for political reasons.

ii. Nationalisation, even on a limited scale, implies concentration of economic power for political purposes, and by its very nature must entail the subordination of industrial needs and efficiency to the pressure of interested political groups. With nationalised road and rail transport, for example, government will be subjected continually to pressure from the transport unions to avoid labour redundancy, to improve wages here and to maintain an uneconomic service there, while the user of the service (and every industry and almost every worker is a user of transport) gets whatever standard of efficiency and scale of costs the monopoly cares to provide.

iii. The absence of competition removes the main incentive to greater efficiency and monopoly control is not likely therefore to lead to a better product at a cheaper price. Whilst this may have distinct disadvantages where the home consumer is concerned, it spells ruin and extinction for Great Britain in the world market. However sympathetic the overseas consumer of our goods may be to the economic difficulties we are experiencing, it is certain that he will not continue indefinitely to pay higher prices for British goods when he can secure the same goods from our industrial competitors at a lower cost.

iv. There is little evidence to support the view that the merging of all the constituent parts of an industry and subjecting them to centralised control will make for greater efficiency. It is true that in some instances mergers have made for more efficient production, but there does appear to be a point, in every organisation, beyond which extension in size and responsibility does not make for increased efficiency. The limit to efficient size depends upon the ordinary human ability to comprehend and direct the detailed working of the whole organisation. The 'optimum scale' of production (i.e., the most efficient size for a firm) varies in different industries in the widest degree. To achieve maximum efficiency, that is producing with the minimum costs in capital, labour and raw materials, it is necessary to secure a fine balance between the often conflicting demands made on organisation by production technique and research, management-labour relations, capital development plans, and marketing and distribution requirements. There is plenty of evidence to suggest that the National Coal Board and the National Transport Commission are far too big and unwieldy to fulfil their administrative tasks with efficiency and to pay due regard to the interests of their own employees, their industrial

consumers and the general public. If the four main railways, after the amalgamations of smaller companies which followed the first world war, each found considerable administrative difficulties caused by the size of their undertaking, the Railway Executive, which controls a merger more than three times as large as any of the privately owned railway companies, must inevitably face even greater difficulties.

v. Finally, the vast concentration of economic power which nationalisation entails places the worker in the position of being dependent for his livelihood upon a single employer. Nationalisation does not mean the mines for the miners, or the railways for the railway workers, it means the transference of ownership from private hands to the impersonal and omnipotent State. It means the worker remains a worker. Who can doubt that the power exercised over the worker by the worst 'boss' is very much less than that wielded by the smallest official armed as he is with the cold, impersonal weapons of coercion of the Socialist State. What is now the position if the employee in a nationalised industry comes into conflict with his employer? Can he strike? If he does so he strikes against the community. Can he give less efficient service? If he does he is acting in an anti-social manner, for the community and not privately owned capital has to bear the cost of his inefficiency. Can he seek redress through his trade union? Only if trade unions preserve their independence. Is this likely? In a Socialist State the Trade Union leadership will be an integral part of government. Is it not likely that the trade unions will be looked upon as an instrument for coercing the workers to the will of a Socialist Government? In Russia they exist as 'industrial whips' for enforcing the dictates of government. Already British trade unions have agreed to the principle of directing labour, and if this is ever enforced on a wide scale the worker will

have lost his freedom and will be tied to his job. Trade Unions then have lost their meaning.

3

Government, in the Tory view, is responsible therefore for the general strategic direction of the national economy, and should act as a trustee for the community, which in return arms it with the power to ensure the maintenance of the rule of law, to guide the main economic effort of the nation, to prevent the exploitation of labour, to safeguard working conditions and to protect the consumer. 'The legitimate object of government', said Abraham Lincoln, 'and with his every word the Tory would agree, 'is to do for a community of people whatever they need to have done, but cannot do at all, or cannot do so well, for themselves in their separate and individual capacities.'

There may be occasions when considerations of public interest must override private freedoms. But there is nothing new in that. We have already seen how in the nineteenth century Tory administrations, to the disgust and chagrin of their Liberal opponents, interfered with the freedom of employers to sweat their workers, the freedom of producers to exploit their consumers, and the freedom of parents to exploit their children. To-day we accept, for example, the broad implications of town and country planning and control of the location of industry. It may even be wise for the State to introduce public ownership for certain essential services. It is certainly necessary for the time being for Government to supervise the nation's exports and imports in order to keep a tight check on the balance of external payments. It is socially necessary in a time of shortages to maintain rationing, and at all times it will be necessary to foster industrial development by sound finance and wise taxation and to protect our markets abroad against unfair or political discrimination.

Despite all this, it is a characteristic device of the Socialists to portray Toryism as a '*laissez-faire*' creed. They paint a

picture of Britain under a Tory Government in which all controls have been ruthlessly removed, in which there is a mad, selfish scramble for the nation's limited resources, and in which the criterion for a share in what is available is not need but the ability to find the money to pay for it. This may be sound tactics but it is bad politics and does a grave disservice to the cause of good government. The Industrial Charter makes it plain, 'We will not remove the control from any necessity of life until we are certain that it is within the reach of every family . . . So long as it is necessary to ration industrial fuel and power, raw materials and building operations, the Government's business should be to determine what are the prospective supplies of the scarce resources and to make broad allocations of these resources among the main classes of users'. The simple truth is that while Tories look upon economic controls as a temporary necessity to be dispensed with at the earliest opportunity, Socialists look upon them as a means to an end which is supreme control of the economy itself.

As far as possible, therefore, Government should limit its action in the economic field to *direction* as distinct from exercising detailed control. It was not necessary before the war to employ vast numbers of civil servants to determine the allocation of raw materials to industry nor to choke industry with forms and regulations. The system adjusted itself through the operation of what was called the price mechanism. To-day, there is an acute shortage of raw materials of all kinds. Even before the war the *demand* for capital (that is money which will command the use of material resources and man-power) for investment in new factories and plant and in building of all kinds exceeded the amount of capital *available*. But, in the past, instead of the clumsy system of direct rationing by an omnipotent Government department which governs allocation of materials to-day, the rate of interest, or the price paid to borrow capital, served as a means of measuring the diverse demands, rejecting those that would not be so profitable as to justify the investment. The chemical, steel, textile industries and others, all could use more capital, but any

system of allocation should surely give preference to those investments which will contribute most to raising productivity. This is best indicated by putting each demand for capital, with its consequent 'pull' on resources, against the standard measuring-rod of profitability. The years 1946 to 1948, however, have seen the spiral of inflation steadily ascending. It is clear, is it not, that as wages spiral upwards and expenditure on necessities is limited by rationing and subsidies, surplus purchasing power can only flow towards 'inessentials'! This would make greyhound racing, tracks and betting pools the most profitable industries without their being the most socially desirable. The price mechanism is therefore stultified. No one suggests that it should be restored at a single stroke, but sound finance demands that we return to its greater use at the earliest opportunity.

Now here the Socialist may interject that these arguments in favour of restoring the price mechanism are another way of advocating the organisation of production for profit rather than for social use! The answer is that no useful 'social' purpose can ever be served by restricting the production of wealth except where such production is anti-social, that Government has a direct responsibility anyway for discouraging 'undesirable' forms of economic activity, and that it can do this most effectually through the medium of taxation or, in cases where high profits are due to restrictive price-raising policies, by legislation to prevent monopoly abuse. The Industrial Charter, after calling for machinery to deal with anti-social practices in industry and monopoly abuse makes it plain that in recalcitrant cases a Tory Government would not hesitate ' . . . to ask Parliament to take legislative action . . . to impose maximum prices where prices have been kept excessively high . . . Government must keep the arena clear for the free play of enterprise. Enterprise, large and small, and the consumer, who has the right to exercise free choice, must not be steam-rollered by those who attempt to corner and abuse economic power. National resources must not be squandered nor national needs prejudiced for the sake of maintaining high prices or short supplies'.

Where enterprise is most free and competition is permitted to flourish the conditions obtain in which the greatest quantity can be produced at the lowest price. Within the framework of such a free enterprise system prices are enabled to fluctuate and thereby eliminate the less productive and the less profitable forms of activity. In this way priorities in the use of limited resources are determined through producers by the consumers whose selective spending really dictates what will be profitable. But to-day priorities are dependent upon the competition for permits, the real merits of any claim being over-laid by a vast amount of special pleading. Each firm submitting its demands to the appropriate Government department naturally considers that its own requirements are of paramount importance, that without its allocation of fuel and raw materials the export drive, or the housing programme, or something else of national importance, will suffer grievously. The cheap money policy to which Socialist Chancellors incline, involving as it does a lowering of interest rates, abolishes the only criterion which can evaluate the mass of these demands on a basis of their *relative* importance. It was not surprising, therefore, to discover at the end of 1947 that, due to over-bidding for steel by industrial consumers, the Government had allocated some 2,000,000 tons of steel that did not exist, so that industries vital to the export drive were slowing down for want of steel while others less important from the point of view of their capacity to earn valuable foreign exchange were getting their full requirements.

Thus the abandonment of the price mechanism and the substitution for it of the cumbrous, inefficient and confusing apparatus of State control has not eased our problems but has tended to make economic recovery more difficult of achievement. In addition, all the normal incentives to greater production, whether they be incentives to producers to make profits, or incentives to workers to work harder in order to secure larger wage packets, have been suppressed or weakened. Under Tory guidance it is reasonable to expect that the price mechanism and economic incentives would be allowed to become once again the allies of Government policy.

A further accompaniment of Socialist control is the restriction of the field of choice for the consumer. The paternalistic argument is now widely used that people do not know what is good for them anyway and therefore there can be no social objection to the choice being made for them of what goods and services they should be permitted to enjoy. Thus, one Minister, described by Mr. Churchill as 'the most mischievous mouth in wartime' and 'in peace the most remarkable administrative failure' has had the power to decide that only one out of every five families who are fortunate in being allotted one of the new houses shall be permitted to buy their home. No overall plan can ever be devised which succeeds in giving all the people what they themselves want; it can only succeed in giving them what the planners think they *ought* to have.

This restriction of consumer choice is in direct conflict with the method of a free society. It is true that in an atmosphere of freedom, some people may make a bad choice, may spend all their money upon beer or betting instead of necessities for their families, or may consume injudicious quantities of fried fish and chips instead of seeking a properly balanced diet. They may do very many foolish things detrimental to life and health if they are allowed. But democratic society has devised its own correctives and safeguards which have worked well enough. It has insisted upon the purity of food and drugs. It taxes beer and cigarettes to a degree where it can restrict consumption. It insists upon well-defined standards of safety. It endeavours through the medium of education to persuade people to make wise rather than foolish choices. Socialism, on the other hand, insists that in the public interest the restraints which already exist shall be increased a thousandfold. Rather than one foolish man should make a wrong choice all men, foolish and wise, will have the choice made for them. *But who is to exercise the right to choose for the community*? The State? But the State is an impersonal body and the choice must be made by its civil servants and the experts who guide the hands of ministers. Who is to say that the experts are right? Who is to watch the experts to

ensure they do not abuse their power? And by what right should any man be given such powers to coerce his fellows? What arrogance is this! And how dangerous it is to the democratic way of life![1]

It is the firm Tory belief that if the State goes beyond the broad strategic direction of the national economy, if it ceases to hold the ring for the multifarious and often divergent interests which make up the fabric of our national life, if it enters into business itself, it then becomes an instrument of tyranny since it possesses monopoly control over certain industries whilst exercising a whip-hand over all others. It can no longer be impartial and the jealous guardian of the individual's rights, for it now becomes the judge of its own case and its own standards of efficiency. The worker will

[1] Mr. John Scanlon in his brilliant satirical study of the Socialist Party *Cast off all Fooling* (Hutchinson) p. 193–4 writes: 'In 1929 the Party was a small island of workmen entirely surrounded by a sea of experts. The experts had been proving a power since the time of the Sankey Commission in 1919. Their showing there was so brilliant that it is worth quoting:

Professor Sidney Webb.
Q. 'Have you ever been down a colliery?'
A. 'I have been down a coal mine a long time ago.'
Q. 'Have you controlled any Government department?'
A. 'I have never controlled any Government department.'
Q. 'Have you ever been in charge of a Government department?
A. 'Never.'
Q. 'Have you ever been in charge of a business?'
A. 'No, thank God!'

Mr. G. D. H. Cole.
Q. 'Have you ever worked as a factory hand or workman?'
A. 'Thank heaven, NO!'
Q. 'Or worked as a foreman or manager?'
A. 'I have never worked in an industrial enterprise.'

'Doubtless had these gentlemen been asked if they knew anything about industry outside books, they would have been proud to reply: Thank heaven we know nothing about industry, or about agriculture, our business is solely to tell people how to run them . . . If a proud ignorance of all the means by which the workers of Britain earned their bread and butter was a qualification for government, the new Labour Party was in a happy position.'

find himself powerless against the colossus and the consumer will reap the whirlwind.

4

The Tory alternative to State control or nationalisation is therefore a system of regulated private enterprise within a framework of rules formulated by the State to protect the public interest. Could such a system guarantee full employment? The opponents of free enterprise are quick to point out that it did not do so in the past.

It is essential that we face the fact that the fear of unemployment and insecurity still lies deep-rooted in the minds of our people despite the absence of large-scale unemployment since 1939. No other single factor contributed so much to the Socialist victory in 1945 than the widely-held belief that while the old system could not guarantee a high level of employment, Socialism, by some miracle which no one could explain, would do so.

The Socialist argues that once the State owns substantially all the means of production, distribution and exchange there will be an elimination of waste, of harmful competition, and production, planned of course in the interests of the community and not for private profit, will provide a high level of employment. But the idea that the State can provide full employment by merely changing the *ownership* of industry or by changing the *structure* of the national economy, is completely fallacious. Elsewhere I have stated that the source of employment is not the employer but the consumer. If atomic energy suddenly became available to every consumer of power in this country and proved to be cheaper and more economical to use, then the demand for coal, except for the chemical industry, would fall off abruptly, and the fact that the mines were nationalised and were being operated in the public interest and not for the profit of a handful of colliery owners and their shareholders, would not prevent large-scale unemployment in the mining industry. True, the new atomic power industry would absorb

some labour, but unless Socialism contemplates a final stage of perfection in which an embargo can be placed on all new enterprise then it will find that with the decline of the old and the rise of the new industries and with constant fluctuation of demand both at home and overseas, some degree of unemployment will always exist. But Lord Beveridge has made it clear that one can have near-full employment in a *free* society without the disadvantages of Socialism, and that it is possible for the State to deal with the social evils of unemployment without having recourse to totalitarian methods.

The main causes of unemployment in Britain in the years between the two wars were first, the drastic reduction of overseas demand for British goods and services and our inability to find any compensating demand, and second, the cyclical depression which followed the slump of 1929 and which proved more severe than any previously experienced.

We have seen that our country, more than any other industrial power, is dependent upon export trade for her life. We possess in our abundant reserves of coal only one raw material of consequence, and even then we are quite unable to produce it in sufficient quantity and at an economic price. In the last analysis, therefore, it matters very little whether the iron and steel industry is operated by a government agency or by private industry—what does matter is whether the industry can supply iron and steel products to the world's markets, either direct or through export industries which use steel as a basic raw material, at a price and quality which bear comparison with those of other lands. If it cannot do this there will be a reduction in demand, a decline in the level of employment, and a secondary reduction of our purchasing power. The first years after the end of the second world war have seen a world shortage of every conceivable kind of goods. A sellers' market has meant heavy demands upon British production and this, in turn, has meant not only a high level of employment, but an acute shortage of skilled labour in certain export industries. The beginning of 1948 showed unmistakable signs of a change in this position,

a change from a sellers' to a buyers' market, a condition which merely serves to reinforce the strength of the argument.

It is not, therefore, the question of public or private ownership which determines full employment but the factors of industrial efficiency at home and favourable market conditions abroad. If this is true then it means that the Socialist obsession for nationalisation in the immediate post-war years has caused both the Government and its advisers to concentrate their attention upon issues which are quite irrelevant to the grave problems confronting the country.

If, however, the efficiency and profitability of industry are to be subordinated to political considerations, if production is to secure social to the neglect of economic ends, then let us face the implications. The most important of these will be our inability, in the conditions of the modern world, to compete effectually in the world market. But if we rid ourselves, in this manner, of dependence for our existence upon overseas demand for our goods, then our survival can only be ensured by a policy of autarchy, of self-sufficiency, under which we reduce our imports to the bare minimum, or at least to the level at which we can pay for them by our reduced exports and then attempt to live on our own resources. Socialism would then become *National Socialism* in every sense of the term. Such a prospect cannot be entertained seriously by any responsible political party, for it spells an immediate and catastrophic reduction in the nation's already lowered standard of life and a sharp decline in our population through sheer inability to feed all our people from our own soil. It was this dire prospect which Mr. Churchill envisaged when speaking late in 1947, he said, 'I am quite sure that Socialism, that is to say, the substitution of State control by officials instead of by private enterprise, will make it impossible for forty-eight millions to live in this island, and that at least a quarter of all who are alive to-day will have to disappear in one way or another after enduring a lowering of standards of food and comfort inconceivable in the last fifty years'.

The way out is not to be found in clamping fresh restrictions

and privations upon the people but in a policy of expansion. This calls for a release of all the pent-up energies of the nation. It calls for an end to the Socialist policy of dragging the ambitious, the competent and the hard-working down to the level of the lazy, the incompetent and the work-shy. It calls for a wages policy that offers incentives for additional skill and extra effort. It calls for recognition from Government that new enterprise creates new wealth and should receive adequate reward.

But would expansion in production be followed by a slump and consequent unemployment? There is no such phenomena as over-production, there is only under-consumption, and a rough calculation of the shortages of all kinds obtaining in our own country, let alone the rest of the world, gives convincing proof. Most economists now agree that trade depressions occur when the balance between savings and investment is upset. When there is too much saving, which means insufficient spending, there will be unemployment, because purchasing power is lying idly in unspent pools. If the surplus savings can be absorbed in extra capital development then unemployment can be reduced. If, however, they cannot be so absorbed, and there is still a withholding of purchasing power, then this will be reflected by a diminution of demand for capital goods, and the capital goods industries, such as iron and steel, begin to close down and their workers become unemployed. If unemployment assumes large proportions, the total volume of earnings is substantially reduced and demand for consumer goods declines thus extending depression and causing still further unemployment. In short, unemployment creates unemployment. Enough is known to-day of the causes to suggest that Government can prevent large-scale unemployment. It can do so by adopting measures which ensure that capital investment is kept in balance with the volume of savings, by exercising economy in its own expenditure when trade is flourishing, and thereby budgeting for a surplus, and by spending more freely when trade tends to contract. In this fashion Government can stimulate confidence when it is most required, can help to maintain demand, thereby

stabilising the level of employment when, under the old conditions, widespread depression and chronic unemployment were inevitable.

These new ideas about the role of the State in relation to the modern economy stem largely from the teachings of Lord Keynes, the greatest practical economist of the age. The crux of the matter is that Keynes recognised that economic forces need to be 'curbed and guided'. The Socialists, busy fighting yesterday's battles against *laissez-faire*, interpreted this as an argument for full state control. The Tories, on the other hand, understand that what is required is a synthesis between the two extremes so that to the *direction* provided by the State can be added the immense *motive power* of individual enterprise. The latter force was not underestimated by Lord Keynes who described the advantages of individualism in words which more responsible Socialists would do well to weigh and consider. 'They are partly advantages of efficiency—the advantages of decentralisation and of the play of self-interest . . . But, above all, individualism, if it can be purged of its defects and abuses, is the best safeguard of personal liberty in the sense that, compared with any other system it greatly widens the field for the exercise of personal choice. It is also the best safeguard of the variety of life which emerges precisely from this extended field of personal choice, and the loss of which is the greatest of all losses of the homogeneous or totalitarian State.'[1]

[1] J. M. Keynes. *The General Theory of Employment Interest and Money* (Macmillan, 1936), p. 380.

Chapter Six

TOWARDS INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY

'The nature of man is intricate; the objects of society are of the greatest possible complexity: and therefore no simple disposition of direction of power can be suitable either to man's nature or to the quality of his affairs.'—EDMUND BURKE.

'Our policy is to humanise, not to nationalise . . . Conservatism is a faith and a way of life which seeks to establish the right of the individual to develop his or her personality. We intend to preach that doctrine both in Parliament and out of it. We desire to work by example and precept as much as, or more than, by penalty or sanction. We propose to establish a series of standards in the field of industrial relations to which we are convinced employers must conform.'—*Conservative Industrial Charter.*

1

In the violent debate between Right and Left as to the means we should employ in the organisation of our society, the ends are sometimes thrust aside or forgotten. I have defined Tory democracy as a system of government which aims at encouraging the individual to expand his personality and gifts, and so find and pursue a purpose in life, co-operating willingly with others in common endeavour. Within every man there is some spark of creativeness, some individual excellence, some desire for service which can be adequately expressed only in an atmosphere of freedom. But no man is truly free, for he has to work to live. The *way* in which people work and the conditions under which they are obliged to work may well determine whether or no they can find adequate expression, whether they feel a sense of purpose and derive a satisfaction from living.

The merits of any political or industrial system are to be measured by their effect upon life as a whole, and when we

speak of workers and consumers these are not two distinct classes but one; when we speak of citizens having the right to enjoy a full life, we speak not in the abstract but of men and women who work in factories and shops, on the land, in the mines, in ships at sea, in Government offices and on building sites. The life these people lead, the hopes they entertain, the happiness they enjoy, the frustrations they experience, the pattern of their daily lives, all these things and many more are linked directly with their work. Moreover the efficiency of industry cannot be separated from the happiness and well-being of the workers. These are bound up with the degree of security the worker enjoys, the interest which he is able to take in his work, the incentives he is offered to do his job well and the treatment he receives from his employers and the management. The subject of human relations in industry is, therefore, of immense importance to all who are interested in promoting a healthy democracy.

It is here that Toryism is prepared to make a notable contribution. The Industrial Charter, says Mr. R. A. Butler, its principal author, seeks, 'to bring a promise of humanity into the present materialist world'. The Charter is a code of conduct for industry which sets out the ideal relations between employer and employed and the responsibilities of each to the other. It repudiates 'any view of industry which divides those engaged in it into "sides" with mutually opposed interests. If the sum of human welfare and happiness is to be increased in this country, it will only be through fostering a sense of united purpose among all those engaged in industry whatever their position'. This demands a clear recognition of the duties and rights attaching to each person. 'There can be no rights without duties. The employee has rights which place a corresponding duty on the employer. In carrying out what may be moral as well as legal obligations, the employer has corresponding rights in that he may in turn expect the employee to do his job to the best of his ability. Rights and duties are inseparable from all human relationships. They are the essence of good team work.' Accordingly,

the Charter calls for the provision of three general rights for all those engaged in industry.

They are :—

i. Security of employment.
ii. Incentive to do the job well and to get a better one.
iii. Status as an individual however big the firm or however mechanised the job may be.

I have already stated that the task of preventing large-scale unemployment is no longer beyond the control of Government. The removal of the haunting fear of unemployment would in itself improve relations in industry, increase self-confidence and enable people to plan their lives to some purpose. But the Industrial Charter proposes a further step. 'Every worker within a certain time of starting a new job should be given a statement of conditions of service stating simply and clearly the terms on which he is engaged and the grounds upon which and the way in which he may be dismissed. . . . such contracts should provide wherever possible that the period of notice should, except in emergencies outside the employer's control, be related to the length of service . . . We should also like to see the Social Security Scheme more widely supplemented by special pensions schemes run by firms or even industries.' In return for industrial security it is reasonable to expect from the worker an end to certain restrictive practices which in the past crept into industry as a defence against unemployment or 'sweating' by employers.

Nothing must stand in the way of extra effort and the maximum use of manpower and raw materials. Accordingly the Charter proclaims, 'Basic wages there must be. But extra reward should always be linked with extra effort and initiative'. It also calls for the greater opportunity to be afforded those who have ability to rise by promotion. 'Those who show the ability to pass from the floor of the shop to the office, including the Chairman's office, must have the chance to do so. Appointments or promotions made on any other grounds may well prove very discouraging to others of equal or greater capacity whose loyalty and keenness is essential in the long run to the welfare of the undertaking.' This is a vital principle

and upon its being implemented a great deal depends. Workers must feel sure that the best men are in the saddle, that the management is efficient and just in all its dealings. Where such feeling exists a mutual trust and respect between management and worker will be engendered which should go far towards ensuring smoother running and more efficient production. In order to establish such a system of advancement the Charter calls for 'a satisfactory scheme for discovering ability and then comprehensive arrangements for giving that ability the necessary education and training. We should like to see such a system throughout industry *and open to all employees* . . . In making such arrangements the large firm has some advantage over the small, but existing examples show that this handicap can be overcome. Co-operative arrangements between small firms with the aid of the local education authority and, in other cases, arrangements to cover a whole industry have proved successful. . . . We believe that the industrial training programme should stretch without interruption from vocational guidance in the schools to the professional and technical organisations. . . . The training of the new entrant into an industry should take the form of apprenticeship for those who wish to become skilled. For the unskilled and semi-skilled there should be a system of general education in the products of the industry and the structure and policy of the particular firm, as well as more specialised training devoted to the particular job . . . ' The Charter very properly lays emphasis on the recognition of management as an art requiring special training, and calls for the opening of the highest positions in industry 'to those who combine technical knowledge and administrative ability . . . only so can we ensure that our investment in research and the proved aptitude of this country for scientific discovery brings in a full dividend in terms of industrial production'.

Security, opportunity, incentive, all these are instruments whereby the individual's life can be broadened and enriched. The emphasis is on the *person.* We are not dealing with machine minders, unskilled labourers or junior clerks, we are dealing with live human beings, each an individual, each a

part of our society and therefore a part of ourselves. The very nature of large-scale modern industry with its mechanisation, its specialisation and the dull monotony of its repetitive work tends to diminish the *person*, to reduce the individual worker to the status of a cog in a machine. In such an atmosphere a man may well feel frustrated without perhaps understanding why. He may well feel unimportant and purposeless, and develop a grudge against society, identifying it with the industrial system in which he toils. Such a man will take little intelligent interest in the world outside his own family circle. His horizons will be limited and he will be fair game for the charlatans and the demagogues. This is bad, for it is the waste of an individual, but it is the worse for making democracy poorer by one citizen.

It is imperative to restore man's faith in himself, to give him status as a human being, to make him feel that however unimportant his job he is not unimportant himself, for he is part of the show. The Charter is clear on the point. 'We must bring back into large-scale industry the personal contact and interest at present found most strongly in the small firm, just as we must make general among small firms that higher standard of welfare service which has been the special contribution of the large firm.'

How can this be done? There is no single, easy answer. But in one direction notable progress could be made. During the war Joint Consultation machinery met with considerable success in improving both the output and efficiency of production and labour-management relations. Joint consultation can operate at all levels in industry, at ground level in the form of departmental or factory production committees or works councils, and at top level where it takes the form of a Joint Industrial Council. The committees consist of representatives of the management and elected representatives of the workers. They are not intended to supersede management—obviously there can be only one authority in any organisation for the issuing of orders and in industry that is the function of management—they act as a consultative and advisory body. Nor should they be permitted to dissolve, as some did during

the war, into futile and sterile argument more suited to the hustings. They have the advantage of bringing management and workers together, sitting round a table to discuss common problems and common interests. They are a projection of democratic method into industry, for they give the worker a sense of responsibility and encourage that mutual sympathy and understanding of the other man's point of view which springs naturally from collaboration in discussion and action. There is, of course, the danger that the best men will not always be chosen to represent the workers, they may be the kind that talk for the sake of talking, they may be agitators, who thrive on discord, or they may be shy, awkward and inarticulate in the presence of the managers. Here is an opportunity for the trade unions, if they value this form of co-operation, to help in the selection and the training of the best men.

Properly run, therefore, Joint Production Committees should ensure, on the one hand, a closer understanding by the worker of the particular problems of his factory or shop, of how costs are determined, how output can be improved, how profits are allocated, and on the other, a deeper appreciation by the management of the workers' point of view. If Joint Consultation succeeds thus far it will foster a positive spirit of co-operation in industry. This will go a long way towards removing the suspicion which too often holds workers and management apart, the suspicion on the part of the workers that they are being driven and exploited, and the suspicion on the part of management that some of the workers are lazy and work-shy. It is, unfortunately, only too true that there are indifferent employers and ca'canny workers. The only way to be rid of them is to show by example that the indifferent employer and the poor-spirited worker are both cutting their own and each others' throats, while from the larger viewpoint of the national interest they are sabotaging the economic recovery of the nation.

Joint consultation, however, is neither the only way nor the best for ensuring a new atmosphere in industry. It does not give the workers a share in management, nor does it embrace

any scheme of partnership in the ownership of industry or the distribution of profits. Industrial co-partnership, on the other hand, that is a partnership between employers and employed, gives the workers a share in all three spheres of industry: ownership, management, and the sharing of profits. Where it has been practised, it has met with considerable success. It can take many forms, and can operate in both big and small businesses. The main features of most co-partnership schemes are the apportionment among the workers of a share of the net profits, the opportunity to acquire a share in the ownership of the capital, and the granting of representation on the management of the business. There are, of course, many more undertakings where partnership is restricted to profit-sharing schemes only, and here the success of the enterprise depends upon whether there is a sufficiency of distributable profits; if there is not then the scheme will mean very little. On the other hand where profits are stable, there may be a tendency to take a regular distribution for granted. Over a much wider range of industry the method which would perhaps be acceptable to most is where wages and salaries receive an increment each year closely related to the annual dividend paid to the shareholders. Such an arrangement has the advantage of clearly identifying the interest of both capital and labour with the general prosperity of the firm.

I am convinced that in schemes such as these lies the real answer to those who seek to bring the bitterness of class strife into industry, for they should give workers a sense of proprietorship, a pride and interest in their work, and they should help to make them more confident, more self-reliant and thereby better citizens.

Chapter Seven

THE WAY AHEAD— A POLICY FOR BRITAIN

'The fate of England is in the hands of England.'—BENJAMIN DISRAELI.

'Nor do I believe that the way of progress lies in a change of our political system. I believe that a better world can come only when that world is peopled by better men and women. I believe that character grows in the environment of freedom and personal responsibility . . . the fundamental purpose of government is to ensure the full development of the individual.'—ANTHONY EDEN.

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At any given time the rear elimitations to what can be done by Government. The international situation, which is always fluid, may present difficulties which impose the necessity of diverting some considerable part of the national resources to defence preparations, and since there is a limit to the resources of men and materials a defence programme means less men available to mine the coal, make the goods, build the houses and grow the food we all require. Similarly, the collapse of some overseas economy, large-scale civil disturbances in a foreign country, or a prolonged drought bring famine in its train, happenings over which the home Government can exercise little or no control, might very well lead to serious dislocation of production and markets. This in turn would disturb the delicate balance of our own economy and so cause Government to be deflected from the path it is endeavouring to pursue.

Just as there is a gap between our individual wants and our capacity to satisfy them, so there is a gap between what is

desirable and needful for a government to do, and what in fact can be accomplished. A wise government takes care therefore to make provision for contingencies, to make the best use of existing resources, to ensure the maximum efficiency in administration and not to promise overmuch. It must also understand that it cannot change human nature by legislative decree and that too much government, too much interference and too little scope for men and women to exercise their own discretion will have serious economic as well as moral repercussions.

I would have people wary of those who find it easy to draw up a ten-point or twenty-point programme of action which constitutes, in the opinion of its authors, a passport to Utopia. If paper plans and election manifestoes were all that was required to ensure the establishment of good government, Britain to-day would be a land of plenty, secure, happy and prosperous. There is, of course, no short easy answer to our problems. In the sphere of politics, it is as certain as night follows day that the solution to one problem will give rise to new problems, that the battle of ideas will go on as long as men can reason. In a rapidly changing world politics becomes largely a matter of adjustment. But if it is difficult to draw up a detailed programme of action for a political party not yet in power, and which may be called to power in circumstances very different from those prevailing at the present time, it is not at all difficult to indicate the way ahead, to lay down those general requirements which are necessary to ensure the proper government of our people and their survival in the modern world.

2

The first requirement is simple enough. It is that politicians and parties should lay less emphasis upon what they will do for the nation if only they are entrusted with power, and what rich benefits they will shower upon the people from the

unlimited treasure chest of Government. In the place of this debauchery of the electorate, this bribery of honest men and women, the emphasis should be upon measures designed to enable people to do things for themselves, reap a reward for their labours and live their lives to some purpose.

The second requirement is that Government should be efficient, that the King's first Minister should not tolerate inefficient colleagues whose errors and whose mingled blandishments and threats have earned the contempt of the nation. A Prime Minister who can maintain in office proven administrative failures whom it is quite unnecessary to name is unworthy of his high office; a government which includes such men is unfit to govern. No one can tell how much the administrative inefficiency of Ministers and their servants in these last few years has cost the country, but there is not a business man who could not testify to some incompetence and wastage, which in sum-total must run into extravagant figures. Who can contemplate the cost to the community of this wastage in both material and morale and not doubt that it could be righted? There is no place in British politics for men who refuse to face facts, who mishandle everything they touch, who put the blame for failure upon their subordinates, who cover up their want of capacity with bitter, foolish, blustering speeches designed to confuse and divide at a time when the nation is crying out to its leaders for clarity of purpose and unity in spirit.

But government requires leadership from men who can be matched to the problems of the day, who can dominate the situation and not let it dominate them. Great leadership is not a commodity of which any political party possesses a monopoly, but it is undeniably true that down the ages Toryism has bred men of whom this nation is justly proud: the younger Pitt, George Canning, Benjamin Disraeli, Salisbury and Balfour. It is no accident that all these were patriots and gentlemen to whom party or personal advancement were of secondary importance in the scheme of things, that they all possessed a character and personality which left an imperishable imprint upon history, a broad intellect which declined

to be doctrinaire, and a great sense of history which enabled them to understand the character and limitations of the people they governed.

A great leader in the British tradition would not be fearful of the people. He would not talk of 'rounding recovery corner' at a time when all the facts pointed to grave dangers ahead. He would not despise the judgment of his fellow-countrymen nor seek to shackle them with restrictions of every kind, justifying each new imposition from a necessity which his own negligence has created. Great leadership cannot be bought. It does not arise out of a great parliamentary majority. 'No political alchemy', said Herbert Spencer, 'can make golden conduct out of leaden instincts.' If men do not possess the requisite qualities they cannot be invested with them. Great leadership is compounded of statesmanlike qualities of which far-sightedness, honesty, and courage are part; it is possessed of an eye for those things which matter to a great nation and of a voice which can reach deep into the hearts of men. Such were the qualities displayed by Mr. Winston Churchill during the late war. 'I have nothing to offer', he said in the dark days of May 1940, 'but blood, toil, tears and sweat . . . at this time I feel entitled to claim the aid of all . . . Come then, let us go forward together in our *united* strength.' Who could fail to be uplifted and inspired by such language? Mr. Churchill understood that to get the best out of the British people in a time of difficulty and danger it is necessary to speak to them in terms of unity, to forget sectional differences and to remember only that we are *one* people. Contrast this with the gloating triumph of Sir Hartley Shawcross, 'We are the masters now!' or with Mr. Shinwell's contemptuous reference to the larger part of the nation not mattering 'a tinker's curse', utterances made when Britain was already plunged into an economic crisis which threatened us with destruction from *within* almost as certainly as, in a more heroic day, the massed might of Hitler's legions threatened us from *without.* Mr Churchill understood too that our people are quick to respond to a difficult situation providing they are put upon their mettle and are told the

worst. This was not a new discovery. Long ago Disraeli who told us that ' . . . the English nation is never so great as in adversity . . . there never has been a time when a great sense of responsibility has been thrown upon the people of this country when they have not answered the occasion and shown that matchless energy which has made and will maintain their position as the leading nation of the world'.[1]

The key to the leadership of our greatest statesmen in the past has been the implicit belief of such men in the people they governed and their ability to summon up that response to danger, that refusal to admit defeat, that fortitude in misfortune which has ever been the characteristic of our race. Tories believe that in the last analysis it is in the character and capacity of the people themselves, not in the policies of a political party nor in the exhortations of Government, that the final answer to most of our problems will be found. The survival of Britain in these difficult post-war years will depend very much less on the number of Acts of parliament Government succeeds in putting on the Statute Book than upon the capacity of every unit in industry to raise production and increase efficiency, upon the voluntary social discipline of the people, and upon their willingness to work and pull together. The Socialist contribution to this has been to preach over long years that with less work and shorter hours under Socialism the reward would be a larger share of the profits of industry, that the bosses being the natural enemies of the workers would be swept away at the earliest opportunity, that in a world crammed full of wealth all that was necessary to ensure abundance and fair shares for all was the election of a Socialist Government. These teachings have gone far to sap the character, the sturdy independence, self-reliance and capacity for work of our people. *They have undermined the only qualities which can save this nation.* Thousands of young men are already in full flight from our shores seeking new life and opportunity in lands where they will be free from soul-destroying restrictions. Who to-day could question Mr. Charles Morgan's bitter lament that ' . . . if Drake were

[1] House of Commons, 11th August, 1857.

living, he would be given a pension and refused a sailing permit'?

The greatest asset we possess is the character of our people. In 1940 it was worth all the divisions of the French Army. 'The wealth of England', said Disraeli, 'is not merely material wealth; it does not merely consist in the number of acres we have tilled and cultivated, nor in our havens filled with shipping, nor in our unrivalled factories, nor in the intrepid industry of our mines . . . we have a more precious treasure, and that is the character of the people.'[1] If, therefore, we are to find a way out of the difficulties which beset us we must begin by sweeping away all measures which frustrate the spirit of adventure and initiative and hinder the spontaneous and natural deployment of the nation's rich fund of talent and skill.

This means a halt to further infringements of personal liberty.

It means an end to the policy of extending State monopoly.

It means that government must take bold and vigorous steps to encourage individual enterprise and to make it possible for men of initiative to launch forth into new projects.

It means that of all social services the most important is the education of the young, the equipment of the men and women of to-morrow with qualities of self-reliance and initiative, the faculty of criticism, an understanding of the duty which each must owe to all, and an abiding love of country.

It means that men and women should be encouraged to accept wider responsibilities and to disdain dependence upon the State.

It means an end to the Socialist dream of a dependent proletariat working in State factories and living in council houses. It means a resumption of the steady march towards a property-owning democracy which received such a powerful impetus under Tory guidance between the two wars.

None of this is impossible.

'Our aim', said Lord Salisbury, in a notable broadcast in

[1] Monypenny and Buckle, *Disraeli*, vol. iii, p. 210.

May 1948, 'should be to extend not only in industry, but over the whole field of our national life, the principle of *partnership* between free individuals. Each citizen should be encouraged to have his stake in the country, his own house, if he wants it, a personal interest in the business in which he works . . . This is not Capitalist in the old sense. It is something new—a society of independent responsible citizens working together for the public good, owning their own homes, having some share in the control of the businesses in which they work, not slaves but free men—the true masters of their country.'

Let it be said that a property-owning democracy is the surest way of safeguarding liberty. Even Sir Stafford Cripps, in another context, has wisely affirmed that 'No one is in greater danger of losing his independence of action than the man who has not reserves to fall back upon'. Where economic power is diffused widely over the nation as a whole, where every voter possesses some material stake in the land, where every family has the opportunity to own its home, it is difficult, well-nigh impossible, to establish tyrannical government.

The degree to which a man owns property is, after all, the measure of independence he enjoys from the State. Where all men possess property in their own right Government will be less able to coerce and direct, for such men will be jealous to guard their small kingdoms and little inclined to surrender their sovereignty.[1]

The next requirement is that Government should pay some regard to the proper management of the nation's housekeeping. If a foolish housewife, in a dishonest attempt to impress her husband, regularly spends more than her housekeeping allowance (always assuming that the shopkeepers are willing to go on extending credit) she will eventually face a crisis which demands either a reduction of expenditure, thereby lowering the family's standard of living, or a sub-

[1] Mr. Aneurin Bevan, who possesses the merit of being able to say openly what most Socialists believe but think it inexpedient to admit, told a R.I.B.A. Conference on Housing on 9th June 1948, that in future '. . . it is essential that owner-occupation or private ownership of small dwellings should become the exception.' Why should it be essential except to ensure State domination over the individual.

stantial loan from her relatives or neighbours. This nation has been living beyond its means and has maintained its standard of living only by borrowing from its friends and relatives in North America and elsewhere. If government persists in relying upon foreign doles and by this means conceals from the people the true state of their affairs, there can be no way out, but it can if it chooses set the country upon the road to recovery by effecting a drastic overhaul of its expenditure, by initiating positive measures to check the inflationary pressure which is sending prices rocketing-up with a consequent ill-effect upon our ability to sell our goods in the world's markets, and by giving a powerful impetus to productive energies by minimising control and maximising incentive.

The way ahead does not lie in accepting foreign aid. In the long run we must look to our own resources for salvation and they are not inconsiderable. A nation which cannot provide its own food is indeed insecure. Yet we possess in our own rich soil the means of sustaining a large part of our population. There is, in the Tory view, an overwhelming case for expanding and protecting home agriculture. The more we can grow at home the less dependent we shall be upon foreign imports and the higher the quality of our food. Our aim should be to raise the productivity of the land consistent with good husbandry and to maintain it at the highest level.[1] To fall short in this respect is to invite disaster. It is already clear that the era of cheap food is at an end, and in the years ahead our ability to buy the right quantities of food may be seriously, perhaps permanently, impaired if our hold on the overseas markets for export trade is not secure. It is sometimes argued that food produced at home costs more. That was true before 1939. It is not true to-day. Nor is it likely to be true for a long time to come, for there is both a persistent world shortage of food and a disposition on the part of the producer countries

[1] *The Conservative Agricultural Charter*, published in 1948, considers that given fair prices and stable markets and adequate priority for capital development ' . . . the future contribution of British agriculture to the national diet should be at least half as large again as it was in 1938–39. That is to say that, taking our 1938–39 output as 100 our target should be at least 150.'

to raise their own standards of consumption at home and to limit the ruthless exploitation of the soil which in the past gave the world cheap food by mortgaging future productivity. Gone too is the situation in which producing countries exported food to Britain to pay interest on loans, for much of that kind of indebtedness disappeared when we were obliged to cash foreign investments to pay for the war.

Tories are not particularly impressed by the 'cheap' food argument advanced by the Liberal or the urban Socialist. The Tory Party has always had a special affection for the land and those who work on it. Historically it is the agrarian party of England, the party of the small squires and the yeomen who rallied round Church and Throne when both were threatened in the seventeenth century, and later the sole champion of a dying agriculture during the long reign of free trade and cheap food imports. But the present day Tory attitude towards agriculture is determined less perhaps by material considerations than by the simple belief that the countryside is the nation's reservoir of health, that it is the breeding-ground of a virile manhood, and that the preservation of both men and soil in good heart is a social duty and a biological necessity.

Chapter Eight

THE WAY AHEAD— THE IMPERIAL SOLUTION

'Our Empire in the good providence of God will continue into the future to fulfil its destined mission—justice, civilisation and peace.'—JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN.

'The British Empire is not founded on might or force but on moral principles of freedom, equality and equity.'—JAN SMUTS.

'You have only got to look at the pages of British Imperial history to hide your head in shame that you are British.'—Sir STAFFORD CRIPPS, 1935.

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I SAID at the outset that our future might lie less in our own hands and would be determined less by any intrinsic quality of our race than by the *kind* of world in which we shall live. Indeed, if one thinks of Britain as nothing more than a small island off the mainland of Europe, the prospects of our being able to sustain life for fifty million people are gloomy. But the Tory does not think of Great Britain as an isolated unit. A host of larger ideas spring to his mind, for he sees her as the centre of a world-wide association of free nations, the guardian still of a large colonial empire, and he thinks of her with pride as a moral force in the world. To a Tory, the Empire is the indispensable element of the greatness of the British people, without which, in the conditions of the modern world, he considers that the people of our small island would quickly perish.

This attitude does not connote, as so many Socialists sought to prove before 1939, a narrow, selfish imperialism standing as a barrier to the forward march of internationalism. On

the contrary, twice in a generation this Imperial system has flung itself into the carnage of war against the violators of international law and human justice. It could scarcely do otherwise, for an Empire which 'is not founded on might or force but on moral principles' could not have long existed in a world dominated by Prussian savages. There are few who would deny that the rescue of the world from the hands of the Nazi criminals owes most to the valiant stand taken by the whole British Empire in 1939, when she led the way into battle, and after the collapse of France, stood alone against the mightiest military power the world had ever known, so giving breathing-space to both Americans and Russians. There can be no narrowness nor selfishness in an Empire which could be sustained in a long lone battle by these words of Mr. Winston Churchill: ' . . . Now it has come to us to stand alone in the breach . . . Bearing ourselves humbly before God, but conscious that we serve an unfolding purpose, we are ready to defend our native land. Here in this strong City of Refuge, which enshrines the title deeds of human progress and is of deep consequence to Christian civilisation, we await undismayed the impending assault. The whole fury and might of the enemy must very soon be turned on us. *We are fighting by ourselves alone; but we are not fighting for ourselves alone.* Hitler knows that he will have to break us in this little island or lose the war. If we can stand up to him, all Europe may be free, and the life of the world may move forward into broad, sunlit uplands.'[1] To Churchill, the great Imperialist, the word 'we' did not mean the people of these islands alone—although Britain was the fortress which symbolised resistance to Hitler in those early days of the war—but the whole Empire in arms.

We fought to establish the rule of law, without which any movement towards an international order would be impossible, except in the sense of capitulation by the world to a single power. What chance would there be for any real world order if the Empire disintegrated? Supposing we took to its logical conclusion the view of those who are ashamed of our Imperial

[1] House of Commons, 18th June, 1940.

heritage, who, like Sir Stafford Cripps could say with sincerity, as he did in 1936, 'It is fundamental to Socialism that we should liquidate the British Empire as soon as we can'.[1] We are entitled to ask what sort of world it would be without the British Empire. Would it be a more peaceful? Would there be more justice, more kindness, more genuine understanding? The answer is clear: 1936 was the year in which Hitler began the territorial aggression which was to end three years later in international war. If the world was spared a Nazi victory it was because the British Empire, which so many Socialists despised and laboured to destroy, stood between Hitler and world conquest long enough for other great nations to collect their courage and mobilise their resources. In both peace and war nothing has contributed so much as the British Empire, either by example or by positive action, to the support of the rule of law, to the maintenance of decent government and to the furtherance of the idea of international co-operation. If the world is groping slowly towards the conception of world government then it has been helped on the way largely by the British Empire and nothing could be more damaging, in the present century at least, than its disappearance.

There are, of course, two British Empires. On the one hand there is the British Commonwealth of Nations comprising the Mother Country and the Dominions, great sovereign democracies in their own right. On the other stands the vast British Colonial Empire, the responsibility for which is vested in the Mother Country. But the division is not permanent for with the Colonial Empire there is a steady movement away from dependence on the Mother Country towards self-government and ultimate dominion status. It is true to say, therefore, that the British Commonwealth is an expanding democratic community of freely-associated sovereign nations affording the world an example of how free men belonging to free nations can live together in peace and harmony. The whole Imperial family, dominions and colonies constitutes in the words of Field Marshal Smuts '. . . a community of states and of nations

[1] *Hull Daily Mail*, 2nd March, 1936.

far greater than any empire that has ever existed . . . we are a whole world by ourselves . . . a dynamic system growing, evolving all the time towards new destinies'.

But this is an Empire very different from those that have preceded it. In large part it is an Imperial Democracy. There have been many great empires in history and there have been great democracies, but never before has an empire been a democracy and a democracy an empire. It is different in another sense. The Dominions are not subject to any control from the Mother Country. They can, if they wish, secede, or stand aloof in time of war. They can send ambassadors to foreign countries to represent their interests and can dissent from the Mother Country at international conferences.

Thus no British political party can do more, as far as the Commonwealth is concerned, than advocate a policy which seeks to preserve the widest measure of collaboration with the Dominions. It is possible, of course, to argue that the existing machinery of collaboration should be strengthened, that Imperial Conferences to discuss the common interests of trade, defence and external policy should be called more frequently, that a permanent Imperial Secretariat should be set up in London and that a bold lead should be given by the Mother Country in the matter of emigration, remembering that no British Government can insist upon any one of the Dominions falling into line with specifically British policies. The Tory Party's Commonwealth Policy should be one, therefore, of continuous collaboration with the Dominions in all fields, constant consultation, and avoidance of any policy which might disturb the excellent relations which have prevailed since the Statute of Westminster.

Where the Colonial Empire is concerned, however, the story is very different. Here we command the destiny of 62,000,000 people and 3,500,000 square miles of the world's surface. Under our hand lies the opportunity to educate whole peoples —not yet able to stand by themselves in the conditions of the modern world—for responsible government and nation status, and to raise the standards of life of millions of human beings, including ourselves, by the development of vast new sources

of wealth. The Colonial Development Corporation is a move in the right direction, for, whilst it does not interfere with the development of colonial territories by private enterprise (indeed, it is designed to assist all enterprise which makes for the expansion of colonial productivity), it clearly identifies government in the United Kingdom with economic development along lines beneficial to the colonial peoples.

What of our relations with the rest of the world? In the Tory view foreign policy cannot be partisan. It may be possible for Leftists to argue that we should pursue a *Socialist* foreign policy—though exactly what that means it is difficult for the non-Socialist to grasp, unless it implies a policy of especial collaboration with Socialist countries to the exclusion of others, a policy which might prove highly embarrassing in the event of changes of government. If it means this, it is plain folly. But it may well mean something else. In the view of the Communists and their 'fellow-travellers' within the Socialist Party it may well mean a policy of attachment to the Soviet Union. In this event, it is a policy which spells the dissolution of the Commonwealth and the death of British freedom.

Foreign policy, in the Tory view, should be above party, and should seek to preserve the interest and safeguard the honour of Great Britain, to maintain the Empire, and to preserve the peace. All other considerations are of secondary importance. The Tory sees our affairs governed by the interlocking of three spheres of British interest, the Commonwealth, our special relations with the United States and our concern with the recovery, security and unity of our immediate Western European neighbours.

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The post-war difficulties which this country is experiencing have performed one service. They have clearly demonstrated what was not at all clear to many people in the years before 1939, namely, the very grave vulnerability of our economy.

We have clearly arrived at a position where we can no longer hope to hold our own in competition with the United States. The Americans, with the advantages of a large, secure and protected home market, and mass-production methods brought to the highest point of efficiency, advocate the freeing of world trade from all restrictions. They do this precisely because, like ourselves in the middle years of the nineteenth century, they know themselves to be supreme in the economic field and have little to fear from foreign competition. But our way of life is not theirs. We maintain more extensive social services than the Americans and these have to be paid for, and as a consequence are ultimately a burden upon the costs of industry. We can never compete effectually, therefore, with the Americans, except possibly in the production of quality goods. However much we may value American friendship, and it is essential to world peace that the British Commonwealth and the United States remain in close association, it must be said that the price of American financial aid has been and still continues to be the surrender of all those advantages which Imperial preference and economic collaboration have given to us and other Empire countries. The price is one we should not be willing to pay if we value our independence.

Our economy is particularly sensitive to changes in the volume of world trade and therefore requires the building-up of an area of stable economic relationships which will avoid the sudden closing-down of overseas markets with the tragic consequence of unemployment at home. Remember the only real failure of British democracy between the wars was its inability to solve unemployment, and yet despite this we were able to provide a substantial advance in social reform and a steady advance in the standard of living. What could we not have done had idle hands been employed to the full? Remember, too, that unemployment was not reduced substantially until after the Ottawa agreements of 1932 which, by the establishment of a comprehensive system of Imperial preferences, laid the foundation for a great expansion in Empire trade.

Free trade and Toryism do not mix overmuch. The power of

Britain was already considerable before the era of free trade and the foundations of that power had been laid with the aid of protectionist policies. No one can measure how far the Navigation Acts, which insisted on trade from and to British ports being carried in British ships, contributed to the expansion of British Imperial Power; suffice it to say that they led to the development of the greatest mercantile marine in the world and with it the navy which held the supremacy of the seas for nearly three centuries. Many Tories were reluctant to abandon the old policies which had served us well and were sceptical of free trade. Disraeli himself thundered against the ruination of agriculture by the adoption of a policy which, in his view, was destined to bring only temporary advantages. 'Protection to native industry', he said, 'is a fundamental principle.'[1] Well, free trade had its advantages and they were enjoyed to the full while they lasted, but to-day they no longer exist. The time has come again when we must plant our feet, as Burke put it, 'in the tracks of our forefathers', where we can neither wander nor stumble.

This requires a bold restatement of national policy. Under Socialism, of the inept, unimaginative variety to which we are accustomed in this country, there are only two likely lines of development. One is towards economic dependence upon the United States, with our industry finding it more and more difficult to compete in the world market and with declining standards of living subsidised by American doles; the other is abandonment of the American connection and a policy of drift which because of the totalitarian nature of Socialism must inevitably end in servile attachment to the Soviet Union.

The answer for us is to be found in the realisation that

(*a*) we possess *at home* an import market second to none the loss of which to many foreign exporters of food and raw materials would be serious indeed and that this provides us with a weapon to ensure guaranteed markets overseas for our exports.

[1] Monypenny and Buckle, *Disraeli*, vol. iii, p. 26.

(*b*) we possess *in the Empire* a huge, rich economic area which can provide us with nearly all the food and raw materials we require and in which the potentialities for expansion and development are immense.

This means the employment of tariffs, a strengthening of Imperial preferences, a return to the policies which more than anything else ensured our recovery after the world trade depression of 1929–31. These are not restrictionist but expansionist policies, for they provide the world as well as ourselves with stable markets, and do not exclude the possibility of reciprocal agreements with foreign countries.

It is true, of course, that the Dominions are becoming more and more industrialised, and no longer require the Mother Country to supply them with all their staple needs. But this is not necessarily a bad thing, for the further industrialisation of the Dominions, fed by sources of raw materials provided by the Colonial Empire, and the consequent general rise in the standards of living of the dominion and colonial peoples, will create new markets for the highly-specialised products which the Mother Country can still provide. In the larger sense there is obviously something wrong with an empire, the outlying parts of which are under-populated, under-developed and still largely dependent upon a heartland which is dangerously vulnerable to attack. Therefore we should not view with dismay any expansion of dominion industries. Rather should we welcome such development as an insurance against the collapse of the Imperial system as a result of some major calamity befalling the Mother Country. The stronger the perimeter lands of the Empire the greater is the deterrent to any would-be aggressor.

As befits a free association of democratic nations there should be the maximum freedom for men to move from one part of the Empire to another. Travel should be cheapened and emigration encouraged. The dearest wish of the Tory is to see the Dominions expanding their wealth and population and extending their beneficial influence and authority in the world. There can be no sense of rivalry between partners

in a joint enterprise. Canada's triumphs in industry and science are ours, the prosperity of Australia and New Zealand will be a reflection of our own. Britain is wherever His Majesty is sovereign and wherever the British way of life prevails.

In the long run the Empire holds together only as long as Britain has the strength to lead, only as long as she remains for all the Empire peoples a citadel of freedom. 'Empires are only maintained', said Disraeli, 'by vigilance, by firmness, by courage, by understanding the temper of the times in which we live.'[1] If Britain moves further to the Left, if she becomes permanently one vast Socialist concentration camp, the Dominions, of necessity, will have to look elsewhere, for their way of life is freedom and freedom in Britain will be dead.

There is little need to take a gloomy view. On the contrary, Britain with her Colonial Empire, closely associated with the great Dominions can be, if we so choose, a world power second to none in wealth and stability. But such a vision demands that we free ourselves from dependence upon the dollar and rid our minds of the tragic delusion that by the surrender of Imperial advantage we somehow advance the cause of international unity and understanding. *It demands that we think imperially.*

It demands also that we take the long view in planning the development of our Imperial resources. But how are we going to find the necessary capital to finance this development? Is it not painfully clear, some may argue, that we in these islands are no longer capable of exporting capital on a large scale? In 1929 Britain had more than £3,700,000,000 invested overseas, of which nearly half was invested in the Dominions and Colonies. The total British investment in Africa alone from 1870 to 1936 is estimated to be of the order of £1,000,000,000 and yet British territories in that vast continent are still relatively undeveloped. Against this, what can the new Colonial Development Corporation hope to do? With its powers of borrowing limited to a mere £100,000,000 it can do no more than scratch the surface of the problem.

[1] Monypenny and Buckle, *Disraeli*, vol. v, p. 465.

All this is true, but when one speaks of ridding ourselves of *dependence* upon the dollar this does not exclude the possibility of ensuring *co-operation* with the dollar by inviting large-scale American private investment in the Colonial Empire. Indeed, it is only in North America that the necessary capital can be found. The United States itself was developed in the nineteenth century to a great extent by British capital; there is no political or economic reason why American capital should not perform a reciprocal service for the British Empire. There are already considerable American investments in both the British Isles and the Empire countries; in 1943, these totalled $4,800,000,000, just over a third of the total of American capital invested abroad. But if further American capital is to be attracted the essential requirement is that the American people have the fullest faith and confidence in the stability of the British Empire and its keystone the Mother Country.

4

It is not at all unlikely that in our time the British Commonwealth may become part of a wider association of peoples. If this comes to pass it will not spell the death of British freedom but its triumph, for no other group of nations will have laboured so much for the concept of ordered world government. Until this dream becomes reality, the Tory considers that it is our solemn duty to guard the Imperial heritage. There is nothing mean or selfish in preserving the achievements of that mighty company of great men who built the Empire. It should be a constant source of inspiration to each succeeding generation to remember the work and honour the names of pioneers like David Livingstone, whose quiet courage and selfless devotion opened up territories where no white man had ever been before; Stamford Raffles, who founded the great city and thriving port of Singapore on the site of a small fishing village; Durham and Elgin, whose wisdom

helped to mould modern Canada; Gibbon Wakefield, the model coloniser of New Zealand; Lugard, whose name will ever be a monument to the fairness and impartiality of British administration in Africa; and Botha and Smuts, who fought against us and became our firmest friends. Each, in his different way, laboured to give reality to an ideal which far from exercising despotic sway over men has served to advance the cause of humanity. It is our turn to guard their achievement and to expand their glory.

There need be, therefore, little fear of the future if we are true to ourselves and faithful to our traditions, and if we realise all the assets of our race, character, patience, industry and inventive capacity.The present age requires an Elizabethan spirit of adventure which calls forth all the best that is in us. There is time yet to recapture the fading glories, to enrich the heritage which still remains and to stir the world again with admiration for British courage and achievement. What is needed in the conduct of our affairs, whether they be concerned with the larger issues of national and Imperial politics, or the more intimate, but none the less important, day to day problems of the citizen and worker, is a supreme effort of will, the will to work, the will to pull together, the will to survive. In the words of Tennyson:

'Tis not too late to seek a newer world,
. . . Though much is taken, much abides; and though
We are not now that strength which in old days
Moved earth and heaven; that which we are, we are;
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will,
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.