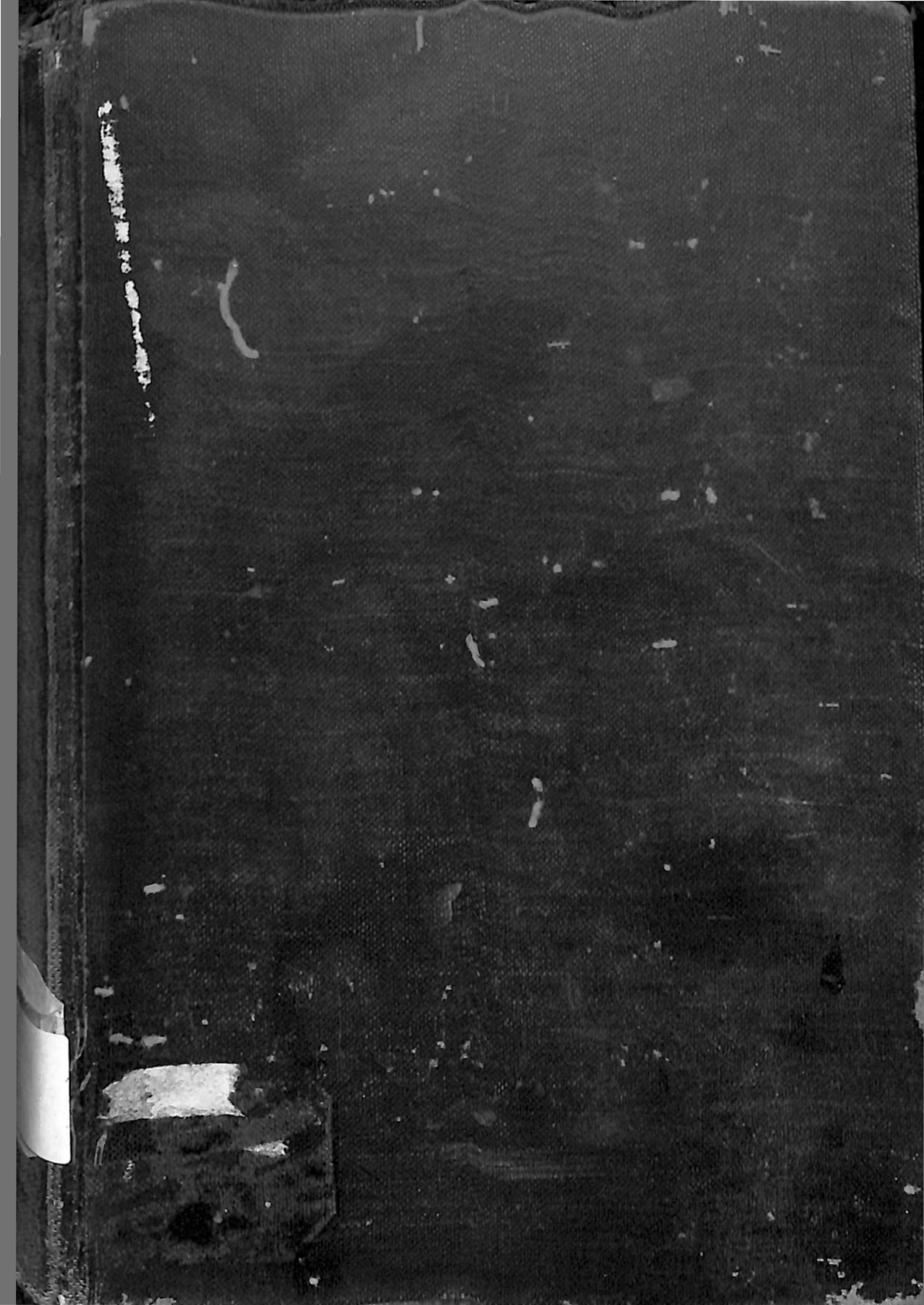




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DICTATORSHIP in the MODERN WORLD --- ---

EDITED BY

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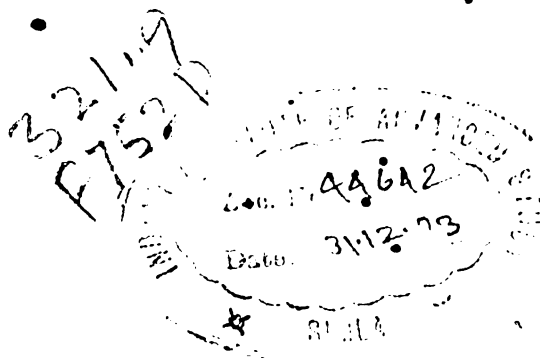
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EDITOR'S FOREWORD

THIS THOUGHTFUL and thought-provoking volume has its origin in a general session of the American Historical Association over which I presided. I had enlisted three young scholars, Professors Lerner, Lutz, and Rippy, to read the papers on dictators and dictatorship that appear in this volume. When the University of Minnesota Press asked me to edit them it seemed to me that the subject of dictatorship in the modern world justified the presentation of its genesis in other lands than those that could be covered in the limited time of a public meeting. In expanding the volume I was able to secure the cooperation of Professors Spencer, Deutsch, and Kohn. Good fortune brought to the campus of the University of Minnesota Denis Brogan, now of Corpus Christi College, Oxford. His lecture on "The Prospects for Democracy" seemed to me then, and seems to me now, one of the best things he has done and a fitting conclusion to a volume devoted to the origins and basic ideas of democracy's antithesis. Taken together these well-written papers make such a cool and dispassionate survey of the subject as only the historical approach can give.

The chief thing we need to get over in our New World attitude toward dictatorship is our amazement. There is nothing new or novel about it. In the long course of the history of organized government one man by virtue of some sanction or other has ruled his fellow men between the Persian Gulf and Portugal much longer and much oftener than they have ruled themselves. We are dismayed to see dictatorships appearing in nations that in the nineteenth century seemed to be feeling

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their way through the forms of self-government to the possibility of its realization as a philosophy of political life. But democracy was a tender and alien growth. Seventy years could not root in some of these continental lands the loyalties to liberty and self-government that England had developed in seven centuries and passed on as a heritage to the English-speaking nations that derived from her.

On the Continent there had been for centuries such a need for security, such rivalry and resort to *machtpolitik*, that a bewildered and disillusioned generation found in the change to something old all the zest of something new. No reader of this volume will be tempted to apply in cynicism to these nations the words of Machiavelli, "How perilous it is to free a people who prefer slavery." He will be led to comprehend what he is not asked to condone. To paraphrase Dante, the peoples of postwar Europe, in their restlessness and ceaseless change, are like a sick man who continually changes his position to lessen his pain.

It is true, as the writers of these essays point out, that the dictators of the present are not lineal descendants of the despots and tyrants of the past, that those of today have a new and powerful technique in mass control through propaganda by radio, movie, press, education, and a secular religion of their own making. Side by side with this volume I have been watching through the University Press a volume on the literature of propaganda in all its varied forms and purposes. That volume and this together raise even profounder questions than either alone. The historian, the psychologist, the social scientist in any field, the citizen in every nation and in every walk of life is facing an old force raised to gigantic possibilities of good or evil.

EDITOR'S FOREWORD

I say an old force, for there has always been propaganda. Words and symbols served the zealot and the despot and the tyrant in the past as they serve the dictator today. The forms and technique are different. The undocumented story of Napoleon at the side of a dying lieutenant, thinking up glorious last words to put into the mouth of the dead, has its modern analogue in the little Bonapartes of our day who think of the stirring phrases they will put on the radio when they have killed or banished their lieutenants and collaborators in their early struggles for power. A modern Tyrtaeus would not ask to write the songs of a nation rather than its laws. He would ask for the first chance to make a slogan that stirred emotion and silenced thought and then he could write the nation's laws and be himself above all law.

Will propaganda make the world safe for dictators? If the span of the life of any one of them is by chance equal to the full maturity of the youth they are now indoctrinating, can they keep the flow of phrases and battle cries below the point of satiety and yet satisfying and unfailing in their appeal? We do not yet know just what kind of drug in the political *materia medica* propaganda is. We have only the evanescence of war propaganda and the reactions from high-pressure sales methods and the fact that dictators breed envious and scheming lieutenants rather than successors and the hunger of the human spirit that will not feed forever on husks to guide us in judging whether dictators armed with microphones and operating through the nameless terrors of secret police and mass emotion will found sovereignties as long enduring as the dynasts of the past.

We can say, perhaps, that there will be either more dictators or fewer. Fewer if democracies challenge the spirit of

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youth to live perilously. More if youth believes that democracy means old forms and phrases behind which stalk the predatory and acquisitive license of an era that is past.

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THE PATTERN OF DICTATORSHIP

By MAX LERNER

MAX LERNER, *assistant editor of the Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences and formerly on the social science faculty of Sarah Lawrence College, is now lecturer at Harvard University in the Department of History, Government, and Economics. He received his B. A. degree from Yale University in 1923, and three years later took his Ph. D. at the Robert Brookings Graduate School of Economics and Government. In the summer of 1934 and again in 1935 he served as Chairman of the Faculty of the Wellesley Summer Institute for Social Progress. This paper was first published in slightly abbreviated form in the Yale Review, and is published here with the permission of the editors of that periodical.*

THE PATTERN OF DICTATORSHIP

THE CONTEMPORARY concern over the advance of dictatorships is not merely the expression of our democratic bias but proceeds from deeper intuitions. There are moods in history when the world map is in essence a military chart, and every governmental change in even the least important country comes like a bulletin from the battlefield, laden with fateful significance for the entire world outlook. Our present mood is one of these. There are still some minds, of course, that persist in regarding the new dictatorships as momentary departures from the democratic norm, just as there are some at the other extreme to which they seem completely catastrophic, spelling the end of the world, the jumping-off place for civilization. We must reject both these perspectives. But one thing may be said for certain: we are dealing here not with a few sporadic and abnormal seizures of power but with the political fiber of an entire period. The question may well be posed whether we are not entering upon a new age of despots.

If so, it means that the liberal-democratic state—whose foundations were laid in the English constitutional struggles of the seventeenth century, which achieved its great victories in the American and French revolutions, and which reached its classic form in the nineteenth century—is in that classic form no longer possible. So completely has it dominated the whole span of the last few generations that it has

been accepted in rhetoric even where it was not followed in actuality, and under its influence Marxist theory itself tended to interpret the dictatorship of the proletariat in constitutional terms. That era of unquestioned acceptance is at an end; the present struggle for power marks its passing. Even if the democratic state survives in some form and is not completely swept away, it will re-emerge in a new shape, bearing the impress of the struggles it is now waging with dictatorship.

But the very sharpness of the clash between democracy and dictatorship exposes us to the danger of simplifying both and of thinking of them as two absolutes, locked since the beginning of the centuries in mortal struggle and now again confronting one another. Dictatorship is undoubtedly old, as democracy is old, or kingship. It has a tradition of its own. But in such matters tradition is unimportant, except in so far as it enters as an element into the intellectual climate of the new regime, causing Mussolini to talk about Caesar and strut like Bonaparte, and Hitler to revive the glories of the Cromwellian revolution. My meaning will be clearer if I put it into extreme paradoxical form: that the dictatorial power itself is far from being the important fact about the modern dictatorship. We have grown accustomed to thinking of any sort of concentration of power in the hands of a man or of a group as despotism, and are prone to guard too jealously a democratic dispersion of power. But the reality today is not dictatorship as an abstract idea, opposed in a timeless dualism to the idea of democracy, but dictatorship as it is set in the struggles and dilemmas of our own age. What really counts is the scheme of society and

view of life represented by the dictatorial regime, the process of building it, and the consequences that flow from it. The power of the dictator is, of course, the central fact of this scheme. But it derives its meaning, whether sinister or salutary, from its relationship to the rest of the pattern. It is this pattern of dictatorship that must be subjected to analysis.

It is now almost two decades that dictatorship and the threat of dictatorship have dominated the political scene in the Western world. The collapse of the great Central and Eastern European empires even before the end of the World War left the ground completely open for that struggle for power which is always latent, even at the height of order and security; and constitutional democracy was not strong or militant enough to seize and hold the power. In almost every country of Europe that has been hard hit by the war three groups fought it out for supremacy—the liberal-socialist bloc, the Communists, and the conservative bloc of large landholders, heavy industrialists, and bankers. Three principal types of dictatorship were evolved. First, the constitutional dictatorship by the liberal-socialist bloc, represented typically by the Kerensky, Karolyi, and Bruening regimes. These were generally the first to profit by the revolutionary overthrow of the monarchist and reactionary governments that had fought in and in most cases bungled the war. Between the anxious passions at the extreme Left and Right their *via media*, however, proved unstable. Second, the Communist dictatorships of Lenin and Bela Kun, which moved like a specter across Europe in the days just before and after the Armistice, like a specter dominated the wranglings at Versailles, but except in

Russia left only spectral and impermanent results. Third, the counter-revolutionary or White dictatorships, successful where the socialist and communist revolutionary movements proved premature or unstable—in Poland, Finland, Hungary—and leaving in their wake a White Terror that will rank among the most ghastly episodes in all history.

To these must be added a fourth type—the Fascist dictatorship—which has thus far proved more durable and effective than any of the others. As it evolved, principally in Italy and Germany, it has been closely related in spirit and objectives to the counter-revolutionary movements but has included more affirmative elements. It has sought not merely to fight Marxism defensively but has developed an affirmative ideology that would make it more effective in the struggle. It has wakened responsive movements in countries as diverse as Austria, the Balkan states, France, England, Ireland, America, and Japan. It is today the focal type of dictatorship, growing continually in definiteness and universal applicability, engaging the energies and loyalties of ever wider groups, constituting itself the opponent at once of the constitutional-democratic state and of Marxist movements. There was for a time a disposition to say that Fascism was a polity unique to Italy, to be explained only in terms of Italian national psychology and traditions. But the movement of events finally took this question out of the realm of academic dispute. After Hitler's great parliamentary gains Mussolini remarked, "Whoever says that Fascism is not an exportable commodity is mistaken." It is around this "exportable commodity" that our analysis of the pattern of dictatorship will center, drawing also, of course, upon the Communist and

earlier counter-revolutionary dictatorships wherever that can be done without doing violence to their own contexts. On the whole, however, it must be made quite clear that in terms of purpose, ideology, and tradition there is between the Fascist dictatorships and the dictatorship of the proletariat a deep and unbridgeable chasm.

But it is not only the contemporary persuasiveness of Fascism and its position as the focal point for anti-democratic action that makes it the important pattern of dictatorship today. Even more crucial is its continuity with the whole line of development of the Western state. There has been a marked tendency to attribute the growth of Fascism to post-war conditions—to the Carthaginian peace with its stigma of national humiliation, its unsatisfactory territorial adjustments, its problems of demobilization and unemployment, its widespread monetary inflation, its legacy of national hatreds. This is sound enough as far as it goes, but stopping there it is truncated and provincial. These influences are themselves merely the crystallization of forces inherent in modern economic and political development. The war, the peace that followed it, the depression that followed both, were the logical consequences of our capitalist-individualist economic organization and our system of nation-states. Wherever the dominant economic groups found that neither the liberal-democratic state nor the constitutional dictatorship could preserve national unity and fight the threat of communism, they were willing to scrap both types of government and accept in their place the anti-liberal, anti-proletarian Fascist dictatorship. By what was more than a happy coincidence, their own interests and those of the Fascist movements were

rooted in a militaristic nationalism. The Fascist dictatorship has thus become the mailed fist thrust out in defense of the capitalist nation-state. Wherever in the future proletarian movements or economic collapse threatens the two basic institutions of capitalism and nationalism, and wherever the democratic state is unable or unwilling to defend them, we may expect that the struggle for power will center around the *Fascist dictatorship*. If, in short, we are really to have a new *age of despots*, then here is the design for the despotism.

* * *

This design should not be conceived as too clearly and sharply etched. Actually Fascism smells of the blood and dust of battle, in which fixed principles are so many impedimenta. It has had to make its way amidst treacherously unstable national and international conditions. It has had to be above all else mobile, and lightning quick in its adaptations. "The *Fascisti*," Mussolini himself has said, "are the gypsies of Italian politics; not being tied down to any fixed principles they proceed unceasingly toward one goal, the future well-being of the Italian people." And Hitler, despite the "unalterable" character of the twenty-five propositions early laid down in the party platform, has proved himself a consummate opportunist. But pattern there is none the less in the Fascist dictatorship—not in the ordered consistency of doctrine and action but in the significant relation between the objectives, techniques, and doctrines of the dictatorship and the interests it represents.

In the making of any dictatorship three principal stages are discernible—the preparation for power, the thrust at power, and the entrenchment in power. The first is occupied

with the laborious building of a movement, and must find ways of reaching and enlisting mind and heart and will. It creates therefore an ideology, a leader, a technique of persuasion, and an organization for action.

Of these the ideology, or system of ideas, is the most conspicuously paraded—and is perhaps the least important. It constitutes at best the rhetoric rather than the logic of dictatorship, and is to a large extent a rationalization after the fact. The Fascist ideology falls rather naturally into several groups of elements. There is first what we may call the *anti* group, in which Fascism declares itself anti-liberalism, anti-tolerance, anti-parliamentarism, anti-electionism, anti-equality—in short, against the whole machinery and all ideals of the liberal-democratic state. The indictment, which has by this time thoroughly entered the modern consciousness, is that the democratic state consists mostly of talk, that in crucial emergencies it has produced paralysis rather than action, and that through its weakness it has permitted the victory of alien and bolshevist elements. Against these—communists, socialists, Jews, foreigners—it directs its primary hatred, holding them responsible for the decadence or the anarchic violence of the preceding regimes.

The second group of elements in the ideology consists of the cult of the nation-state and of the related patriotic and militaristic virtues that are to heal its wounds and restore it to its former glory. The nation is the cohesive force that must override every class, sectional, economic, or religious loyalty.

The third, and in a sense the crucial, element is the concept of order. Unlike the loose-knit law-and-order concept of the constitutional state, this is a militant, driving concept. It

seeks to stamp out all dissident elements, create the structure of the corporate or totalitarian state, bring firmness and authority where libertarianism and tolerance had existed, establish a set of known relationships in a system of status, and a hierarchy at the apex of which stands the leader of the party and the guardian of the state.

Finally, add to these three groups of elements the myth of a cultural renaissance, and you have a complete and rounded ideology. The renaissance as embodied in Italian Fascism has its varied roots in the Roman imperialist tradition, the old *Risorgimento*, Marinetti's Futurist movement, and Mussolini's own contempt for the old men and his zest for *giovinezza*. In Germany there are none of the futuristic elements, more stress upon the return to the primitive Teutonic virtues, and the intention of eliminating all racial strains except the Aryan, which has been traditionally the carrier of those virtues.

Such an ideology, given the purposes it is to serve, is an immensely skillful construction. It shows that its framers have learned the primary principle of the whole business—that an ideology must create and manipulate hatreds as well as loyalties, that it must make use of the most deeply ingrained habits and prejudices, that it must lull inferiorities and direct cruelty and despair into politically useful channels. The spirit or *Geist* of Fascist and Nazi culture is more than a literary expression. It has served like a huge tide to float an entire political revolutionary movement.

The most important symbol and emotionally the most evocative figure in the entire movement is the leader himself. But to say this is to say nothing more than could be said of any outstanding Hollywood star, whose appeal lies partly in

her beauty, partly in the kindness of lighting and the make-up artists, and partly in the expertness of direction and the ministrations of a huge sales and publicity staff. The dictator, like the movie star, has been excessively romanticized. A glamour-starved populace, both in his own country and abroad, creates the myth of a superman who focuses all the energies of his time and dares put an end to inaction. By enlarging his stature they succeed in compensating for their own dwarfed and stunted stature in an industrial age. He is *Il Duce, Unser Führer*. He sways tens of thousands by his daemonic oratory; he moves about in a continuous hysterical parade; whenever he goes heels are clicked, hands rise to salute, hoarse and eager throats do him homage. In due course this begins to tell on him, for he is generally a person capable of persuading and hypnotizing not only others but even himself. If, to start with, he was only a man who wanted to be dictator, he ends by becoming a combination of Caesar and Messiah. And naturally so, for he comes at the end of a long romantic sequence. All the centuries of romanticism, by emphasizing genius and leadership and a Promethean defiance of fate, have contributed to his construction. He stands there, mystic, adventurer, orator, fanatic; the man of action who moves by his words, the man of words who incites to action; the hero of our time, which had begun to fear that it had lost its capacity for hero-worship.

But this is only half the story. The other and more important half is that the building of a dictatorship is, under the modern conditions of the machine age, a large-scale industry, and the leader himself, therefore, a part of the machine process. A successful movement toward a dictatorship must

enlist a membership, arrange meetings and speeches, gain the help of the press or establish a party press, distribute propaganda, win over the aid or connivance of the police and the army, penetrate the churches, clubs, and trade unions, build a party organization with local units and leaders, equip, arm, and pay a private army. It must, in short, add to all the business requirements of running a successful party the further burden of running a military establishment, staging a revolution, and preparing for a new social order. All this requires organization, advertising, salesmanship, and financing. The dictator is, then, really the product of romanticism who finds himself part of a huge administrative organization. He is a Byronic figure caught in the machine age. He stands thus at the confluence of two worlds, an enduring witness that history is not a matter of clear sequences but shuttles back continually from present to past in weaving its unbroken web.

Thus the leader not only rides the movement but is ridden by it. He becomes part of a whole train of needs and purposes and techniques and consequences. He may become not a symbol but merely an instrument, used by the interests that can afford to dig down in their pockets to furnish the sinews of war, incapable of retreat, unable to go on without them. Once they have accepted him it becomes immaterial whether he really possesses the Nietzschean qualities attributed to him: if he does not, they can be created for him.

The earlier analysts of the Fascist dictatorship, impressed by the fact that it had found fertile soil in the despair and desolation of the middle class, held that it was a middle-class movement to secure the interests of that class against both the proletariat and the capitalists. But this is to mistake a

favorable soil for an effective force. Like the Russian peasantry in regard to Communism, the middle classes in Italy and Germany were willing to tolerate and even aid the Fascist movements. Theirs was the nationalism that was whipped up to a fury; theirs, the most credulous, was the intolerance; theirs, the least class-conscious, was the hatred of class groupings; theirs, the most stereotyped and culturally starved, was the reveling in the symbolism, the insignia, and all the trappings of an *opéra bouffe*.

But the real stakes were those of the industrialists and landowners. It was a large banking house that first gave Mussolini financial backing, and the Thyssen steel bloc that gave Hitler his. In both movements there was a definite progression away from the mild socialism with which they had started to an out-and-out conservatism. The invectives against bankers in the Nazi propaganda grew increasingly milder until finally they ended lamely in the distinction drawn by Feder, the party ideologist, between productive and unproductive capital, the latter presumably belonging to the Jews. Long before the party purge of June 30, 1934, Hitler dissociated himself from the left wing of the party, represented by Strasser and the Nazi-Bolshevists, after which he was able to be more persuasive in the speeches he made before private gatherings of the great industrial magnates. They, on their part, when they had got over their initial distrust of demagogic methods and irresponsible personalities and had seen through some of the phrase-making, were not unwilling to join their fortunes to a movement that could vitalize the flagging opposition to radicalism. They shrewdly saw that the two could march to power together. There was

one clear common ground on which the industrialists could meet the Nazi and Fascist leaders—common hatreds and common nationalist zeal. Not only were they tied together by economic interest: they were both tied impalpably to the nation-state by all the symbols in which they had come to believe.

With an ideology, a leadership, an organization, financial support, the enthusiasm of the middle class, and the backing of the vested interests, the remaining task in the preparation for power is systematic terrorism. In the terrorism that follows the successful establishment of a dictatorship there is little to choose between the Reds, the Whites, and the Fascists, except, of course, as one may sympathize more or less with the particular aims that terrorism serves. But terrorism as a systematic preparation for power, as a way of keeping one's own military impulses in trim while crippling and demoralizing the enemy, is a specific characteristic of the Fascist movements. The basis of operations is the party army—in Italy the black-shirt Fascist squads, in Germany the brown-shirt Storm Troops. Similar private armies are found, in a more or less developed state, wherever a Fascist movement has taken hold.

Such an *imperium in imperio* would have seemed inconceivable in a strong nation before the war, but the disintegration of the state power in both countries after the war reduced the state to a police force attempting to keep the peace between armed camps. The typical activity was squadrist—terrorization by bands roving over the countryside or squads descending suddenly upon a trade union headquarters or a newspaper establishment and destroying it, or kidnapping

some too troublesome member of the opposition and beating him into unconsciousness. Such strong-arm work often got beyond the control of the leaders themselves, who strove to discipline some too zealous squadrists or Storm Troopers, or attempted to dissociate themselves from specific acts of violence, as Mussolini did in the instance of the murder of the Socialist deputy Matteotti. But this must generally be taken as an official dissociation, which does not necessarily exclude the usefulness of the act to the movement or even a personal desire that it be carried out. When an entire movement is deliberately founded upon a philosophy of violence, it is somewhat casuistical to repudiate particular acts. To an American with a law-and-order tradition inherited from Anglo-Saxon constitutionalism, it would seem unthinkable that private armies or strong-arm squads should be allowed within the state if it were not that we had our own racketeering and gangsterism as instances. In either case the state's capacity to enforce order has broken down, and private organizations for protection and attack operate interstitially in the particular area of activity where the state is powerless.

To be effective such a preparatory reign of terror must have the sympathy, or at least the toleration, of the police, the army, and the magistrates. Here a Fascist movement, appealing to nationalist and militarist attitudes, has in a capitalist-minded people a definite advantage over whatever private armies the socialists or communists may possess. In Germany the republican regime made its crucial error by carrying over the police, the judiciary, and the army officers from the monarchy. They stood by inactive while the strength of the Republic was being whittled away by civil dissension, allowed

assassination and terrorist acts to go unpunished, and, when the crucial time came for the *coup d'état*, aided the transfer of power. In Italy there was open camaraderie between the squadrists and the police, and in the March on Rome, Mussolini was able to make a grand gesture by placing at the head of each of the five divisions of his Black Shirts a regular army general.

Given such a situation, the actual thrust at power is less dramatic, less dangerous, and—if we may put it so—less crucial than is generally conceived. If the preparatory work has been done thoroughly, it is a relatively formal affair, those in power being less concerned with a militant defense against the movement for dictatorship than that they be offered a sufficient show of force to save their faces. The March on Rome served this purpose quite adequately, and neither the prime minister nor the king cared to engage Mussolini in an actual trial of strength. In Germany Hindenburg and Papen counted on being able to control Hitler more effectively when he was given the responsibilities of ministerial office. In both countries the nature of the cabinet system gave the transfer of power a parliamentary form, ironic enough considering the anti-parliamentary character of the movements. The genuine danger to the realization of the dictatorship comes not from the existing regime but from the possibility of a general strike. But this possibility is considerably decreased by the memory of past terrorism, the speedy destruction of the workers' press, and cleavages in their own ranks.

* * *

With the dictatorial party in power, the road to the establishment of the dictatorship itself is, even under a parliamen-

tary system, swift and certain. The party can accomplish under the guise of legality what it could not have accomplished as a revolutionary movement. This was especially true in Germany, where the reverence for the state and its functionaries is deeply ingrained in the individual burgher. The first task before the new government in dissolving the parliamentary state is to stamp out all opposition. All the opposition armies are disbanded, their parties outlawed, their press destroyed, their funds confiscated. The reign of terror is intensified: it becomes incredibly brutal, merciless, calculated; it is now directed against those who are defenseless and pleading. Those who are spared death and do not succeed in fleeing the country are, as in Germany, placed in concentration camps or, as in Italy, exiled to penal colonies. The tactical principle governing all these operations is that everyone in any way connected with one's enemies is, if not already a political offender, at least potentially one, and should therefore be put out of the way.

With equal thoroughness all the government services are purged and refilled with party men. This not only assures the entrenchment of power but takes care of the supporters who have been clamoring for jobs and helps the movement to get on the bandwagon. The government's licensing function is used to rid the professions of undesirable elements, and even the large business corporations have party agents placed on their boards of directors. The technique of effecting so complete an entrenchment in power has measurably improved with experience, so that Hitler was able to accomplish within a few months what it took Mussolini as many years to do. But in Hitler's case the added speed and ruthlessness overshot

their mark: hence the jerry-built structure of coercion and the need for terroristic purges within the party.

The dictatorship is now ready to lay down the lines of its completed polity. This includes the single-party system, the thoroughgoing local party organization, both in local communities and in the factories, the transformation of the party army into a party militia, the control of all the agencies of communication and education, the focusing upon youth of a propaganda that associates with the discipline of the movement their holidays and social pleasures, the all-powerful "blood and iron" state, and the hierarchical concentration of party leadership and state power in the hands of the dictator. Some of the main lines of such a polity—given of course, the fundamental difference that may exist in aims and consequences—are common to both the developed Communist and the developed Fascist dictatorship. Sidney Webb's phrase describing the Communist party as the "steel frame of Soviet society" would apply equally to the Nazi and Fascist parties. Relieved of the usual need of competing with other groups for power, the single-party system represents a new conception of the function of the party. It becomes, along with governmental services, an arm of the administration, and the more effective arm—watchful, zealous, setting the pace and taking the leadership in every area of social activity. This requires discipline and periodic purgings of the party membership. It requires also a far-flung local party organization. In the Italian polity this led to the system of *rasses* or small party bosses exercising continuous and often irresponsible local coercion—a system whereby, as one Italian deputy put it, Italy had not only a central dictator but "9,362 miniature

dictators, one in each town." Germany, too, is covered with little Hitlers and Russia with little Stalins. The fiber of the central regime cannot help penetrating to every crevice of the entire polity.

The other important cadre of Fascist political organization is the corporate or totalitarian state. This involves characteristically the organization of the economic groups that compete for the distribution of the national income into government-supervised associations, or "corporations," with the government holding the balance of power. All open conflict in the form of strikes and lockouts is banned and the labor movement is nationalized. But this does not mean that the dictatorial regime involves a genuine system of economic control or even of state capitalism. The essential outlines of private property as an institution and individual profits as an incentive are retained. What the dictatorship aims to do is to prune capitalism of its irresponsible individualism, assure it a steady return, and insure it against labor difficulties. The corporate state is then far from being the *stato forte* in the economic sphere. If it is a despotism, it is here a benevolent despotism. But everywhere else its sway is undisputed, with the important exception of the church. Both in Italy and Germany only the churches continue to compete with the state for the allegiance of the individual citizens. The state has not been able to make much headway in absorbing them, largely, perhaps, because the belief in religion is an act of faith more richly and deeply rooted even than belief in the nation or in a great leader. But since the church and the dictatorship are essentially conservative forces, both seeking to establish a system of institutions immune to change, there is

every probability that in a crisis which threatens both, their present difficulties will be ironed out.

The part of the dictatorship which is put to the greatest strain by the accession to power is the dictator himself. Overnight he is compelled to assume a double role—to combine the glamour of the revolutionary extremist waging *Mein Kampf* with the sobering responsibilities of power, which call continually for compromise and qualification. He must continue to preach militarism and huge armaments, yet somehow keep from getting embroiled in an inconvenient war; must continue his anti-labor policy, yet keep the productive forces of the nation going; must continue to be a myth, yet function as a reality. Yet his prestige grows, even with every fresh factional split in his party; for the essence of party divisions in a single-party system is the vying over loyalty to the leader. His best security is the knowledge that on him and him alone depend the little islets of power he has created for every man in the organization.

But though their immediate aim may be spoils and power, the ultimate vision of the adherents to a dictatorship is far different. The democratic bias ends too easily in attributing to any dictatorship only a vision of earth and no vision of heaven. The dictator's heaven is contained in the society he is aiming to establish. This society contains three essentials: it is aristocracy, it is built upon a definite system of status, and its thought and culture have been purified of all imperfect elements.

The notion of the "élite," which has taken the imagination of the Fascists, represents the revival of old impulses toward aristocracy which democratic industrialism had completely

repressed. The aristocracy of the upper bourgeoisie under capitalism had never really been a satisfactory one; it had been too mobile, too new and callow, too accessible to Jews and upstarts. The Fascist dictatorship aims to create a new élite, or else to entrench the old landowning aristocracy and give it an official stamp. Below this there will be a system of status, forming an ordered and stable society in which each individual shall have his definite place. The women are to be taken out of industry and brought back to their old position in the home and encouraged to rear children. All the elements of the population that cannot fit into such a scheme must be stamped out or allowed to wither away, and there has even been some discussion in the German dictatorship of sterilization for the non-Aryan elements. Thought and culture too must be brought under political control, lest the heavenly city of the dictator and the élite be tainted by earthly dross.

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It will not do to dismiss all this as a madman's dream of power. It is a complete scheme of life. It seems at first sight to represent a reversal of our whole cultural and political drift during the past three centuries. Actually, however, it is a direct and natural outgrowth of our present society. The dilemmas that Fascism seeks to resolve are our dilemmas, the institutions it wishes to conserve are the basic economic institutions of our society, the loyalties it appeals to are the loyalties that attach to the nation-state which we have created, the militarism it exploits is the same militarism that leads to our own wars, the passions it channels to its purposes are the race and class passions that grow out of the competitive struggle inherent in our society.

Most significant of all, the techniques upon which the dictatorship chiefly relies, both in building and maintaining its power, are in reality those used, though less arrogantly and with a less explicit political intent, in a democratic society. I am not referring to the Black Shirts and the Brown Shirts, to the March on Rome or terrorism, but to that entire mastery of mass persuasion without which all the shirts would have been only so many yards of cloth and the March on Rome merely a paranoid fantasia. The democratic state has had to dispose of an increasing amount of unneeded products that its machines were turning out, it has had to drum up the war fever, and it has had to give its masses the illusion of power while withholding the actuality. To do all this it evolved a technique of advertising and of high-pressure salesmanship, a flamboyant journalism, a radio and a cinema that stamped the same stereotypes on millions of brains. We have been naïve enough to believe that our nationalism and militarism, our race and class conflict, our advertising and salesmanship, our techniques for influencing opinion and manipulating the effective symbol in swaying mass emotion would always remain in the same pattern. But under Fascism an economic and political convulsion has disarranged the pattern and is forming its elements into a new one. "We think with our blood," says Hitler, and there seems to be something a bit alien and shocking about the irrationalism that underlies such a statement. But actually that is the basic premise of all the techniques of mass persuasion which we have ourselves been using. The most damning blow the dictatorships have struck at democracy has been the compliment they have paid us in taking over (and perfecting) our most-prized techniques of

persuasion and our underlying contempt for the credulity of the masses.

The recurring question about the Fascist dictatorships that have established themselves is how long they will survive. It is evident that they have effectively stamped out opposition, and that they are using with consummate skill the entire apparatus of school and press and radio in inculcating civic loyalties and "teaching the young idea to shoot" to their own purposes. Short of economic collapse or a catastrophic war there is no reason to believe that these dictatorships will not endure on into the calculable future. What strains and stresses may be developing meanwhile that may cause their eventual disruption we have no means of telling. There is a copybook maxim that "nature, expelled with a pitchfork, ever returns." This would be a consolation to the believers in democracy—if only they could be certain that nature is on their side and not on the other. It is possible that responsible constitutional government under the conditions of industrialism demands too much both of the human brain and the human will. It is possible that democratic government has been able to survive as long as it has only because it has operated under the surplus economy of the period of an expanding capitalism. In either case the real aberration will prove to have been the democratic effort of the last few centuries; and the pattern of dictatorship with its submission to authority, its entrenchment of the powerful economic interests, its gaudy adornments, its system of status, its intolerance, will invest with a deep security a new age of despots.

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EUROPEAN DICTATORSHIPS

By RALPH HASWELL LUTZ

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EUROPEAN DICTATORSHIPS

THE RULE of the dictator, now widely prevailing, is in the opinion of many one of the unfortunate heritages left by the World War and its aftermath. To understand such a rule it is essential not only to define it but also to know why and how such a government could come into being.

Dictatorship may be broadly defined as the assumption of extra-legal authority by the head of the state. Authority of this kind is almost always secured by force without regard to the welfare of the governed, who usually suffer the loss of their traditional privileges. A parliament never flourishes in a state controlled by a dictator, for the latter could not withstand the loss of power that would result from being held responsible to a body of legislators. An analysis and interpretation of the history of European dictatorships leads to the conclusion that the establishment of such governments has come about not through consecutive or sustained political and social movements but through sudden and revolutionary changes. Most dictators have been destined for a comparatively short career, and have neither passed their power on to their heirs nor secured the vitally important sanction of tradition.

The dictatorship is not a modern phenomenon. Its roots lie deep in the history of Greece and Rome. In ancient times some venerable patriarch, such as Cincinnatus, who was called from his plow to aid in a crisis, might be granted un-

limited authority for the time being in order to save the state. That the constitution as a whole might be preserved, the temporary suspension of important constitutional provisions was considered justifiable. But when the danger was over, the power of the dictator passed from him.

One of the first scholars to give serious thought to this form of government was Aristotle, who came to the conclusion, set down in his *Politics*, that dictatorships as he knew them were no more than monarchies degenerated, that they are one of the least desirable forms of rule, since they inevitably lead to the tyranny of self-interest. The modern historian Mommsen describes the Roman dictatorship as a monarchical institution within the republican state order.

Sulla, turning to ancient Latin traditions to proclaim himself dictator in 82 B. C., was one of the wolves in sheep's clothing pictured by Aristotle. He was a tyrant able to work his will with the help of the army, a man clever enough to realize that he could make himself absolute if he could hide his power under the old conception of a constitutional dictatorship as represented by early leaders like Cincinnatus. More than thirty years after the rise of Sulla, Julius Caesar, with the military forces behind him, assumed the office of dictator. When he was declared dictator for life in 44 B. C., he became the tyrant whose destruction was inevitable. In Caesar's time, as well as in that of Augustus later, there was a tendency to obtain control of all the important republican offices, and to allow only minor officials to be elected.

With the appointment of Augustus as imperator by the Senate and the people of Rome a new experiment in government was inaugurated, an experiment that was to be the

beginning of the Caesarian tradition of dictatorship in the Western world. The new ruler, at first appointed for a stated period, was made the head of all the armies. Augustus of course remained in office as long as he lived. As imperator for life and commander of the armies, Augustus, and his successors, too, enjoyed unlimited power.

The nearest approach to a dictator in the Middle Ages was Charlemagne, who considered Augustus his predecessor. But the tradition was not really revived until the time of the Renaissance, when interest in the classical institutions returned, and the spirit of Greece and Rome held sway. The dictatorships of the Renaissance were a force in bringing about a renewed devotion to the idea of nationality. Those of the *popolani* and the *condottieri* in the Italian city states, originally based on the illegal seizure of power with the assistance of mercenary troops, became hereditary governments in Florence and Milan.

Cromwell in England and Napoleon in France continued the tradition of the military dictatorship. Cromwell's authority depended, however, not alone on the backing of the army but also on his popular appeal as a man of integrity. Napoleon made a contribution to this type of government through his reconciliation of the idea of democracy with that of power. He established a new relationship between the all-powerful executive and the democratic citizen, developed the technique of the plebiscite, and drew up the code for all future dictators who were to be either elected or confirmed in their position by a national referendum.

The modern dictatorships of the pre-war era usually appeared as the result of spontaneous movements actuated by

individuals, and seemingly had little effect on the slow but sure progress of self-government. The weight of authority was generally on the side of evolutionary democracy during the nineteenth century. And until the tragedies of the peace settlement of 1919 proved that Europe was not a safe haven for this kind of government, many American scholars clung to the belief that other nations would, when they became enlightened, reorganize their political institutions after the pattern of those in this country.

The World War, interfering as it did with the evolution of democracy, paved the way for more or less revolutionary changes in government. Most chief executives seize emergency powers without difficulty during a war crisis or are readily granted such powers by their constituents. Out of the political upheaval of the war period and the years since have arisen the dictators of today, the great men of the critical moment, whom the social scientist might call technical mechanics specializing in social reconstruction. In the evolution of government, as analyzed by Plato and Aristotle, they belong to the last of the following phases: monarchy, aristocracy, tyranny, democracy, dictatorship. It is a sound conclusion that the breakdown of modern democracy has made possible the dictatorships of today.

European peoples were willing to accept the rule of the dictator after the World War for several fundamental reasons. They had become accustomed during the war to the concentration of authority; the democratic movement had disintegrated after the repeal of emergency legislation; communism was a challenging force; parliamentary government had passed through several crises; and, finally, selfish mate-

rialism was rapidly spreading. The determining action of demagoguery has been evident in the rise of most of the present-day dictators of Europe.

Many students of the problem have come to similar conclusions regarding the causes of contemporary dictatorships. Wilhelm Ellenbogen in *Wurzeln und Geisteshaltung des Internationalen Faschismus* states his belief that war psychology, national chauvinism, changes in the distribution of power among various classes, and the rebellion of the disinherited youth of the bourgeoisie have brought about the current European political situation. Silvio Trentin, in his study *Aux Sources du Fascisme*, states:

"In my opinion one cannot but discover in the easy fortune of Fascism the symptomatic manifestation of the general and complete exhaustion of all the constructive energies of unified existence, an exhaustion due first to the sacrifices imposed by the war, second by the peace. . . . All classes, despising all demands of social harmony, tried to pursue their own particular ends, on their own account at the expense of others."

Carlo Sforza's analysis of European dictatorships leads him to conclude that present dictatorial regimes are a *revanche* offensive of autocracies against democracies and are the means by which so-called industrialists and landowners are able to combat labor and socialist movements. The renewed passion for the persecution of the Jews, Sforza contends, also finds a more convenient outlet under a dictator, whose rise has, finally, been made possible because of a lessened veneration for the worth of parliaments. "The significant symptoms of the mental disease which has seized upon European thought

is this," Sforza states, "that there should have been for a time not only 'conservatives' who rejoiced in the destruction of laws . . . but also intellectuals, sons of liberty, who failed to realize that in vindicating regimes destructive of freedom, they thereby disavowed their own fundamental principles."

The basic causes for the appearance of contemporary dictatorships in various countries differ according to the peculiarities of the people involved. The Portuguese, discouraged by the poor showing of their democratic leaders and attracted by the glamour of the Italian and Spanish one-man governments, allowed General Oscar de Fragosa Carmona to assume the prerogatives of dictator in 1926. Certain Portuguese had even considered it patriotic to conspire in the overthrow of the monarchy. The dictatorship did not spring up mushroom fashion without any antecedents, for Portugal had the first rule in the twentieth century by a man of crisis, in the person of João Franco, appointed by King Carlos to prevent the political parties from running away with the monarchy. Later a party known as the Lusitanian Integralists and desiring the ruler to be absolute was organized with the doctrines of *L'Action française* as its basic code. Without this party the history of the Portuguese military dictatorship might have been very different.

Yugoslavia was forced to accept a dictator because of the difficulties she faced as a new country trying to weld her heterogeneous population into a united whole. The parliament made no progress toward this goal, because it was backed only by the letter of the constitutional provisions and not by the spirit of the people. The unfortunate economic situation also helped turn the balance in favor of the absolute rule

which the king himself, Alexander I, established at the opportune moment.

What was the background that made National Socialism supreme in Germany? It seems ironical to Karl Federn that the Germans are willing to consent to the rule of a dictator, for his studies had led him to the conclusion, as presented in *Parliamentarismus und Diktatur*, that "dictatorship and absolutism are always of Latin or Slavic origin." Ludwig Lore, however, sees the average middle-class German of today as a person to whom "one-man rule is as natural as the military spirit that still pervades his public life," and to whom government by "the strong man" would mean the return of the golden age of prosperity.

It seems to be generally agreed that Hitler and the National Socialists were boosted to the top as the result of the economic distress suffered by the German people during the post-war years, the reaction to the harsh terms of the Treaty of Versailles, and the inherent weakness of the Weimar Republic. The proletariat, its ranks augmented by impoverished members of the lower middle class, were unwilling that the solution of their problems be delayed. Parliamentary methods had failed them. "So the idea of a 'democratic' dictatorship for many unemployed . . . hopeless people became continually more alluring," says Karl Kautsky. It is doubtful whether the propaganda against the Treaty of Versailles would have succeeded so well if economic discontent had not been so widespread. But opposition to the terms of the treaty was apparently the means by which a defeated, discouraged people could regain its self-confidence. And from this source came part of the vogue of National Socialism, "a sort of stepchild

of the Treaty of Versailles," as Calvin Hoover describes it. It is evident that a country cannot be studied exclusively as an economic field trip, but that personality must be taken into account as well. The men who preceded Hitler in part prepared the way for his dictatorship.

It may be noted at this point that no dictator has yet succeeded in making himself the ruler of any well-organized European democracy. For the citizens of a true democracy ("true" in so far as mankind has thus far been able to conceive it) are willing to try out various suggestions for the solution of pressing social needs. They guard jealously the right to discuss all public problems freely.*

The man of the hour in many European countries striving to repair the havoc created by the World War thus seems to be the dictator. He is one who knows where he is going and his constituents make way for him. He has been hailed as the savior of his people. What is his program and what can he accomplish?

Among the great dictators the wisdom and results of whose regimes are being weighed at present are Pilsudski in Poland, Mussolini in Italy, Mustafa Kemal in Turkey, Hitler in Germany, and Stalin in Russia, where until comparatively recently Lenin was supreme. One-man rule is also the order of the day in several of the smaller European nations. In Yugoslavia the king, Alexander I, was able to transform his kingship into a dictatorship, but in Spain the monarch counted for little when General Primo de Rivera decided to seize the reins of government. Hungary, Rumania, and Portugal have

* The American political boss is often compared to the European dictator, but the two are hardly comparable, because the former directs people and personnel, whereas the latter is in control of things and social processes.

come under the domination of such leaders as Count Bethlen, Bratianu, and General Carmona. Some of these men cannot be described as true dictators, however, because they have made no consistent effort to impregnate their entire nation with the doctrines and methods of a dominant political and social party.

Let us consider in more or less detail the characteristics of three of the outstanding contemporary dictatorships—those of Italy, Russia, and Germany—their points of agreement and their dissimilarities. It is evident that, by whatever means dictatorships may be established, their chief aim is to crush out democracy. This is as true of Italy as it is of Russia or Germany. The present Italian regime is representative of the predominant type of post-war European dictatorship: Fascism or the corporative classless state. Mussolini is the ideal of non-proletarian dictators. He proved himself equal to putting into effect the discipline which the Italian people thought they craved as an aid in reducing post-war chaos to order. Those who admire the *Duce* say he was the first to make his country conscious of her entity as a nation. He knew how to crystallize and fuse different and even conflicting elements into Fascism, to overthrow the multitude of social fragments called the Italian parliament, to defeat socialism, and to appeal to an Italianism that invoked the historic past. The summoning up of the remembrance of past glories is, indeed, one of the principal sources of the popularity of Fascism.

It was easy, too, for Mussolini to stir up the desire for national vindication after Italy failed to receive what she considered her rightful share of the spoils of war. "We won

the war and lost the peace" was a slogan that succeeded in rallying many around the standard of the Black Shirts. The worth of Fascism lies in its state-like reaction to post-war social conditions, which were destroying the effectiveness of the Italian people. The pragmatic dictatorship of Mussolini, perfectly consistent with the underlying principle of the power of the executive in the modern state, repudiates democracy not as power but as rational participation. In spite of its denial of civil rights, Fascism must be judged by its positive results in the consolidation of authority. If its contributions to such consolidation are worth while, other states will be only too ready to copy them. Mussolini has been described as "the Dictator who first of all elected himself, next elects the electors; then elects the elected; and finally summons the non-electors to approve the elected." But it must be granted that, though his methods are high-handed, he has, as the exponent par excellence of Fascism, succeeded in one short decade in changing the psychology of the nation, the whole attitude of the people, from despair to confidence.

Russia has been the stronghold of the communist or proletarian dictatorship. The Marxists-Leninists consider the state merely as organized force by which the class in control is able to oppress the others. The proletariat did not destroy the state at the time of the Russian Revolution but, after scrapping certain features, reorganized it. The state then became the agency of the proletarian dictatorship. Lenin even went so far as to declare that the seizure of power by the proletariat was not the signal to end class war, for the machinery of government was to become the means by which the proletariat would continue the struggle. The state will, in

Engels' famous phrase, "wither away" only with the perfection of communism and the disappearance of classes.

The Soviet dictatorship has been aided in attaining its present state of development by several events. Obstacles to its evolution were eliminated, in the first place, by the 1917 revolution and its consequences. The victory over the interventionists likewise helped to assure its smooth progress, as did also Lenin's strategical retreat, as characterized by the NEP and the slowing down of the pace of Sovietism, and the violent personal and theoretical struggle between Trotsky and Stalin, in which the latter was victorious.

A study of the Russian system of government seems to show that it is one which would be capable of functioning in any country. The economic set-up is an attempt to carry out the communistic principle in the common ownership, by the people as represented in the state, of all the resources of the nation. An examination of the political system reveals, however, that the characteristics of dictatorship obtain. The legislative function is completely dictatorial; the directives in party policy proceed from the top down, although theoretically freedom of discussion within the party is permitted on all issues until the moment when a decision becomes the party policy. Then deviation is forbidden and is punishable by disciplinary action. Nevertheless, it must be granted that the several subordinate units of the party, and especially its cells, have previously reflected the currents of opinion of all social and political groups, and that such reflections have usually reached the top.

To understand something of the accomplishments and hopes of the Soviet dictatorship, the main points of its pro-

gram must be considered. The principal objectives of the regime seem to be (1) the industrialization of the country through the first and second Five Year plans; (2) the improvement of agricultural efficiency through collectivization and mechanization; (3) the intensive cultivation of the land and the extinction of the kulaks for refusing to do this; (4) the communization of the people in general, and of the youth in particular, through education and propaganda; (5) the maintenance of power by means of an elaborate intelligence and police system.

Among the outstanding characteristics of the Soviet system are its flexibility and its response to the popular demand for changing social conditions. The elimination of groups opposing the dictatorship is certain, although the main features of their program are generally adopted. Lenin, credited with originating this means of satisfying his constituents, came to the conclusion that he would never be able to control history but that he could limit its tension. It is evident that, even under dictatorial rule, the extent to which social forces can be directed is very restricted.

It is impossible as yet to estimate the worth of the technical achievements of the Five Year Plan. It is obvious, however, that the Plan has wrought great changes in every phase of Russian life. It has also shown the possibilities of large-scale social and economic planning. The principal conclusion to be drawn from a study of the Soviet dictatorship is that, if power is granted, some control is possible. To attain this end the U. S. S. R. has sacrificed the comfort of its citizens, their freedom of thought and action, and the educational opportunities of their children. And yet it is said that Stalin,

"like a mountain with a head on it . . . cannot be moved. But he thinks," and the people are only too willing to accept the results of his thoughts.

There are many differences between the Fascist dictatorship of Italy and the proletarian rule of the Soviets. The basis of the former is largely political, that of the latter economic. The Fascist state is moving toward unification and a decrease of power in local centers, whereas the opposite is true of the Soviet Union, and especially that part of it lying east of the Urals. Fascism draws much of its inspiration from the days of the Caesars; Sovietism has broken with the past. The Fascist dictatorship has been described as a kind of political superstructure of capitalism; it does not forbid private ownership of property. The Soviet regime, on the other hand, has abolished the right of the individual to own property. There are no more zealous internationalists than the Communists; they want to convert the whole world to their point of view. The Fascists have turned their backs on internationalism; they are concentrating their efforts on making *la patria* into a glorious nation. Still another difference between the present regimes of the two countries is that in Italy the middle class has been a bulwark of Fascism, whereas this class is virtually nonexistent in the Soviet Union, and so has made practically no contributions to the present methods of government there.

The German dictatorship is so much newer than those of Russia and Italy that it has not had the same opportunity to display its wares. As has already been pointed out, the National Socialists with Adolf Hitler at their head reached their exalted position in Germany with the election of March, 1933,

partly as the result of repercussions of the war. The German people had come to an economic and political impasse. The voice of Hitler was sweet to their ears. He it was who could save the Fatherland both at home and abroad; he it was who could lead the way to a new life. Hitler's ability to unite the ruined middle classes with the agrarian and industrial nationalists to overthrow the socialist, center, and state parties of the Weimar Republic, and the growing faction favorable to communism, brought success to the determined leader. Although this border-German might never have been able to assume the prerogatives of dictator without the example of Mussolini before him, there is little doubt that the Fascist tendencies of National Socialism are developing in accordance with the peculiarities of the German temperament and may eventually seriously oppose their Italian counterpart. Hitler and his followers have, like the Black Shirts and the *Duce*, used the forces of the state to subjugate the state itself. And the *Führer* would not have been able to rise to power on the shoulders of the National Socialists, a group opposed to democracy, had he been unable to use democratic methods to get himself before the people.

Thus the dictatorship of National Socialism supplanted the Weimar Republic, which had never been very strong. "We made a republic, but there were no republicans," a prominent German has said. The republican Reichstag of the old days, elected by universal direct and secret suffrage with a proportional representation that deranged the functioning of political parties and destroyed the possibility of working majorities, has been replaced by a subservient body composed almost entirely of National Socialists. The Nazi Reichstag

has passed five articles investing Hitler with dictatorial powers for a period of four years. At least the measures do not permit the Reichstag and the Reichsrat to be abolished as institutions.

One explanation of Adolf Hitler's rise to dictatorship is that whenever he accepted responsibility he always made sure that such responsibility was one more step in the direction of complete power. He was not to be stopped. He has never swerved from the principle he set down in *Mein Kampf*.

The appeal of National Socialism to the emotions of nationalism as a means of strengthening its hold goes far back to the dim twilight of the gods, to the time of Wotan, the blond hero-god. This *Furor Teutonicus* has laid special emphasis on the necessity of unity of race as the basis of the state. The Jews have on this account found themselves in an unfortunate situation, as have other groups who are not frenzied nationalists. Much of the program of the National Socialists is connected in some way with the purification of the race.

Unity, one great goal of the German dictatorial regime, is thus being achieved in part by purging the country of alien blood. Wheeler-Bennett has said that "for the first time since Charlemagne Germany stands united under one party and one leader." Another aim of the dictatorship, the establishment of a totalitarian state (*Totalitätsstaat*) would, if reached, mean the end of class warfare in Germany. The good of the individual must give way before the good of the whole people, who have shown themselves ready to help make this ideal a reality. The National Socialist dictatorship thus seems to be making use of every means available in order finally to bring into being the standard of governmental perfection as con-

ceived by certain militarists—the state whose citizens, although warlike in spirit, are under complete discipline. Hitler's program does not shelter the capitalists; it favors the owners of small business enterprises. His plans also include a drive to make the German nation economically self-sufficient. Every resource that can be mustered to help achieve the desired ends has been called into action. Especially important is the press, which Goebbels, minister of propaganda, has described as "an instrument on which the government can play" any tune it may wish.

Hitler has, above all, identified the state, as a factual category, with power. He has not, however, emphasized the Hegelian synthesis which hypostatizes the state as the epitome of collective morality. The Third Reich represents primarily the effective power in the German community. The best evidence of this is perhaps to be found in the present organization of the German dictatorship with its doctrine of the infallibility of its leaders.

The three dictatorships which have just been considered are similar in many respects. All have developed an extreme centralization of government. In each of the three countries one political party is in complete control. The Soviets, the Fascists, and the National Socialists have all set up governments that are responsible, although in varying degrees, for the organization of the economic life of their peoples. In each country a pedantic bureaucracy, abetted by a spoils system, is making its presence felt, and the population is being denied the civil rights usually taken for granted. Elaborate intelligence and spy systems have been set up which are of great assistance in the suppression of those who dare to criticize.

Propaganda and regimentation are the watchwords of the education of the youth. Unfortunates who must shoulder the blame for mistakes have to be easily available in these dictatorships, which consider it their duty and their privilege to supervise even the small details of social and cultural life.

There are naturally some differences also. It was not the proletariat of the cities that helped to bring in the National Socialist rule but rather the lower middle class, the disillusioned university students, the peasants, and even the ruined nobles who had once known good times. The German dictatorship is more like that of the Soviets than that of the Fascists in its appeal to radicalism and the emotions. A Russian émigré prince is quoted as having said, "The National Socialists are not Communists but they are certainly Bolsheviks." In their patriotic frenzy the lovers of the Swastika have cried, "We think with our blood!"

Armstrong points out that Hitler has a better chance for economic security than Mussolini, since Germany has a relatively abundant supply of raw materials and natural resources. The *Führer* also favors the small man in his economic scheme, whereas Mussolini encourages the capitalist. Armstrong believes, too, that the Teutonic temperament is much more ready to be set in the mold of complete conformity, of perfect order, than the Italian. Italy has yet to industrialize her people. The Germans were fully industrialized before the advent of Hitler.

Certain other dictatorships may be mentioned. The opinion seems to be widespread that Mustafa Kemal is one of the most successful of modern dictators, that he has more positive achievements to his credit than most of the others. Like the

Soviets, Kemal has cut loose from the past and has made Turkey a modern nation. His domestic policy is based on "nationalism, secularism, and industrialism." Mustafa Kemal knew how to line up the Turkish forces seeking to express themselves in a modern world. He seized his opportunity just at the time the patriotism of the Turks was becoming a reality. Although Kemal's watchword of "Turkey for the Turks" has worked hardship, it has made a better country out of this danger spot.

The Spanish dictatorship of General Primo de Rivera is the only one which has been over long enough to be analyzed in perspective. The contention that Rivera's rule was backed by the king has been both supported and denied. Sforza states that, with the exception of Mustafa Kemal, Rivera was the only dictator who "dared to carry out a policy which went counter to the traditions of external prestige and of militarism," and in that respect really served his country. With the rise of the working classes and the decline of the bourgeoisie, and the discrediting of the parliamentary system, the general saw his chance to seize power. The war in Morocco, the social agitation, and the deficit in government funds led directly to the setting up of the Spanish dictatorship. The principal failure of Primo de Rivera's rule lay in the inadequacy of his economic and fiscal policy, although he should perhaps be given some credit for a feeble attempt at economic rehabilitation. But he did not build with enough stress on the future, and he bolstered up the faith of the people with vague promises.

Rivera, the so-called military dictator of Spain, was overthrown largely because of his difficulties with the army. He

has been called its victim rather than its tool. The general's policy of monopolies was injurious to the foreign relations of Spain, for many foreign business houses found themselves affected by it. Rumors of graft and attempts to coerce the intellectual leaders of the country also helped to make the dictator's position untenable.

Are the contemporary dictators of Europe, when weighed, found wanting in some or all respects? Have they made any real contributions to the problem of government, or to the welfare of the countries in which they are at the present moment supreme? It is clear that they are all modeled on one pattern in their rapid move away from democratic principles. They have all appeared, however, at a time when the nation whose head they were to become was facing a serious crisis. They have arisen when quick decision and strong performance was necessary to combat anarchy and political chaos, when a desperate people was willing to submit to their rule. Even though the disinterestedness of dictators is open to question, it must be granted that, if they have made a chaotic government somewhat less chaotic or have brought about a condition of law and order as Mustafa Kemal has done, the positive results of their regimes cannot be entirely disregarded.

But the negative results are many. The appeal to force may reduce the people to a state of fear from which it will take them some time to recover. For the ruthless dictator will not stop at anything in his drive to quell opposition. One of his most useful tools is the army, as it was in the days of the Caesars. The army has been described as an essential part of a dictatorship, "a vast pretorian guard, an insatiable octopus feeding on the national treasure, a constant menace

to the stability of the state." The devoted followers of the dictatorial ruler are almost always organized into a party, *the party*, which allows no other group to take part in the government. Hitler has succeeded in building up a situation in Germany in which he is not responsible to the party, as would naturally be expected, but rather the party is responsible to him. In general the leaders of industry and commerce have been willing to support the dictatorship, as they have in Germany, because they have feared putting themselves in a worse plight. The world has tended, since 1914, to become rabidly nationalistic. This trend has played directly into the hands of the dictators, some of whom, like Mussolini and Hitler, have made the appeal to pride in country one of the cornerstones of their policy. The Germans would wipe the stain of defeat from the pages of their recent history; the Italians would revive the glories of Rome. One reason for the triumph of National Socialism was its ability to present itself as the champion of nationalism and to show up its opponents as the enemies of this holy cause.

How will the contemporary European dictatorships terminate? Will the reaction be to state socialism with its trend toward bolshevism or to frenzied nationalism with its tendency toward planned economy? Those who still have faith in democracy believe that the dictatorships of the present will probably perish from their own weight, that the methods of jingoism and artificial stimulation that have helped create them will, in the end, overcome them. The party will not always want to be responsible to the dictator. The seeds of dissension will eventually grow into trees. Primo de Rivera has been overthrown in Spain; Alexander of Yugoslavia has

been slain. The lives of Mussolini and Hitler have been threatened. Students of many shades of opinion see only disaster ahead for contemporary dictatorial regimes.

Yet those who adhere to a solid belief in the value of democracy know very well that all is not smooth sailing with them. "Those of us who hold to our faith in popular government," writes Guy Stanton Ford, "do it often by a philosophy much like that which Fisher Ames expressed when the republic was founded. 'A monarchy is like a merchantman,' he said, 'you get on board and ride the wind and tide in safety and elation but, by and by, you strike a reef and go down. But democracy is like a raft. You never sink, but damn it, your feet are always in the water.' We, like the Massachusetts statesman, are willing to reckon with wet feet, but is it necessary to have wet feet that reach clear to your neck?"

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DICTATORSHIPS IN SPANISH AMERICA

By J. FRED RIPPY

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Dictatorships in Spanish America

SPANISH AMERICA has exhibited during the last century great capacity to produce dictators. Every nation to the south of us has had them, including even the younger republics of Cuba and Panama. They have been so numerous, their sway has been so constant, that the national history of most of the countries of the area is to a large extent the biography of these imperious personalities. Nor would it be safe to assert that the Age of the Dictators has passed in a single nation of Spanish America. They come, go, and return even in the more stable republics like Argentina, Chile, and Costa Rica; and the present trend of all Western civilization seems to be toward an epoch of drastic restraint and compulsion.

And yet, notwithstanding their prevalence, the dictators of Spanish America, their genesis, character, technique, and work, have not been thoroughly and scientifically investigated. The historians and literary men of the region itself have written much about them, but comparatively few of their works bear the stamp of impartiality. Produced either by sycophants or enemies in exile, most of these writings are characterized by extravagant praise or bitter denunciation. Scholars of the United States and Europe have hardly begun a serious investigation of these dictatorships, and foreign journalists and *litterati*, in so far as they have dealt with the subject at all, have usually written as propagandists, in a defama-

tory, eulogistic, or humorous mood. The dictators have therefore frequently been represented either as Olympic heroes or Satanic villains, and the republics portrayed as perpetual comic operas or as Lilliputs cursed with the vices of Sodom.

Many of the local contemporary materials for the study of this important and interesting subject are difficult to procure; some of them have perhaps been lost or destroyed. Probably the best sources are to be found in the archives of the foreign offices at Washington, London, and Paris. The field is so vast and is still so largely untilled that its proper cultivation demands cooperative effort.

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How may the phenomenon of Spanish-American dictators be explained? Two generalizations may be advanced: they have been the product of their environment, and they have been generated by crises.

The environment includes, of course, many physical, psychological, and social features which have tended to determine political forms and procedures: geography, racial composition, colonial heritage, intellectual climate, and the long and expensive struggle for independence. The crises, which have been so frequent as to be an almost constant factor, have been occasioned by the menace of domestic anarchy and foreign war.

The influences of physical environment, colonial heritage, and racial composition are closely related. Most of the area is characterized by tropical jungle and lofty mountain. The centers of population, native as well as Spanish, were established in the highlands of the interior or in coastal areas made comfortable by the cooling breezes. The settlements were

not compact but widely scattered and, owing to Spain's failure to build good roads or establish an adequate system of river or coastal transportation, were so difficult to reach from the seat of government that disobedience and insurgency could not be suppressed in their incipient stages.

Moreover, most of the other elements in the colonial heritage were cast in the balance against an orderly democracy. Primitive and mixed races were allowed to survive and were incorporated in the body politic, with the result that at the beginning of their national independence the populations of these countries lacked homogeneity in race, culture, and ideals. Forty-five per cent of the people were pure Indian, thirty-one per cent mestizo, four per cent Negro, and only nineteen per cent white. Racial animosities existed; the ethnic groups did not understand one another; there was no community of ideals or interests. The primitive and mixed races were untutored, and many of the whites were themselves illiterate. The population lacked political experience and habits of self-direction and self-restraint. Participation in government had been confined during the colonial period almost exclusively to the town councils, which were deliberative rather than administrative, and the activities that centered around them tended to exaggerate local loyalties. Men had not been trained to think nor to act for themselves; a tedious paternalism had not permitted them to plan and direct their own lives. The whites and mix-bloods had been accustomed to the absolutism of viceroys, captains general, and governors; the Indians had been subordinated indirectly to these Spanish officials and directly to their own chiefs—who were allowed to survive as instruments of social control—or to the local Spanish administrators

and the priests. The mass of the natives had never practiced either self-government or self-control.

About the year 1800 a new light appeared upon the horizon of this static, servile, and repressed society, a light that came from England, France, and the United States. It appeared in the form of a new philosophy, a new conception of the cosmic drama, a new notion of the importance of politics and the world in man's career. Ideals of liberty, natural rights, the dignity of the common man, equality before the law, and popular sovereignty (ideals developed in England, given irresistible literary expression in France, and first put into practice in the United States) found their way into the jealously isolated Spanish colonies and became the inspiration not only of a heroic struggle for emancipation but also of experiments in government hitherto untried.

These ideas permeated only the small group who could read or who had intelligence enough to appreciate a discourse in Spanish, but such Indians and Negroes as were not disposed to follow their customary leaders blindly could be enlisted by promises of liberty, exemption from tribute, or license to plunder the estates of their former masters. The emancipation movement was fomented and to a considerable extent led by the intelligentsia, but the masses entered the rank and file of the armies with fanatical devotion to their leaders.

The struggle for independence was long and expensive. It lasted for fifteen years and cost millions of dollars and tens of thousands of lives. It was accompanied or quickly followed by the expulsion of the Peninsular-born Spaniards, who were almost the only group with any experience in government. It

fastened the shackles of militarism upon the people. The generals could not be reconciled to the obscurity of private life under civilian rule, and the common soldiers, accustomed to the adventure, the plunder, and the excitement of military combat, were loath to exchange the camp for the field and the shop. The illiterate masses could not resist the appeal of the man on horseback with his brilliant uniform and seductive slogans.

The close of the war left the new nations unprepared to operate the system of government established by idealistic intellectuals. The young republics were impoverished administratively and financially; they were without financial resources or administrative agents to carry on, without a community of ideals or a clear sense of direction. The Spanish yoke had been cast off, but the constructive elements necessary for a new regime were almost entirely lacking. Spanish individualism, the individualism of the military leaders, and the individualism of the *hacendados* and the Indian chiefs experienced a renaissance. The ideal of strong government was transmitted unmodified from the colonial era, but the new states encountered the dangerous magnification of arbitrary personalities and the soaring aspirations of liberalism and radicalism at a period when treasuries were empty and administrative ability extremely scarce.

In short, the new nations confronted a domestic crisis. It was the crisis of anarchy, the anarchy of atomic, imperious wills operating in a medium where the strong man was admired for his virility and liberty worshiped as a fetish. In brief hours of ecstasy fledgling political philosophers had written into virgin constitutions all the idealism of their time,

but it was as if they had attached wings to lead. The constitutions served as a mighty stimulus to individualism, but they were without power to impose restraints. They urged loyalty to the nation, but the constituency knew only loyalty to a locality or a leader. They held up the ideal of the general welfare as the goal of the state, but this ideal was too impersonal for simple men accustomed to following headstrong individuals. To such men, and to their chiefs as well, the government was not an instrument to be employed for the benefit of the whole nation but rather a trophy to be captured and used in the interest of the leader and his followers. The fundamental laws offered the ballot as a means of selecting statesmen and determining policies, but why should mere pieces of paper be endowed with such virtue and power? Intrepid leaders would obey nothing but their own wills and impulses, and political children respected no arbiter save force. Government by the counting of ballots at the polls and in legislative assemblies appeared inane and absurd. It seemed far more heroic to hew one's way to power with saber and *machete* and to determine policies with the musket and the pistol. Those who failed might face the rising sun and the firing squad like martyrs, or wander heroically in nostalgic exile, but at least their reputation for courage would remain untarnished!

In addition to domestic crisis, the new nations were exposed from time to time to external danger—the menace of foreign invasion and conquest. A score of boundaries were unmarked and uncertain; no definite and reliable agreements designated the number of nations that should be set up in the late Spanish Empire; ambitious leaders threatened almost

constantly to extend their dominions at the expense of their neighbors or to impose their political programs on other countries at the point of the sword; and the United States as well as European nations sometimes threatened the security and integrity of the infant states.

Crises—whether they arise from internal chaos or external menace, or both—tend sooner or later to produce strong governments. In democracies they produce dictators. All government is accompanied by a certain degree of subordination of the individual to the group, with the mailed fist ever in the background. In societies where the restraints of conscience, custom, and acceptance of common objectives are potent, the soldier and the police are hardly visible. Where these restraints fail, persuasion, propaganda, and ballyhoo must be employed. And when all other methods of subordination prove inadequate, coercion by armed force is the only bulwark against anarchy. In homogeneous societies a community of interests and ideals results in the minimum of coercion, but when diverse races and cultures exist side by side in a single nation, menace and compulsion are the customary instruments of social control.

Frequently the crises in the Spanish-American countries developed more or less spontaneously and inevitably, without the participation or instigation of a dictator. Sometimes he did all he could to produce them, in order to justify his appearance as the man of the hour or his retention of the reins of government. The documents of the time are filled with terms suggesting a crisis: "liberator," "savior of the country," "deliverer of the people," "restorer of order," "defender of the holy cause," champion of the "honor of the country," the

"only man capable of saving the *patria*," "founder of peace," and so on.

The language of the period was thus the language of messianic hope and hyperbole. Two further illustrations, though both relate to dictators of minor proportions, may be ventured, one dealing with Argentina and the other with Venezuela:

"No longer resound the terms Thermopylae and the plains of Marathon. Plataea and Salamis are as if they never were, and Leonidas and Themistocles are not now famous in the world. These illustrious names have been eclipsed by those of Alvear and Brown." (Quoted by C. E. Chapman in "The Age of the Caudillos," *Hispanic American Historical Review*, August, 1932.)

"The last revolution . . . was a bloody contest for Castro and his men. It was the ultimate proof to which was submitted the work of the Restoration in the presence of the entire country, and from which General Castro emerged victorious, as Hercules in his battle with Antonio, and as Jupiter in his campaign against Cyclops. Castro vanquished the giants who believed themselves to be the arbiters of the Republic and the proprietors of the steeds of Mars, and from the blood which flowed out of the arteries of the monsters were born the public liberties which will illumine the pages of our history, and the military esteem which will elevate discipline to a practical and sacred dogma.

"New men require great convulsions in their vicinity in order to make them known. The lightning, in order to illumine the twilight, must shock the clouds, and [produce] the thunder which terrorizes and intimidates. The flakes of foam

which poetize the beach need the tempests of the ocean to raise the waves and break them upon the rocks. And great men, to command with imperial grandeur the national conscience, need the boisterous deeds of arms to cover themselves with immortal fame, and the Homeric triumphs which give them glory and renown." (*El Combate*, Caracas, December 4, 1903.)

Leonidas, Themistocles, Aristides, Caesar, Napoleon, Bolívar, Hercules, Jupiter, Alvear, and Cipriano Castro! The dictators were exalted by their friends and sycophants, and sometimes even posed themselves, as messiahs. Melgarejo of Bolivia was not too modest to decree that his birthday should be celebrated with the shifting cycle of Easter. For years the portraits of Rosas hung above the altars of Argentina.

* * *

It is difficult to classify the numerous dictators of Spanish America. Most of them were generals, but several were civilians who managed for a time to retain the loyalty of the army. More than a score held power for many years; others were ephemeral rulers set up and deposed by capricious fortune—men whose names scarcely deserve to be remembered. Some were abstemious and sober; many were sensual, three or four constantly under the influence of strong drink. Some were men of culture, possessing literary or artistic talent, but most of them had little formal education. Some were whites, a few were mulattoes or Negroes, the majority were mestizos. A small number were pious, a few were atheists or freethinkers; more were scarcely influenced at all by their conception of the deity. Some were actuated by patriotism and a love of humanity and progress, but most were impelled by personal

greed or ambition for power. Many were either noted or notorious for their reforms, their energy, industry, tenacity, or courage, their duplicity, corruption, or cruelty, or their vivid personalities. Few were modest or simple in their tastes; those who were usually concealed these traits for political reasons. Perhaps the most striking characteristics of all of them were their willingness to gamble with fate and their fondness for titles, pomp, and ceremony.

They were ready to fight and bleed to obtain power. They marched over cold, bleak mountains or through steaming swamp and jungle, fought with the musket in hand, and slept in the saddle, in the bush, or in uncomfortable bivouacs. They showed the faith that was in them by going out to the mountainside or the wilderness and hacking their way to office with full knowledge that failure meant expatriation or facing the enemy with back to the adobe wall and a last look at the palms, the blue mountains, and the wheeling buzzards.

And success was hardly less perilous than failure. Power must be maintained by the sword, the censorship, and propaganda. Unpaid generals, soldiers, spies, and writers were likely to be disloyal. Funds therefore had to be secured from taxes, tributes, customs, forced loans, shares in the profits of concessions and monopolies, manipulation of the currency, and bond issues sold to trustful foreign investors as souvenirs of misplaced confidence. Enemies, traitors, and assassins lurked in the shadows; catastrophe hovered always near; sooner or later violent death or ostracism would surely be met. Ex-presidents were seldom tolerated, and it was only the more fortunate who managed to escape to France, England, the United States, or a neighboring Spanish-American nation with

a sufficient portion of the contents of the treasury to insure a comfortable old age.

Titles, medals, ribbons, uniforms, parades, and ceremonies were in part a pose for political effect, but they also represented a genuine fondness for such display. They were a manifestation of Orientalism, the expression of two Oriental strains, the Spanish and the mongoloid Indian. The dictators were few who did not possess sonorous titles a quarter of a page long ending with "and so forth" or wear decorations covering the entire chest.

The constructive dictators usually tackled three important problems: communications, transportation, and education. In addition, they often sought to apply various direct stimuli to agriculture and industry, and sometimes they became the patrons of art and learning. Many of them also gave much attention to monuments and public buildings, particularly in the capitals and in their home towns.

A dozen of these dictators might be taken as examples, but it may be more profitable to turn first to the pages of a literary man, who has given a sort of composite caricature of them all in Losada of Honduras ("Anchuria").

With a mighty effort Losada shook the republic "nearly free from the shackles of ignorance and sloth. . . . He established schools and hospitals, built roads, bridges, railroads, and palaces, and bestowed generous subsidies upon the arts and sciences. . . . Other presidents had been rapacious without reason. Losada amassed enormous wealth, but his people had their share of the benefits.

"The joint in his armor was his insatiate passion for monuments and tokens commemorating his glory. In every town

he caused to be erected statues of himself bearing legends in praise of his greatness. In the walls of every public edifice, tablets were fixed reciting his splendor and the gratitude of *his subjects*. His statuettes and portraits were scattered *throughout the land* in every house and hut. One of the sycophants in his court painted him as St. John, with a halo and a train of attendants in full uniform. . . . He ordered from a French sculptor a marble group including himself with Napoleon, Alexander the Great, and one or two others whom he deemed worthy of the honor.

"He ransacked Europe for decorations. . . . On state occasions his breast was covered from shoulder to shoulder with crosses, stars, golden roses, medals, and ribbons."

And now he wishes a portrait executed by a New York artist. "He wants himself in the center of the canvas, of course. He is to be painted as Jupiter sitting on Olympus, with the clouds at his feet. At one side of him stands George Washington, in full regimentals, with his hand on the president's shoulder. An angel with outstretched wings hovers overhead, and is placing a laurel wreath" on the dictator's brow. "In the background are cannon, more angels, and soldiers."

Losada is a "dictator clear down to his finger ends. He's a kind of combination of Julius Caesar, Lucifer, and Chauncey Depew done in sepia." (O. Henry, *Cabbages and Kings*, New York, 1913, pp. 234-35, 243, 245-46.)

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Within the limits of this essay it is obviously impossible to discuss even in summary fashion the thirty or more dictators who for one reason or another achieved prominence in Spanish

America during the century following the expulsion of the authorities of the metropolis. The following brief sketches must suffice.

The earliest and most enigmatic of them all was José Gaspar Rodríguez de Francia (1756?–1840), who bore the actual title of dictator of Paraguay for twenty-six years and died a natural death while still in power. Of either Franco-Spanish or Spanish-Portuguese descent, he was educated for the priesthood in the best schools of colonial South America, but eventually he turned to the practice of law and became the advocate of the Indians and mestizos in litigation against their Caucasian exploiters. Unsettled conditions accompanying the beginning of the movement for independence opened the door of political opportunity. By 1811 he was a zealous supporter of Paraguay's independence, whether from the Spanish authorities or the insurgent government at Buenos Aires. National congresses composed largely of Indians and mixed-bloods, who were greatly impressed by his friendship and his learning, first chose him as a member of the provisional governments and then elected him dictator for three years (1814–17). At the end of this period another national assembly, similarly constituted, chose him as dictator for life by an overwhelming vote. Thus he derived his power largely from the primitive and mixed races, who outnumbered the whites at least twenty to one. At the outset, however, he had partisans among the Spaniards and Creoles, who supported him because of his evident patriotism and his administrative ability. In the midst of domestic anarchy and the menace of invasion from Peru, Brazil, or the Río de la Plata provinces, they felt that his talents were indispensable.

Solitary and melancholy, industrious and methodical, honest and able, but capricious, vain, austere, and cruel, Francia was for the lower classes a benevolent despot, and for the Creoles and Spaniards nothing less than a bloody tyrant. He resented the ecclesiastical organization and scorned the superstitions of the clergy. He annihilated the hierarchy and all special privilege. The members of the leading families were driven from office, forbidden to marry within their own group, imprisoned, executed. The power of the church he demolished by confiscating its property, abolishing religious communities, reducing the number of holidays and festivals, and placing his own agents in ecclesiastical positions. For the upper classes his rule was truly a reign of terror.

But in several ways he endeavored to promote the material prosperity of the country. He encouraged simple household industries, improved agriculture by introducing new crops and methods of cultivation, and developed better breeds of horses and cattle. Because the docile and servile Indians lacked intelligence and initiative, he inaugurated a sort of state socialism, taking under his control and supervision a large part of the arable land. Largely because of his fear of Argentine anarchy and intrigue, he prohibited virtually all communication with foreign lands, making of Paraguay a hermit nation. He also rebuilt Asunción and constructed numerous public works, but he did practically nothing to stimulate education.

When death ended his long reign Paraguay, though still backward and stagnant, was probably better off than it would have been under a succession of temporary dictators. Some material progress had been achieved, the population had

doubled, and an intense nationalism had been fostered. Indeed Paraguay may owe its existence as a nation to *El Supremo*. But he paved the way for other dictators, one of whom, Francisco Solano López, led a fanatical populace into a tragic foreign war.

Juan Manuel Rosas was hoisted into power in 1829 by a combination of reactionary churchmen, wealthy landlords and merchants, and the Gauchos of the Argentine Pampa. The provinces of Río de la Plata were in a most chaotic state, and Rosas was hailed as the man of the hour. He entered upon the scene with all the equipment necessary to master his political environment: ancestry, fortune, a handsome physique (he was a *rubio*, or blonde, a type much admired in South America), industry, and a talent for practical affairs.

He was born in the city of Buenos Aires in 1793. His formal schooling was brief. From his early youth he spent most of his time on the ranch, where he acquired all the qualities and defects of the Gaucho while escaping the revolutionary contamination of the capital. He ruled the province of Buenos Aires for three years, and dominated the entire Argentine nation for seventeen (1835-52).

The testimony of foreign witnesses indicates that Rosas was energetic, extraordinarily industrious, and at times haughty and cruel, but that he was not insensible to public opinion either at home or abroad, for he had his subsidized press in Argentina and in three or four foreign countries. He appears also to have been strictly honest in the management of public funds: a millionaire when he came to power, he carried little away with him into exile, and died almost in poverty years later (1877) in England.

He ruled by virtue of his prestige, astuteness, and good fortune. His handsome physique, his skill in the management of horses and cattle, his dexterity in all rural sports, his courage, and the influence of his family made him the hero of the men of the cow country. His conservatism and administrative ability commended him to fanatical clergymen and to the wealthy inhabitants of Buenos Aires. His bonhomie, rowdiness, and pretended scorn for the élite of the capital won the proletariat, composed in the main of Negroes and mulattoes. His business patronage obtained for him the favor of the butchers, the small merchants, and the tavern keepers. Once in control of the leading port and province of Argentina, he was a man to be cultivated and feared. Many of the military leaders of the other provinces hastened to negotiate with him. Good fortune soon relieved him of three of his most formidable rivals: one died of poison or disease, another was assassinated, a third was captured by a Gaucho with his *bolos*.

Rosas' technique was direct and impressive. He roused the passions of the half-barbarous masses by brutal and vulgar denunciation of his political adversaries; established newspapers and subsidized a coterie of writers; suppressed the journals of the opposition and embargoed their works; organized a spy system; and utilized a secret society composed largely of assassins. Sycophant priests displayed a likeness of his handsome person above the altars. His effigy was carried in numerous processions. His name resounded in the public prayers. He became the object of hero-worship in the schools. With the customs of the port of Buenos Aires, the public lands, the confiscated property of his political opponents, and a bank of issue at his disposal, he bought off the men he could not

readily subdue, sent into exile those whom he was unable to buy. If these devices seemed inadequate, there still remained that "last resort of scoundrels," the appeal to patriotism. National neighbors could be declared hostile or provoked into hostility; and both England and France attempted coercive measures at an opportune time. He did not have a large army, no more at any period than twenty-five or thirty thousand men, half of these perhaps Negroes and mulattoes.

His task was never easy. Ambitious *caudillos* had to be watched and placated or intimidated, conspirators detected, hostile propaganda prevented in Argentina, counteracted abroad. He was always busy, eternally vigilant, and for years financially embarrassed because of French and British blockades. Insurgent "liberators" soon rose against him. He encountered six such revolutions before the final uprising of domestic and foreign foes that drove him into exile.

Authorities differ regarding Rosas' place in Argentine history. He appears to have made only one contribution of any significance. He saved the Plata area from the Gaucho hordes that were cutting it to pieces, held Argentina together during the crucial years when it might have been riven asunder. He made no effort to give the nation a constitution, and he did little to encourage the economic and cultural development of the country.

The llanos of Venezuela produced a dictator of somewhat different mold and more admirable type. Born of poor parents and left an orphan at an early age, José Antonio Páez spent almost all of the first thirty years of his life on those great tropical plains that stretch northward from the left bank of the Orinoco. Like Rosas, he was reared among the cattle and the

cowboys, and was a *rubio*, with magnificent head, admirable physique, and great dexterity in the management of animals. Like Rosas, he rode into power at the head of a regiment of daring horsemen. Like Rosas, he was hailed as a hero not only by the cowboys but by conservative churchmen and gentlemen of wealth. But unlike the Argentine dictator he fought in numerous battles during the War for Independence, possessed humane sentiments which usually outweighed his brutal impulses, and always had the highest respect for learning and men of culture.

For twenty years (1826-46) Páez dominated Venezuelan political life. But in 1850 his enemies sent him into exile after confining him for several months in a vile prison. He spent a decade in the United States, returned to become dictator of his native country for another eighteen months, and then departed once more for the "classic land of liberty." In 1867 he published his autobiography in New York. The next year he went to Buenos Aires as a cattle buyer for a group of New York traders. In Argentina he was lionized as the lone survivor of the glorious struggle for independence, and was given the rank and pay of a general in the army. He now had sufficient income for his comfort and for travel. After visiting several of the republics of Spanish America, he returned again to New York, where he breathed his last in 1873. His body was taken to Venezuela in a public vessel of the United States, and he was buried with the mighty Bolívar in the Panteón at Caracas.

Páez is perhaps more deserving than any other man of the title of Founder of the Venezuelan Nation. His rule was stern but seldom cruel. He began a movement to free the

slaves, promoted education and internal improvements, sought to stimulate industry, foreign commerce, and immigration, and was almost as scrupulous as Rosas in the management of public funds.

With rare exceptions, the diplomats of the United States in northern South America spoke of Páez in terms of highest respect. In 1827 one of them called him a "man of genius without education." Two decades later another declared that he deserved the title of the Washington of Venezuela and referred to him as a disinterested patriot who had ruled his country with prudence, tact, and moderation. Not "a solitary execution for political offences ever occurred under his direction." He was described as a "man of polished manners, and . . . the best model of a practical statesman" the Spanish-American nations had produced. A third diplomat was deeply touched as the venerable statesman set sail for the United States in August, 1863. "God grant that . . . in such a land his rest may be peaceful as his course has been eventful and honorable." (Minister E. D. Culver to Secretary Seward, August 11, 1863, Despatches, Venezuela, Vol. 13, No. 30.)

Páez would seem to have been the logical champion of the Indians and mestizos among whom he spent the formative period of his life, and whose backing raised him to the chief magistracy. But he governed mainly in the interest of the white aristocracy, which numbered no more than a hundred thousand or so. Probably he was influenced by race consciousness, although it is possible that he had some Indian blood in his veins.

Andrés de Santa Cruz, perhaps the most noted dictator of Bolivia, gained his position by virtue of his association with

Bolívar and Antonio José Sucre, and maintained himself by means of his astuteness and his administrative ability. He was probably aided also by a certain glamour that attached to him because of his descent from an Inca princess. He was born in Alto Peru in 1792 of a poor Spaniard and a mother descended from the royal family of the Incas. He received little formal education, for he entered the army while still a youth and fought on both sides during the War for Independence. Bolívar honored him by making him his chief of staff and later placing him in charge of the Peruvian government. President José de la Mar appointed him Peruvian minister to Chile to be rid of a dangerous rival. And when Sucre retired from the presidency of Bolivia in August, 1828, he persuaded its congress to choose Santa Cruz as his successor. Before the erstwhile diplomat could reach La Paz another had seized the scepter; but the energetic mestizo soon vindicated his rights. On May 24, 1829, he took the oath of office.

For the next decade Santa Cruz was dominant in Bolivia, and for four years (1835-39) he was dictator of a confederation consisting of both Peru and Bolivia. It is probable that his aspirations reached out beyond the boundaries of these two states and that he desired to resuscitate the ancient empire of the Incas, which extended from northern Ecuador to central Chile and southeastward into northern Argentina. His ambition was unbounded, almost insane. He was ambitious for glory, titles, honor, and wealth. But his imperialism aroused the bitter opposition of the governments of Chile and Río de la Plata, and his military genius proved unequal to that of his opponents, especially the Chileans. In January, 1839, he was overthrown and sent into exile. He passed the

remainder of his life in Ecuador and Chile and in Europe. Despite efforts to placate him by diplomatic appointments, the fires of ambition continued to burn. He made several attempts to regain his lost authority, the last one after he had reached the age of seventy-two. He died in Nantes in 1865.

If his military talents had equaled his gifts as an administrator, he might have molded the Pacific Coast of South America into a single powerful state. Most authorities agree that he was not a great soldier.

The prestige he won in the patriot armies aroused admiration for him among all classes. His conservatism, his magnetic personality, and his administrative genius obtained for him the support of the clergy and the wealthy Creoles. His Inca ancestry made him highly acceptable to the Indians and mestizos who composed the vast majority of the population of both Bolivia and Peru. The priests and the local civil authorities sent the ignorant masses to the polls to vote for him and his candidates for all offices, legislative and administrative. He suppressed freedom of speech and the press and sent his enemies into exile. He demanded absolute submission to his personal rule. He was reserved, suspicious, deceitful, and economical to the point of stinginess. He concealed his ideas with an excess of verbiage, approached his goal by circuitous paths, and was frequently guilty of cold-blooded duplicity.

Of the scores of dictators spawned by Spanish America, at least two were soldiers of fortune, dramatic and colorful. One of these was Antonio López de Santa Anna, who is well known to Anglo-Saxon readers because of his relations with Texas and the United States.

Santa Anna was born of well-to-do Spanish parents in Jalapa, near Vera Cruz, in 1795. He fought on both sides of nearly every issue that arose in his day, dominated Mexican military and political life for almost thirty years, spent more than two decades in exile, returned to Mexico in 1874, and died two years later after having written his memoirs. Impetuous, dissipated, corrupt, unscrupulous, devoid of fixed political principles, he was nevertheless a moving orator and a consummate actor, with a superficial brilliance and great personal magnetism.

The other soldier of fortune was Juan José Flores, who was twice dictator of Ecuador and a man to be reckoned with in that country for almost forty years. A mestizo, he was born of very humble parents in Puerto Cabello, Venezuela, in 1800. At one time he was the servant of a Spanish officer engaged in suppressing the struggle of the Venezuelans for independence, but he soon entered the patriot army, where his rise was rapid and he was finally given a general's commission by Bolívar. While this great warrior was governing *La Gran Colombia*, Flores was in direct charge of the province of Quito. Immediately after the Liberator retired from the presidency, his Venezuelan compatriot led a secession movement that resulted in the establishment of the Republic of Ecuador, and became its first chief executive.

With the liberal Vicente Rocafuerte, Flores controlled the political destiny of the country until he was forced to leave for a foreign land in June, 1845. He was received with open arms in Spain, where he plotted with the adulterous queen, María Cristina de Bourbon, to establish a throne in northwestern South America. Very soon he also won the

favor of Viscount Palmerston and extended his military preparations to England. Thanks, however, to the adverse memorials of British merchants and the protests of the Spanish-American diplomats, the enterprise was abandoned. Flores later resided in Central America, where he found military employment, and in Chile and Peru, where he continued to hatch plots to regain his power. The year 1860 found him once more in Ecuador supporting García Moreno and entering eagerly into plans for the establishment of a French protectorate. He was again in command of the Ecuadorian army. In 1864 a revolution broke out, and García Moreno ordered Flores to suppress the insurgents. The veteran soldier was ill, and begged to be relieved, but when the president insisted, he set out in search of the enemy. He died before he reached his destination (October, 1864).

Juan José Flores must have had an ingratiating personality. His relations with Queen Cristina and Palmerston are convincing proof, and the diplomats of the United States to Ecuador wrote of him in most laudatory terms. One of them remarked:

"His measures were generally chosen with an astonishing degree of ingenuity and skill, and he had a profound knowledge of men and motives. His persuasion was almost irresistible, and the fascination of his presence and manners was great. . . . He governed the Republic with great . . . energy. He made many valuable improvements. . . . He courted the members of the old-established families, and drew them generally to his support. His well-nigh irresistible persuasion often changed an enemy into a fast and valuable friend. . . . His success in Europe may be attributed to the same cause.

. . . *His mind is one of surprising acuteness and readiness of apprehension. He is a constant observer and quick thinker.* . . . It should be added that he has not the reputation of a sanguinary man. . . . He has always preferred to gain men over to his side by flattery and artful policy [rather] than to inflict on them summary vengeance." (Minister John T. Van Alen to Secretary John M. Clayton, February 1, 1850, *Despatches, Ecuador*, Vol. 1, No. 27.)

Two of the prominent dictators of Spanish America, Rafael Núñez of Colombia and García Moreno of Ecuador, frankly based their power upon pietism and the Roman Catholic Church. Of the two, García Moreno was more fanatical and sanguinary.

The son of Castilián parents, Gabriel García Moreno first saw the light in Guayaquil in 1821. He received his early education from a pious mother and a priest, and at the age of fifteen entered the University of Quito, where he was known for his industry, his keen intellect, and his dominating personality. He soon became a journalist, and traveled widely in Europe. At twenty-seven he was the champion of the Jesuits. At thirty-five he was denouncing the growing secularization of the age and declaring his belief in the supremacy of the church over the state. He was a mystic whom the conservatives of Ecuador were ready to proclaim as their Moses. He preferred a French protectorate to an independent republic ruled by the liberals.

In April, 1860, Moreno became president of Ecuador, and he continued to dominate the country for fifteen years, until he was assassinated in August, 1875. He set up a theocracy,

revived the Inquisition, and consecrated the nation to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. From ardent Catholics he received extravagant praise: "a Christian Hercules," "a disciple of Charlemagne and Saint Louis," "a hero of Jesus Christ and not of Plutarch."

Nor did Moreno neglect the material development of the republic. He systematized the revenues, suppressed frauds and contraband, made prompt payments on the public debt, founded a mint, encouraged industry, constructed a great highway from Quito to Guayaquil. He suppressed the bandits, executed the petty militarists, and shot his political adversaries, imprisoned them, or sent them into exile. He gave the nation order and a certain measure of prosperity at the expense of liberty.

The ablest of all the Spanish-American dictators is unquestionably Porfirio Díaz, who dominated Mexico for thirty-five years and holds the record for length of rule, although Juan Vicente Gómez, who has controlled Venezuela since 1906, will have few rivals for second place. These battle-scarred veterans must be passed by here, however. The career of Díaz is already well known, and the truth regarding Gómez will hardly be available for another decade. Díaz died in Paris in 1915 at the age of eighty-five, after an ostracism of four years.

Perhaps the most ridiculously crude and ignorant of them all was Mariano Melgarejo of Bolivia. He was born in April, 1820, the illegitimate son of a Spaniard and an Indian woman of the department of Cochabamba. At the age of eighteen he joined the army of Santa Cruz. He took part in many a barracks uprising during the next quarter of a century, and

suffered exile on three different occasions, twice in Peru and once in the "Green Hell" of eastern Bolivia. Finally, in December, 1864, he fought his way into the National Palace at La Paz. For six years he maintained himself in power and subjected the nation to his bizarre and degrading rule. He was a gambler, a drunkard, and a libertine. Crassly ignorant and quarrelsome, he once argued violently that Napoleon was a greater general than Bonaparte. He taught his favorite charger to drink beer, ordered his army officers to lie down and roll over like poodles, commanded his soldiers to march through a second-story window and fall to the ground, decreed that his birthday should be celebrated along with the resurrection of Jesus, threatened to shoot the members of his cabinet when they talked of resigning, and had them march with him from city to city at the head of his army, compelling them to travel hundreds of miles over mountain trails and through torrid jungle. No newspapers were allowed to exist except those under the patronage of the government, and nothing was published except what the dictator approved. His political adversaries were treated as enemies of the country, and none but his friends were allowed to participate in the elections. He named the candidates for the legislature; the employees of his government elected them. Although he relieved the poor Indians of the heavy charges for funeral services and encouraged several citizens of the United States to undertake enterprises designed to foment the economic development of the country, his rule was on the whole one of the very worst that any Spanish-American country ever had. When he was overthrown on January 15, 1871, he fled into Chile, but soon afterward he took up his residence in Lima,

where he was killed by his son-in-law in the following November.

Accounts of his conduct written by the ministers of the United States make most interesting reading. On receiving news of his assassination, one of them remarked: "His was a reckless and desperate career. . . . His government was the most arbitrary and tyrannical with which Bolivia has been cursed. His private life was scandalous beyond belief." (Minister L. Markbeit to Secretary Hamilton Fish, December 16, 1871, Despatches, Bolivia, Vol. 5, No. 158.)

This series of sketches must close with a brief characterization of Antonio Guzmán Blanco of Venezuela, who might well have been the prototype of O. Henry's Losada. The son of a distinguished journalist and politician, he was born in 1829. He ascended to the presidency in 1870 and was master of the nation until 1889, although not actually chief executive during all this period. He spent the last decade of his life in Europe, dying in Paris at the age of seventy.

Although venal and ruthless, augmenting his private fortune at public expense and committing acts of unjustifiable cruelty, Guzmán Blanco was able and occasionally patriotic. He issued decrees making primary education free and compulsory, legalized civil marriage, secularized the cemeteries, suppressed religious orders, sponsored the codification of the national laws, reorganized the finances, restored credit, went to Europe personally to negotiate loans (leaving a puppet to act as chief executive during his absence), and undertook internal improvements on a large scale. In many respects his rule was better than any which Venezuela had experienced since the early administrations of Páez.

But he was excessively vain and arbitrary. "He allows no man in his cabinet nor among his personal confidants to have an individual and independent opinion. He insists on deciding the most trivial questions himself, and gives personal attention to the smallest details, not allowing his cabinet officers the slightest discretion," stated a contemporary diplomat from the United States. (W. A. Pile to Hamilton Fish, August 7, 1873, Despatches, Venezuela, Vol. 21.) Another described at length the numerous marble tablets set up to commemorate his achievements. (W. L. Scruggs to James G. Blaine, October 29, 1889, Despatches, Venezuela, Vol. 39, No. 47.) A third writer spoke of the "inordinate vanity of the man which prompted him to erect statues to himself in every conceivable place," and recalled the dictator's remark that there were only two illustrious Americans: Antonio Guzmán Blanco and George Washington! (A. W. Barrett, in the *New York Herald*, January 6, 1890.)

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Such were the origin, character, methods, and work of the dictators of Spanish America. At worst they seem to have been a necessary evil; at best they were men of energy, vision, and patriotism. They gave direction to confusion, substituted order and temporary stability for chaos. Democratic forms and anarchy presented them an opportunity for action and enterprise. Occasionally they served the nation better than they served themselves.

The failure of Spanish America to set up constitutional monarchies has been lamented. But, quite aside from the fact that such monarchies would have been most difficult to

establish and maintain,* it may be doubted whether they would have been better for the people of the region than turbulent republics characterized by the alternation of revolutionary chaos and strong men on horseback.

An orderly regime in independent Spanish America would have meant a hierarchy of churchmen, landlords, mine owners, and wealthy merchants, with a following of Creole lawyers, physicians, army officers, and the like. It would have made impossible the rise of such men, for instance, as Juárez, Díaz, Santa Cruz, Páez, Flores, Sarmiento, and Castilla. In the midst of revolution there flourished a sort of anarchistic equalitarianism, since all were equal before the dictators with their extensive powers. The comparatively easy achievement of military rank was a democratizing influence which placed on the same level men of all classes and all strata. On the battlefield the idea of equality, with the abolition of special privileges as its corollary, gradually penetrated the soul of even the common mass. Revolutions have thus been the process by which the aristocratic society and the caste system have been transformed into more liberal commonwealths. Despite many setbacks, the trend has been in the direction of a more democratic order, toward greater social unity and a more ardent nationalism. During the Age of the Dictators population and wealth increased, and progress was made in

* The British government refused either to permit members of the English royal family to establish thrones in Spanish America or to allow the French Bourbons to do so; and the leaders of Spanish America were strongly opposed to Spanish Bourbons.

The fate of nineteenth-century monarchs in Hispanic America was not a happy one. Iturbide of Mexico was overthrown and later executed. "Imperial Majesties" of Haiti were deposed or assassinated. Maximilian was shot. Pedro I of Brazil was dethroned, Pedro II deposed and sent to Europe.

art and literature. The expense of the new order was great, but its benefits should not be ignored.

Bibliographical Note

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THE MUSSOLINI REGIME
By HENRY R. SPENCER

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THE MUSSOLINI REGIME

THE VOCABULARY of political science has undergone remarkable shifts of meaning. One such change is going on at this very moment. If we have regard to the idea and practice to which the term "dictatorship" has traditionally been applied, the Italian regime of today is of quite different character. Yet here is where the tag is stuck, and in popular speech the word seems to be rapidly becoming the accepted designation for what Mussolini is and does. Other state rulers, from Pilsudski to Mustafa Kemal and Hitler, have followed his example in various ways and degrees. From these several experiments there is emerging a more or less well-defined type of government.

In view of our democratic preconceptions, formed from nineteenth-century experience, such reversion to autocracy does not seem to belong to the twentieth century, though we well know that there are serious defects in the techniques and institutions which have been evolved to give body to the spirit of democracy. There were peoples whose history and social environment made the working of democracy particularly difficult; they were deeply divided economically or ecclesiastically or regionally; they were politically inexperienced, or they were so heavily handicapped by poverty and illiteracy as to be retarded, definitely "backward peoples" in respect to the march of human progress. Some thinkers, furthermore—now wise after the fact—are prepared to say that what is now

coming to be called dictatorship is only one of the reactions that might normally be expected as a noxious sequel to the war of 1914–18, in which civilization came so near to suicide.

In the ancient Roman republic the constitution included provision for those crises that were so extraordinarily pressing that they could not be dealt with by ordinary governmental agents operating in familiar constitutional forms. The crisis might be military—the enemy at the gates, a danger that could not be coped with by police nor even by the supreme executive consuls because of their divided power. Or it might be financial disaster, requiring receivership, or an administrative blind alley, calling for the cutting of an inextricable Gordian knot. When such critical occasions arose, the Senate decreed suspension of the ordinary checks and balances of the constitution, especially the division of power between two consuls, and chose one person who should have absolute power for the duration of the crisis. This person was named “dictator”—by etymology, one who can speak with great, indeed irresistible, force, one who can command and compel obedience and need not try to persuade. Rational processes being suspended, the state’s social purpose being single and clear, the dictator was acting above and outside the letter of the ordinary constitutional law; but he was doing so with the one purpose of preserving the constitution.

But of equal importance with the absoluteness of the dictatorship was its limitation in time, and the ultimate responsibility of the temporary holder of absolute power to the Roman people. Whatever its origin, the dictatorship was *temporary*. It might last for days, for weeks, or for months. In no case might it constitutionally exceed six months. At the

expiration of the fixed period the dictator's power came to an end. He must render an account of his stewardship and deliver back his extraordinary power to the Senate, which had bestowed it. The constitution should then resume its normal course, saved by a period of temporary suspension, restored to health by its short sleep, enabled by temporary anesthesia to endure a major operation that was imperative to save its life.

Dictatorship, like medical measures, might be abused. Cincinnatus, it is true, like George Washington, did dutifully return to the plow. But others, having absolute power in hand, might be corrupted by the insidious temptation to extend that power. If the anesthesia were frequently repeated, a drug addiction might be formed, portending disaster in the long run. When the late Roman republic came to be repeatedly, almost continuously, rent by civil wars, and Julius Caesar was named dictator more and more frequently, it was a symptom that the republic was falling into ruin, that the dictatorship, too often repeated, was becoming a habit tending toward despotism. Even despotic power might be benevolently used, but frequently it tempted its possessor to become an exploiter, not serving the community but reducing its members to an instrumentality for serving his own ego. Augustus might find Rome brick and leave it marble; but there was the possibility also that Nero might leave it a smoking ruin.

This excursion into Italian history is necessary before one may begin properly to conceive Mussolini and his regime. The next step is to realize that there are two periods in Mussolini's tenure of office which need to be sharply distinguished: that which came before January 3, 1925, and that which

follows. Far more important than the famous March on Rome of October 30, 1922, this other was the fateful date of his Declaration of Intransigence, of permanent personal independence of parties, parliament, and the familiar constitution.

When Mussolini by the king's invitation became prime minister on the October date mentioned, the event was viewed by most observers merely as another link in a series of experiments that post-war Italy was trying, in the effort to secure an executive who could lead Parliament to a solution of the extraordinarily difficult post-war problems. These difficulties were financial and administrative; they concerned the representative body; they even challenged the fundamental constitution of society and of the state, for republicanism and bolshevism were very much in the air. After Orlando, Italy's spokesman at the Paris peace-making, Nitti and Giolitti had been premiers for brief periods, followed on a definitely lower plane of political morale by Bonomi and Facta. None of these men had been supported by coherent majorities. The Chamber of Deputies had been composed, as the result of general elections in November, 1919, and May, 1921, not of real political parties but of a large number of personal followings in idle, futile competition. These dozen or more groups were precariously combined into temporary coalitions which easily fell apart; they were all aghast in the face of the portentous aggregation of over a hundred and fifty Socialists, who were, it is true, badly divided, but whose left wing was pledged to communism. There were also about one hundred Christian Democrats, who, under the lead of a clever and statesman-like priest, Don Sturzo, were promising not clericalism but thoroughgoing renovation of the nation's life, on the basis of

a juster, more Christian distribution of economic goods among those who needed and could use them.

After May, 1921, the Chamber contained also some thirty followers of Mussolini, called *Fascisti*, a name which at first meant only that they were "banded together." In their original phase (March, 1919) the motive unifying these energetic youngsters was only union for strength. Disgusted war veterans, mostly of syndicalistic, anarchistic, futuristic tendency, they longed to smash to pieces the profiteering system from which they were so poignantly suffering when demobilization of the army left them out in the cold. Somehow, vaguely, they wanted to reconstruct the world. A half year later they warmly sympathized with D'Annunzio's mutineering seizure of Fiume (September, 1919). They found that ultranationalism was their most effective platform plank for political propaganda. Let Italian super-patriots defy the powers at Paris, and defy the pusillanimous Italian government as well. Let Italy in "sacred egoism" assert by unauthorized but bold, self-directed action the claims to what was due her as winner of the war. But also it was against the socialists that they bore their most justifiable grudge, because of the inclination of all socialists toward international pacifism, and because Italian socialist laborers had, speaking generally (they would say), spent the war period in munition manufacture drawing good wages while heroes were suffering in the trenches.

The Fascists in armed bands took drastic, often violent, action to expel socialists from their positions as mayors and councilmen of cities, as managers of cooperatives and of labor exchanges. As success attended their lawless enterprise, the Fascists attracted the free-handed support of wealthy land-

owners and industrialists, who contributed money for indispensable but expensive war equipment, and the enthusiastic enlistment of young men. Especially after the discouraging report of a socialist mission to Russia in 1920, and the ridiculous fiasco of socialist labor's seizure of the steel factories in September of the same year, the widespread civil war waged by the Fascists became a socialist rout.

The momentum must not be wasted. The Leader's ambition rose higher, from self-protection to nationalism, to defense of society against bolshevism, and finally to mastery of the nation. Government's prestige had fallen to progressively lower ebb as premiers became more pusillanimous, parliamentary sessions more loquaciously quarrelsome and futile, administrative problems more pressing. The situation cried out for leadership, the old political leaders were discredited by failure, and the constituted authorities waited, their teeth chattering.

Whatever Mussolini's shortcomings, his nerve is manifest; he has never lacked self-confidence. Toward the end of the summer of 1922 he and his advisers judged that the time was ripe for the legal national government to yield itself into the hands of the Fascist party army. Fascism had hardly a sign of a program (except Activism); it had only 31 of the 535 members of the Chamber of Deputies; it had no military force fit to mention—only a large number of ill-assorted armed gangs who looked vaguely to Mussolini as their leader, and who could lawlessly suppress socialist and Catholic preachers of revolution so long as the police, constabulary, and army looked on with benevolent neutrality.

But Fascism was an active *movement* in the presence of

governmental paralysis, and it had a *condottiere* who inspired fanatical devotion in his followers. Perhaps under his confident leadership the nation might be galvanized into action, might even follow through to Renovation, to what Americans at the same period were vaguely but hopefully mouthing as "Reconstruction." Many a liberal patriot of 1922 must have felt something of this hope when, after the general strike (August 1 and 2) was put down, not by the shilly-shally Facta government but by the energetic Fascists, the challenge of Mussolini and his followers in late October was answered by Facta's weak yielding—and the *condottiere* became premier.

The challenge was a cleverly conceived and well-timed political bluff. The March on Rome was a myth (militarily speaking); the Facta regime fell apart rather than was attacked and pushed out. The vacuum of power received the inrush of self-confident Fascism. A cabinet of all the parties (even the Socialists were invited, but that part of the plan fell through) was put together for national regeneration under Mussolini's confident command. The most amazing and significant fact is that within three weeks Parliament had actually sanctioned the whole proceeding by expressing confidence in the new premier and granting his demand for full powers to carry out financial and administrative reform, powers that were to continue, under the terms of the statute, until December 31, 1923.

Here began the real dictatorship of Mussolini. For this grant of full powers there were precedents—not many, but genuine—in the history of modern Italy as well as in the constitutional life of ancient Rome. Appointment by the king,

legislative grant of powers by Chamber and Senate, gave the seal of constitutionality to the new regime, which might well be regarded merely as drastic dealing with a distressing situation, to be supplanted by normal governmental operations as soon as normal conditions should have been restored. There are evidences that Mussolini himself on some occasions held this view of the situation, qualified—as in the case of our own New Deal—by the expectation of procuring not mere recovery but also removal of some ancient abuses. The receiver should not only restore the corporation to active life but rid it meanwhile of the elements that had produced the crisis.

But such restoration was not to be. The equivocal situation brought out evidence pointing to a quite different attitude on the part of Mussolini himself, a disposition to speak of the events of 1922 as a Fascist “revolution,” from which there should be no return to the former constitutional equilibrium. More important, though he was premier by royal appointment, he could not escape from his own revolutionary past. Furthermore, his cohorts, now called *squadre* but hardly capable of being squared with legality, had tasted blood and were not now to be satisfied with law. As early as July, 1921, Mussolini had declared that there was no longer any danger of bolshevism and had negotiated a truce with the Socialists and Christian Democrats, but his Fascists would have none of it, and he soon learned that if he would not lose his followers, he must needs go their way of illegal violence. So now, though he called his Fascists a militia, he could not hold them back from deeds of blood. He might teach purification, but there were serious financial scandals. He might seek the unification of the nation’s administration, but there were

dozens of regions in which a local *ras* (the name itself derived from an Abyssinian chieftainship) held absolute sway and was only to be kept loyal to Mussolini by being allowed his own free despotic hand. Yet this *ras* system meant the destruction of equal law and order, and constituted a serious impediment to the national unity that Mussolini had been brought into power to secure.

The sad story of 1923-24 need not be retailed; one tragic episode will suffice. The law governing elections to the Chamber was drastically reformed in July, 1923, jammed through Parliament by threats of force. To get rid of the old Chamber, composed of fragmentary partisan cliques, and to secure a stable majority, two-thirds of the membership was to be assigned to whatever national list of candidates secured the largest number of votes in the nation at large, and the remaining one-third was to be proportioned among all the other parties. Immediately after the election held in April, 1924, Giacomo Matteotti, a leader among the moderate Socialists, rose in his place in the Chamber and began to develop a mass of evidence that besmirched with corruption some of the Fascists in high places and represented the election of the victorious Fascist list as tainted by wholesale violence and fraud. Within a week Matteotti was dead. He had been kidnapped and, because of his resistance, murdered by gunmen who were well known for Fascist deeds of violence, who were protected and aided by Fascist leaders. For six months the nation was rocked by the Matteotti crisis. One after another of the political groups that had been collaborating with Mussolini, at least passively, in what had been designed to be a national regeneration, withdrew and went into opposition or

an aloof neutrality that was no longer benevolent. This was not only the Aventine Secession of pronounced anti-Fascists (Socialists, Democrats, Social Democrats, Christian Democrats, and others) who went on parliamentary strike and refused to sit with the Fascist deputies in the Chamber. More serious to Mussolini's position before the world was the profound disapproval, and finally the withdrawal from close alliance, of the Ex-Service Men's Association and the "*collaborating*" political parliamentary groups. These were the *non-Fascists* that still followed the ex-premiers Salandra, Orlando, and even that most exquisite connoisseur of Italian political affairs, Giovanni Giolitti, who had preserved his long years of parliamentary leadership by always foreseeing accurately the trend of events and acting in time. Late in December came also the threat of publication of the memoranda regarding the Matteotti case by two of the men who had been nearest to Mussolini, Cesare Rossi, head of his Press Bureau, and Filipelli, editor of the chief Fascist newspaper in Rome. They would fain exculpate themselves by throwing the blame on their chief.

Mussolini, a journalist by profession, is no mean observer of current trends. At last, on the third of January, 1925, he made his bold declaration of independence, or Intransigence, as it was coming to be called. If others would not collaborate with the Fascists in governing, very well, he would govern alone. He assumed full responsibility for all the deeds that had been done in the Fascist name and behalf, defied the Chamber to impeach him, and remarked that such critical situations are always settled by force, which he, in the capacity of legal premier as well as Fascist party *Duce*, undoubtedly

was able to exercise. This position of mastery was especially manifest in view of the deep divisions of attitude among all the parties opposed to him. The press was immediately brought under complete Fascist control. Within a few months all political parties save the Fascist were deprived of legal existence. Freemasonry was exterminated, and there was an end of the freedom of assembly and of association, for labor protection or other purposes. From now on, all that was to be permitted in social life must be Fascist and wholly Fascist. Totalitarianism became an ideal, to be realized in all social relations and to be defended against the disintegration of laissez faire liberalism as much as against bolshevism, defended by all the apparatus of despotism, as conceived by the Czarist or the Soviet regime. Whatever this Mussolinian autocracy may be, it is not dictatorship; for it aspires to permanence.

We have observed the steps by which Mussolini marched if not on Rome, at least to power. It remains to examine some of the basic elements in the regime that has gradually come out of his conduct of affairs. It has become sufficiently apparent that here was not the realization of a preconceived program but agile opportunism. There was a fierce storm, and Mussolini rode it. By no means passively or inertly; for a very considerable factor in the swirl of events was his own eloquence of tongue and especially of pen, his uncanny journalistic flair for the immediate present—what it is and what it demands shall be done. The situation seemed to beckon to him and he, like the true artist, made his contribution to a situation that evoked his demagogic art.

The regime of Mussolini is nationalist, imperialist, abso-

lutist. By far the greatest portion of the loyalty upon which he has been able to rely, first among passionately devoted henchmen, later in a vaguer fashion among the millions of his countrymen, is born of the feeling that he embodies, as he certainly is never tired of stating, an ideal of nationalism. The nation is literally "sacred"; a favorite word in his mouth is the "passion" of this new religion. The Fascist is the ideal Italian who cannot regard himself or his relation to the nation without high emotion. There may be much bunkum in the way this idea is manipulated in public, but after all it is a recognized feature of the technique of this regime. On this point possibly even Hitler has only gone his teacher one better.

It is a disputed point whether imperialism in the modern world is fully or partly economic, or not at all. Italy is an instance of the exploitation of the idea of empire without, or sometimes even against, economic reason. Mussolini's Italy must again become what once was called not Italy but Rome. Imperium is leadership which is essentially command, which scorns the suggestion of equality, which expresses an expansive personality by dominating those who can be dominated. The lictor's axe and rods were a symbol of the majesty of the Roman state. So also are they of what regards itself as the imperial Roman state of today. The official publishing house is called lictorial, so also the public loan (as we Americans spoke of a "liberty" loan or a "victory" loan). Even the new city called into being by the regenerative magic of Mussolini in the midst of the Pontine Marshes must be called Littoria. All this is familiar technical propaganda material for impressing upon the Italian that his state is a great power, pos-

sibly *the* great power. Hence the elevation of morale enjoyed by Italians the world over. With Mussolini in Rome every Italian ditch digger realizes that he is no longer a Dago, but a fellow citizen of The Empire. The excavation of ruins in Rome shall remind both Romans and tourists of the spacious days of Augustan Empire. Tourists shall admire, Romans may glow with self-satisfaction.

The world has not been given the statistical data by which to judge how much of this imperialism is real; there is widespread suspicion that what has actually been achieved is only a small part of what is triumphantly proclaimed as achieved, that there is something of the familiar practice of whistling in order to keep the courage up. There certainly have been wonders of statistical manipulation, motivated by the high purpose of maintaining the Italian people's will to win. This self-hypnotism is perhaps a justifiable way of compensating for the long generations and centuries during which the inhabitants of the Italian peninsula were compelled, by poverty and by the imperialist aggression of foreign states, to recognize ruefully that their Italy was a memory or a baseless dream. If Metternich a hundred years ago was not only convinced that Italy was a "historical expression" but also firmly resolved to keep her in that humiliating position, Mussolini goes to the opposite extreme. National Italy ought to be imperial: she shall be. Dry realism may have its way when acute Italian minds study situations realistically. But for public purposes of oratory and journalism it is patriotic duty to speak bombastically, to forget the inescapable poverty of raw materials for industry and the frightful backwardness in social organization that exists in the southern half of the

peninsula and the great islands of Sicily and Sardinia. This bombast is referred to not by way of rebuke or depreciation; it has been, by Mussolini's instinct, utilized and effectively applied to the purpose of remaking the Italian public "political man," ridding him of his sense of inferiority, of being unequal to the task of self-government, since that sense of inferiority had deprived him not only of personal dignity but of all responsibility for public affairs. Now Italy *will* go it alone (*fará da sé*). But Mussolini alone will do all.

We have seen more or less both of a theory of nationalism and of imperialism: the former derived from a school of aristocratic thought that had come to light long before the war and whose leaders, Rocco, Federzoni, and Corradini, have been absorbed as active and as elder statesmen of Fascism; imperialism is the result of a process of rationalizing Mussolini's achievements and hopes. When it comes to *absolutism*, we must be content to derive an understanding of Fascist thought by induction from Fascist action. Mussolini has always said that there had been enough and too much of program-making; what Italy needed was resolute action; Fascism was a movement not intellectualist but emotional and passionately devoted. There was a time when absolutism was associated with the divine right of kings. Of that there is nothing in present-day Italy. The royal dynasty of Savoy was accepted by Mussolini, late in 1922, as an element in the situation that was firmly intrenched; even his "republican tendency" had better yield to that fact. If Paris was once held to be worth a mass, Rome certainly was worth a kissing of the royal hand. The hand was powerless to harm, and it might help to serve his purpose. The king has long been ac-

customed to a function that makes of royalty a mere symbol of national unity, a flag flowing with the wind. An exalted personage, innocent of political intention, goes through the forms necessary to give sovereign validity to the nation's dominant will, moderately liberal under Cavour, democratic under Giolitti, absolutist under Mussolini. Mussolini's absolutism, it is found, can be realized under the cover of a constitutional kingship. It may well be questioned, however, whether Victor Emmanuel's acceptance of the Fascist regime has not made the continuance of the dynasty dependent upon the continuance of the Fascist absolutism, which for twelve years it has clothed with legality in return for vigor. If Fascism were to be swept away by war or revolution, it is not unlikely that kingship would go too.

From a responsible and royal parliamentarism, such as obtained during the sixty years from Cavour to Giolitti, the constitution has been transformed completely, though the letter of the *Statuto* of 1848 remains unchanged. Since the *coup d'état* of October, 1922, the process of constitutional change, and even of statutory legislation, has been somewhat as follows. An idea or institution is conceived by Mussolini, subjected to discussion in the Grand Council of the Fascist party, passed by the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate, or possibly brought into activity by executive decree or party regulation, if under the circumstances that seems more convenient. Popular vote has been three times appealed to (1924, 1929, and 1934), after the manner of a Napoleonic plebiscite, to give an appearance of popular sanction to a Fascist list of deputies, ratified by a voting body that sees no alternative course of action.

The Senate has been, after the ancient tradition, filled up from time to time with new members chosen by the prime minister. It has contented itself with a modest role, the temperate criticism of detail, and never constitutes a formidable obstacle to the executive's realization of his purpose. The Chamber of Deputies had formerly been the chief seat of power, but it was induced by threats of force (much after the manner of Oliver Cromwell) to pass an act granting Mussolini the "full powers" he demanded. It was similarly coerced in July, 1923, to pass an act transforming its own elective system according to the Fascist party requirements. Again in 1928, being now almost purely Fascist, it voluntarily accepted Mussolini's plan for still another transformation. Government by authority of an elective parliament (called by D'Annunzio's pleasant phrase the Great Beast) being now reprobated as a liberal institution, hence disintegrating and offensive to totalitarian Fascism, the principle of election from below is effectively supplanted by appointment from above. By the terms of the last-mentioned statute the Chamber became one hundred per cent Fascist, making only such criticism as loyal Fascists might make from their class point of view, as employers or employees, as agriculturalists or industrialists.

The Grand Council was the result of a gradual evolution of aristocracy within the Fascist party. From early in 1923 it was the custom of Mussolini to call together as an advisory group the most important heads of administrative departments and the chief manipulators of party propaganda and conductors of party institutional activity. This body was confined to a program put before it by Mussolini as acknowl-

edged *Duce*, and as a matter of course it arrived at no decision, formulated no opinion, that was not satisfactory to him. In 1928 this body was recognized and reorganized by parliamentary statute, since it had already been intrusted with electoral function as the Grand Elector of Parliament, i. e., the body that should choose from one thousand nominees the four hundred members of the Chamber of Deputies. In this constituting statute a degree of representativeness was designed for the Grand Council. A body of fifty or more persons was designated by an elaborate series of *ex officio* categories, with opportunity for the addition of an indefinite number at Mussolini's discretion. But it quickly became apparent that the categories mentioned in the statute might involve the inclusion of individual personalities (e. g., the firebrand Farinacci, ex-secretary of the party) whose presence was embarrassing. The Council's membership was immediately cut down; its meetings, monthly by law, were made irregular and sporadic. In other words, this legal advisory check upon Mussolini was deprived of any independent vigor that might have accrued to it from experience or have been given to it by the statute of 1928. The result is that it has ceased to be an active-minded staff meeting and has become a mere registering board. The Council remains, it is true, a going concern which might, in the event of Mussolini's death or incapacity, serve as a center of political power and even of legality if circumstances required transition from the present regime to a conceivable (however improbable) Fascist regime without Mussolini. But in the presence of Mussolini it is nothing more than an enlargement of his sole omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient omnicompetence.

If King, Senate, Chamber, and Grand Council are without independent power to control Mussolini by advice or consent, we must conclude that constitutional check and balance is entirely gone, that Mussolini is "all and in all." Hierarchy is the watchword of the regime. All authority is exercised through a pyramid whose apex and cohesive force is the *Duce* alone. He glories in the principle of disciplined obedience rather than in that of rational persuasion. Even from the party organization and the guild scheme for society known as "corporativism" there is the avowed, carefully designed exclusion of all "electionism." Party secretaries and trade union presidents, as well as ministers of state, owe their positions to his all-seeing eye and his promoting or demoting hand. The civil service first, and later the judiciary and the university lecturing staff, have been frankly combed so as to leave in influential position no person who is not satisfactory "from the national point of view," i. e., no anti-Fascist.

Such a system makes for efficiency of the regime while a strong hand is at the helm; but it is also the essential weakness of the regime, which is thus made to rest for its day-to-day operation and for its continuance upon the vigor, conscience, and capacity of what is after all not a continuing institution but one mere man. The system is Nietzschean. Suppose Mussolini to be the superman, conquering fate and circumstance. Will he remain forever a superman? Or is he likely, like Napoleon, to grow fat, hence sluggish, with his mind set in a groove, his judgment growing faulty in later days?

Absolute power is among the most corruptive forces that can operate upon a mere human being. This was true even of such rationally convinced and instinctive democrats as Wood-

row Wilson and Lloyd George when the exigencies of a war situation compelled them to assume and exercise the essential autocracy without which war cannot be waged. The autocrat is compelled to assume responsibility, to regard himself as above advice. By his word of command he must move mountains, and by so doing he inspires the faith of millions. But it is a miracle if that experience does not upset him, diminish his power of understanding and of persuasion, of appeal to reason, his capacity to work with other men, his disposition humbly to serve his nation's interest and will. Worse yet, it impairs his own ability to evaluate, his realization of the actual facts of the social situation by which he is surrounded. He is an angel if he does not come out of an experience of autocracy with a disposition that is intolerant of criticism and determined that those with whom he deals shall obey him without having to be persuaded. It is significant that the dread islands of exile to the north of Sicily have known the presence not only of convinced anti-Fascists but also of some few men who formerly were among the most faithful, most devoted adepts and sub-leaders of Fascism. Having once begun to think through administrative problems in obedience to the *Duce*, these active-minded men could not cease thinking at the moment he made up his mind. Their criticism, constructive and indispensable, was offered in the service of the Fascist regime. But the tragedy of a Fascist regime that has become autocratic is that it cannot endure the indispensable constructive criticism. "Yes-men" tend to become flatterers and sycophants, useless and deleterious to the cause upon whose surface they ride and attempt to make their own careers. Yet there is every tendency, in a regime of intolerance

such as autocracy induces, for senators, deputies, ministers, party organizers, leaders in business and trade unionism, to become "yes-men" and nothing more. That makes an essentially weak, precarious regime.

Turning from the regime to the nation, the outstanding fact is that Mussolinian Italy has become the place where liberty is not ill-protected and ignored but positively, exultingly scorned. Mussolini himself has boasted of the readiness of Fascism to trample upon the "more or less decomposed body of the Goddess of Liberty." He says that what Italy wants is order and efficiency, not liberty. Not the communist, nor even the socialist, idea is now Fascism's pet abhorrence; it is liberalism, which recognizes and depends upon free wills and lives by persuasion. Shortly after the Declaration of Intransigence (January 3, 1925) the press was completely throttled or Fascistized; all political parties save the Fascist were dissolved and membership in them made a penal offense (practically as treason). Freedom of speech and of association was and remains subjected to the whim of the police and the Fascist party agent.

All this anti-liberalism was entered upon as a tactical necessity in a contest for power. It has subsequently been rationalized. The Fascist theory is that liberalism is atomistic, whereas Fascist Italy is to become corporative and totalitarian. The individual citizen in and for himself is nothing. Human beings are cells composing higher wholes. Organs and limbs are organized in a body. This body is the sacred nation, whose mind is to be found only in what Mussolini says and does. For an individual to think of himself, or a social group to think of itself, as having an individual or group right to

exist, is undue libertarianism, and may be treason. "All is within the Fascist state, nothing allowed outside of or against the Fascist state."

Concede that much of the corporative scheme of trade unions and business syndicates is dream or empty façade. It is designed to cover a regime of state-compelled production that is free from strike and lock-out, because the will of producers is to be ignored, the laborer must work at state-fixed wages or starve, and the business man must acquiesce in state-fixed direction of the investment of capital and the granting of credit or be forced out of business. What is the real opinion of the regime in the mind of the people, which after all must be the basic, vital factor of any regime and its right to be? The attitude of the nonpolitical millions is, as it has been for generations past, what the Italian means by his expressive word *pazienza*. He wants a chance to work and to eat. *Pazienza* carries with it an irresponsible shrug of the shoulders. What is government to him but something external, incomprehensible, burdensome, a circumstance, like earthquake and volcanic eruption, that cannot be controlled, to which one must simply adapt oneself, hoping now and then to exploit it to one's own advantage? A succession of premiers in pre-Fascist days—Depretis, Crispi, and especially Giolitti—had accustomed the masses to this attitude of irresponsibility. By *trasformismo* a prime minister was in the habit of shifting his ministries to suit the changing whims of parliamentary parties and other political circumstances, carrying elections to suit himself by the grant of patronage and of other administrative favors, dividing and recombining political cliques, never associating his own personality firmly with any legis-

lative principle but maintaining under parliamentary forms an irresponsible, capricious, but quasi-absolute power, to which the citizen and the politician must yield, and from which by conforming obedience the climber might make his career.

This national trait is continued in the Mussolini regime. The nonpolitical masses are tired of agitation, of social effort. "Let Mussolini do it." The inarticulate people are not only incapable of ruling but they do not wish to be bothered; they are quite ready to evade the difficult duty of self-government.

It would be unjust to suggest that this is solely an Italian characteristic. Doubtless there are millions of Americans who under similar circumstances would assume the same attitude. It would likewise be unjust not to recognize that there are real achievements to the credit of the Mussolini regime. One-man power is a universally applicable device for achieving results, which democracy also requires (under safeguards for responsibility) if the ideal of popular self-government is not to fail for lack of efficiency. Absolutism also can make good use of this device. The foreign observer need not be unduly impressed by the famous boasts that the trains run on time (on the through lines traveled by tourists) and that the beggars have been swept off the streets of Naples (driven into secret hiding places, with little progress toward the solution of the problem of poverty). Abolition of short-changing is a police duty, capable of being achieved by democratic as well as by autocratic administration. Under the drive of Mussolini's will the Pontine Marshes have been drained and aqueducts for the distribution of water have been constructed, largely according to plans of ancient date. There may well

be considerable achievement in budgetary reform, since an autocrat's finance ministers need not persuade reluctant deputies but can scrap the pork barrel and plan national finance according to national need.

But at this point it may be noted that there is danger in finance that is decreed and not legislated by persuasion. For instance, the tax relief given the well-to-do inheritor of property only means that still more of the burden is heaped upon the long-suffering payer of indirect taxes on consumption. Another instance is the stabilization of the lira at a point that was fixed for the sake of national prestige (to surpass Poincaré's franc) at a rate that was far too high from the point of view of sound currency and international trade. Italy thus came to enjoy a suffocating trade depression some two years earlier than the rest of the world. Furthermore, Fascism, without parliamentary criticism and consent, has incurred a public debt that is stupendous.

An autocrat could, and Mussolini did, early cut down unemployment by the device of "sharing the job," allowing each laborer to work a few hours a week to earn the pittance that would keep soul and body together, since no one needed to be consulted or persuaded. One may also acclaim the consummate skill in propaganda by which the "battle of grain" has enabled Italy to lift herself up by her own bootstraps, to produce far more wheat per acre than she had previously done, in a national will to make the nation economically self-sufficient. Enthusiasm in national reconstruction has undoubtedly resulted, to the untold benefit of a nation whose tradition had been excessively, cynically individualistic.

The whole system of *Dopo-lavoro* (after-work) is a

broadly conceived national plan for institutionalizing the laborer's enjoyment of leisure (*panem et circenses*). He feels that it is at the nation's bidding, under the *Duce's* patronage, that he cultivates his personality, goes to the theater at reduced prices, travels over the country at special railroad fares to visit the nation's shrines, enters into the inheritance of a nation's prestige that is centered in Rome. The ultranationalism that is cultivated by parades, anniversary celebrations, worship of heroes, and the militarization of education is normal to the present regime. There may be long-run risks to world peace in Mussolini's tall talk, but hitherto his diplomacy has been conducted under a firm rein to the upbuilding of Italian national prestige; he has always held back from undue risk of the war his talk tends to provoke. For, notwithstanding his swashbuckling oratory for inducing national self-confidence, he shrewdly realizes that a real war for any purpose, even the most sacred, would as a matter of sheer economic fact involve incalculable dangers to his own regime.

What of the future? Has the Italy of the twentieth century to anticipate a repetition of her Renaissance "Age of Despots"? Or is her modern Augustus to be followed by a series of factious, fratricidal struggles among claimants to the succession? To an absolutist master the lieutenants, though indispensable, are a source of danger. They are potential successors, and as his rivals for public favor must be weeded out. Leading Fascist thinkers of former days, such as Rocca and Misuri, have been cashiered and are forgotten. Cesare Rossi, the *Duce's* Press Bureau chief until the Matteotti crisis, is in prison for life. Even Rocco, the facile contriver of nationalist legislation while Fascist minister of justice from 1925 to 1932,

has been retired from office. Dino Grandi becomes an international statesman of European renown; then he is abruptly dropped down into a mere embassy. Italo Balbo wins the amazed plaudits of the world when he conducts a mass aeroplane flight to the Chicago Exposition and returns with hardly a casualty; he is withdrawn from the Air Ministry, to become a mere colonial governor.

Aloneness of the sovereign master seems to be a tragic necessity of absolutism. The nation is held to be unfit to participate in self-government, hence it is excluded from the task, denied the opportunity to learn by doing. Thus it is involved not in progress but in retrogression. A political class is prevented from rising, or an institution that should have continuity and a power of survival beyond the days of the years of the Ineffable One. The question will not down: After Mussolini—what?

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THE ORIGINS OF DICTATORSHIP
IN GERMANY

By HAROLD C. DEUTSCH

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THE ORIGINS OF DICTATORSHIP IN GERMANY

FEW CONTEMPORARY political phenomena have so persistently challenged analysis of their origin and significance as has the Hitlerite dictatorship in Germany. Defined in turn as revolution and as reaction, as the climax of a series of political accidents and as the culmination of an extended historic process, the interpretation of its more general aspects has varied as greatly as it has in matters of detail. "National Socialism," say its own adherents, "was born at Versailles." If so, the German revolution of 1933 is the inevitable consequence of the long travail of the German people which began with the Armistice, a repudiation in essence of the republican regime which guided the destinies of the Reich in the troublous fourteen years after 1918.

Far less clear and unqualified than the break with the Republic is the break with the traditions of imperial Germany. A very considerable number both of the protagonists and the critics of the National Socialist movement would here agree in conceiving of it as a renaissance of pre-war ideals, eventually perhaps even a return to old forms. This view, however, is as superficial and misleading as that which sees in the Third Reich an entirely new Germany, a child bereft of its parents by the national catastrophe and left wholly a prey to contemporary influences. Those holding the latter opinion point out that the young people who play so dramatic

a role in the Nazi state care little about the history of their country before the period of their agitation, that they live to an amazing degree in the present, and have no interest whatever in the politics and program of imperial Germany. "Theirs," says Hamilton Fish Armstrong, "was a twentieth century revolution, as radical in implication and potentialities as the Russian, but in the *Prussian manner*."

It is indeed not always an easy task to trace the continuity of historical experience in Germany. Individual epochs are sharply severed, and intermediary stages of transition are at times scarcely discernible. Not always does a connecting consciousness lead from one period to another. The generations that emerge after the great cleavages seem to begin an entirely new life, scarcely aware, apparently, of even a thread of common feeling with previous epochs. This explains the phenomenal aspect of particular historic developments, confused as we are concerning their roots even in the immediate past. Thus so complete a stranger to German history as a Caesar risen from the ranks was bound to make a startling impression when he made his triumphant appearance at the opening of the 1930's. Certainly this revitalized Reich does not signify merely a return to pre-war precedents. Yet deliberately and unconsciously it is in more than one way a reversion to type, representing the revival of forces whose operation was interrupted by the World War and the revolution of 1918. Though in the new Germany these forces frequently underwent a change in direction, the original impulse in every case is to be sought in the former empire.

The most elementary bases of the National Socialist dictatorship in Germany could probably be reduced to four:

1. A government insuring order, efficiency, and authority.
2. A regime that aims to be fully representative of the German nation and the Teutonic race, directing the unified energies of an aroused people in the path of its national destiny.
3. The complete annihilation of the Communist threat against the capitalist nation-state.
4. The further integration and development of the totalitarian character of the state along socio-paternalistic lines.

In no small degree the government of the former empire had observed these requirements, though its attention was mostly concentrated upon the first. Certainly the Bismarckian state was not remiss in satisfying the German craving for submission to authority. Not that we should interpret this national predilection as mere servility. It sprang in the main from a consciousness among the German people of their essentially dispersive nature, their instability, their excessive receptivity, and their powers of assimilation—in short, their formlessness. As a nation they were aware of their immaturity as compared with such peoples as the French and English. Correspondingly great in consequence was their readiness to submit to a more rigorous governmental discipline; the more rigid framework compensated, in part at least, for what was lacking in spontaneous united action. The Germany that entered the World War was still more patriotic than nationalistic in the true modern sense; loyalty to the state was stronger than loyalty to what the French mean by *la patrie*. Only through the suffering, fear, and hopes engendered by the conflict were the mass of Germans finally brought to realize all that a people's fate implies.

The Germany of 1914 was a bourgeois capitalist state that had almost succeeded in laying the proletarian ghost. Since the departure of Bismarck the revolutionary elements in German socialism had receded more and more into the background. The improved condition of the working classes, the propagandist activities of the government working through army, school, and church, the increased participation in bourgeois local government, all these operated to tempt the Social Democrats to abandon their anti-state attitude and to restrict their agitation to the forms employed by a vigorous opposition party. In effect they became converts to the liberal bourgeois ideology with its canonization of "freedom," "reform," and "democracy." Officially they retained the symbols of orthodox Marxism and rejected the slogans of the "revisionist" socialists, who denied the completeness of the class struggle and showed a disturbing readiness to cooperate with liberal bourgeois groups. But in reality the idea of a proletarian dictatorship ceased to interest the German Social Democrats—it had in fact never been thoroughly accepted among them. A liberal bourgeois state under a limited monarchy was about all they dared hope for. A republic was scarcely dreamed of and certainly not considered a practical subject for agitation. When Rosa Luxemburg proposed the injection of the republican issue into the Prussian electoral campaign of 1910, she encountered the opposition of almost the entire party and failed to gain even the support of her associates on the extreme left. The program of the German Social Democrats in the event of war might also have been foretold long in advance. After all, they asked themselves, was not Germany the country with the strongest socialist and

labor movements, the most enlightened social legislation, the most advanced publicly owned enterprises? In protecting her from attack and annihilation, would they not also be playing the part of true proletarians?

When on August 4, 1914, the Social Democratic deputies joined in voting the credits that symbolized the Reichstag's acceptance of the "war of defense," they resigned for the time being their function as a party of protest and formalized their integration in the capitalist nation-state. Their action was also of vital significance for the political situation in Germany during the rest of the war. Once the great mass movement of the Social Democracy had identified itself with the national cause, its continued support became indispensable to the government. Its withdrawal would have created an intolerable psychological situation which it was necessary to prevent at all costs, a necessity that increased as the war dragged on and the will to endure had to be maintained.

The Social Democratic leaders, however, never comprehended the vast political influence which was now potentially theirs. The few concrete demands on internal and external policy which they finally formulated in cooperation with bourgeois liberals won no more than vague commitments from the government. All in all, it must be stated that the Reichstag really exercised no greater influence than it had in times of peace. It continued to regard itself as an organ of criticism and made no serious attempt to seize or even demand a share in the direction of affairs. It is not surprising, therefore, that when power was literally thrust upon it by the collapse of the imperial regime, the Reichstag was not even psychologically prepared to become the decisive organ of state policy. One is

obliged to record that the real initiative in the parliamentarization of Germany was taken by the Supreme Army Command, which hoped thereby to consolidate the home front or at least to secure a more tolerable peace from the enemy. Even then liberals and Socialists would have contented themselves with the substance of what was offered them. As late as October of 1918 Ebert, soon to be president, refused to come out for a republic and confined himself to demanding the abdication of the Kaiser, an attitude that cannot be wholly ascribed to inability to keep pace with the breathless acceleration of events. There is reason to believe that Ebert and other Socialist leaders still lacked confidence in the stability of a republic and would have preferred a monarchy somewhat after the English pattern. Not until the Kaiser fled and the workers' and soldiers' councils began to take steps to seize power did the Majority Socialists declare for a republic. Their action was now less the climax of their struggle against semi-autocratic monarchy than a move to forestall a soviet dictatorship. From the "dictatorship of the proletariat" they turned, as if for refuge, to the "National Assembly," paying homage thereby to the German liberal traditions of 1848 and of all bourgeois revolutions since 1789. The ideology of 1848, the vitality of which might well have been questioned, was tricked out in garments scarcely new and paraded before a people to whom the familiar face of the imperial regime had temporarily become hateful. In the absence of attractive competitors it won an acceptance far more general than profound.

* * *

Upon the parliamentarization, a last resort initiated by despairing army leaders, there thus followed the Republic.

Inevitably those political tendencies now made headway that had previously formed part of the program of the opposition. These had perhaps as good a claim to being "historical" as those they replaced, for they rested upon forces that had attempted the foundation of the Empire before Bismarck and had remained alive, though largely quiescent, in the state of his creation. Though they now come to occupy the center of the stage and play the lead, there was a strong inclination to select the supporting cast from more experienced personnel. To the German, accustomed as he was to reverence the professional expert, it was well-nigh inconceivable that the roles of soldiers, judges, and bureaucrats should be improvised overnight or that the routine operation of essential public services should be even temporarily interrupted. In the midst of catastrophe and defeat the Republic had sprung like Athena from the brow of Zeus, full-grown and arrayed in its democratic panoply. Conscious of the fact that it was not yet firmly rooted, it was fearful of too abrupt a breach with the past. Wherever they did not clash too sharply with the new institutions it sought to tie up with the old symbols, to link itself with the national tradition. As the verdict of Versailles, by striking at the army and navy, had again endeared these instruments of imperial power to the German people, the republican regime sensed the danger of disassociating itself from them. It thus came to nourish more than one serpent in its bosom.

Not the least of its mistakes was the failure to make of the new army a "Republican Guard." Though the Social Democrats had always vigorously denounced the bourgeois standing army, they had failed entirely to develop the con-

cept of a proletarian force. And so we are confronted with the amazing spectacle of a Reichswehr which in 1926 could still boast fifteen aristocrats among its twenty-six highest ranking officers. To a degree never approximated under the Empire the army had come to constitute a state within a state, its predominant tone hostile to that of the political regime which provided its support.

Thus the German Republic had permitted the preservation of a bridge to the past over which a counter-attack could soon be expected. One would at the least have expected a proportionately greater vigilance in preparing the defense. But here the historic ideology of the groups now termed "republican" paralyzed all initiative. To begin with, the Weimar Constitution had been largely determined by the sentiment that it must recognize and fortify all those rights and liberties which had been lacking in the old Reich and which the former opposition parties had supported as "democratic" and in conformity with the spirit of modern liberalism. In bondage to their own ideology, socialists and bourgeois liberals felt compelled to demonstrate the sincerity and truth of their convictions. And so their constitution was made to provide guarantees for every conceivable liberty, particularly for such freedom of political agitation as was scarce to be found in the most settled and secure of parliamentary states. It ostentatiously took for granted a unified will sanctioning the institution of democracy, ignoring entirely the probability, one might well say inevitability, of strong currents operating to render the parliamentary system unworkable. It is true that the famous (shall we now say notorious?) Article 48 endowed the president with most extraordinary

powers in times of crisis, but these could hardly operate as a democratic function in more than a passing situation.

The circumstance that the above situation redounded entirely to their benefit did not serve to reconcile the anti-republican elements to the ideology upon which the Weimar Constitution rested. The very facility with which they could embarrass the new regime only increased their contempt for it and confirmed them in their reverence for the old type of authority. Under the inspiration of Oswald Spengler the cult of authority acquired new vitality and ever larger numbers of enthusiastic devotees. With him they perceived in democracy "not form, but formlessness in every sense as a principle—parliamentarianism—constitutional anarchy—the republic—the negation of authority." (*The Hour of Decision*.) Most "sinister" of all, maintained Spengler, was the ideal of a nation "governed by itself," an impossibility and an absurdity; a nation could no more govern itself than an army could lead itself: it must be governed, and "as long as it possesses healthy instincts, it likes to be governed." The French Revolution and later upheavals of the sort did not result from popular opposition to absolutism which in each case had ceased to exist, but because "*authority was in process of dissolution*. All revolutions start from the decline of state supremacy."

Even if the Republic had not failed to inspire the respect of the old ruling classes after permitting them to remain entrenched in the essential state services, their opposition would in any case have had to be reckoned with. Equally unavoidable was the attack of the Communists, similarly enemies of parliamentary government. But the crucial problem for the Weimar Republic was not so much what defenses to erect

against irreconcilable elements of the right and left. Rather its greatest need was to maintain and strengthen the loyalty of those considerable sections of the population that had identified themselves with it at the start. Without the continued support of the traditional champions of democracy and liberalism, such as the artisan class, the small merchants, the white-collar workers, the professional people, and the students, its eventual doom was certain. Yet these were in large part the very elements that were now suffered to be dealt the most staggering blows of fortune. One can even say something in support of the claim that the Republic exploited them for the benefit of organized labor and organized capital. Even before the war Germany stood out as one of the states in which politics were thoroughly dominated by economics, and this tendency was further accentuated in the post-war era. The early twenties witnessed the formation of an informal alliance between the trade unions and the big industrialists, largely at the expense of the middle class. For the latter the final catastrophe came in the inflation, which has been called the worst blow dealt democracy in Germany. From this moment the liberal bourgeois parties were headed for oblivion. During the succeeding years the middle class also abandoned faith in the bourgeois parties of the right, who failed to maintain their opposition stand whenever they faced a real crisis, as in the matter of the Dawes and Young plans. Being already largely proletarianized, the next logical step would have been adherence to communism had not the psychological adjustment been so unbearable. All that remained to the impoverished bourgeois was the shred of his social superiority over the worker, and to this distinction he clung with despairing determination.

Most desperately unhappy was the lot of the young people. The Republic was not the creation of this younger generation, but surely the latter was in no way disposed to greet change with hostility. It was indeed among the youth of the nation that the greatest restlessness and dissatisfaction with contemporary civilization had been evident before the war. If the economic position of the younger people had been reasonably assured, there would have been every reason to hope for their adherence to liberal political principles. Instead the post-war period witnessed the conquest of German industries by "American" methods, the chief feature of which was a perfect mania for mechanization. By the middle twenties the older personnel proved more than adequate for the manning of the factories. From 1926 to 1931 a million established workers, it is said, also lost their positions, in spite of the fact that production was increased by twenty per cent and three quarters of a million young men who came of age found no employment. Here the youth of all social classes were affected, from those who would ordinarily have engaged in the crudest hand labor to those who might have qualified for managerial positions. Sixty per cent of every university graduating class found nothing to do; half of all men from sixteen to thirty years of age were permanently unemployed. Even the dole system was administered in a manner favorable to the older men.

It was the younger element also that felt most keenly the injustice and humiliation of the Versailles settlement. Whether their elders were responsible for the catastrophe or not, certainly the fault was not theirs. The Republic they knew as the child of defeat and the signator of the Carthaginian peace.

Of the failings of the old regime they were hardly aware. Whatever these might have been, the Republic offered little of positive value that had been lacking in the Empire. Naturally the impression became ever more general that the real revolution or national regeneration was still a thing of the future.

If the comparatively "prosperous" times of the late middle twenties had continued, the situation described above might have lasted almost indefinitely and perhaps some adjustment might even have been arrived at. But the catastrophic consequences of the world depression also brought the political situation to a climax. A country with an economic system so maladjusted as that of Germany was certain to be among those that could not hope to weather the tempest by the routine working of the regular government machine. In each of these states it was found imperative to endow the executive with extraordinary powers and to limit or adjourn the free operation of the democratic organs. In such countries as France, Great Britain, Belgium, and the United States such emergency measures were usually arrived at by some sort of political truce. In Germany the bitterness of party strife and the narrow margin of strength between the chief contending groups made such an arrangement inconceivable. Although everyone appreciated the need for united action, few would consider it in the light of cooperation and compromise with their political opponents. It might indeed have been foreseen that the country would not react in the same way as the older democracies and that the internal rivalries would only be intensified.

To carry on at all the Bruening government in 1930 felt

obliged to resort to that article in the constitution which, like practically all similar post-war documents, provided for emergency executive powers in case of danger to "public order and safety." As no such threat actually existed, this procedure could hardly be regarded as conforming to the spirit of the instrument and inevitably it served as a precedent for subsequent departures which are more difficult to justify. German democracy had thus ceased to function freely before Hitler and before von Papen, and had itself indicated the point of attack for those who meditated its overthrow.

The universal recognition of the need for greater executive authority had particular significance in Germany. It furnished grist to the mill of those who preached with Spengler that economic success could be assured only in a strong state, that in fact "the whole crushing depression was simply and purely the result of the decline of state power." Bismarck's political achievements and not private enterprise, said they, had inspired the great economic advance of imperial days. To German business magnates such sentiments were less disturbing than they would have been to most of their foreign brethren. Liberal capitalism of the Western European type had never really existed in Germany, where the industrial system was concentrated in a stiff framework of trusts and monopolies which the state helped to maintain and to whose aid it came in times of economic crisis. Such a crisis, one of unparalleled proportions, had now arrived, while the state was itself in such financial straits that it could not give much further help. The only way out for capital was a general reduction of wages, but so long as the prevailing political alignment endured, such a drastic downward revision was out of

the question. So the big business men were made to realize that the only way in which they could hope to rehabilitate themselves would be to secure a more direct control over the state. After the war they had come to terms with the workers at the expense of the middle class. They now conceived the possibility of reversing the process by forming an alliance with the latter. Such a course would have the added advantage of making it possible to dispense with socialist assistance in fighting the Communists, whose agitation had naturally increased in violence and popular appeal because of the general economic misery.

The first problem concerned the form which the proposed cooperation with the middle class might take. In the main the capitalists could afford to regard this question with indifference, for to them the thing that mattered was not so much the course to be traversed as the goal to be arrived at. They realized that in the modern industrialized state a certain amount of mass support is indispensable to the success of any movement. Therefore it was important that the road should be as wide as possible to allow for the most diverse types of company. Indeed there would be no particular harm in providing room even for some of the enemies of capitalism, if their anti-capitalist sentiments could be marshaled against "foreign" or "Jewish" capital.

In general the choice of roads was confined to two. If the old traditionalist authorities had not been so discredited by the war, the forces favoring the rehabilitation of the capitalist nation-state would preferably have rallied around them. Their first impulse was undoubtedly in this direction, but the experiences with Papen and Schleicher were such as to discour-

age any expectation of securing a broad basis of public support in this way.* There remained only one alternative—a popular dictatorship.

* * *

The classic concept of dictatorship implies the temporary suspension of the regular constitutional authorities of a country in a time of extreme danger. In a very real though strictly limited sense this is the character of the emergency powers conferred upon the executive branches of a number of democratic governments within recent years. During the past decade, however, dictatorship has in several notable instances been championed and established as a form of government that might and ought to endure. This furnishes us our chief explanation of why in democratic states both popular sentiment and the parliamentary branch of government showed such great reluctance to take what might turn out to be the first step in this direction; in almost every case it was only when the general emergency reached a sort of crisis that drastic action was finally taken. In such instances it might therefore be said that the example of triumphant dictatorship elsewhere has up to the present exercised an influence that is chiefly negative.

In Germany the hostile reaction against the emergence of dictatorship on the European horizon was from the first largely limited to those circles whose traditional ideology could admit of no compromise with this type of political innovation.

* From June, 1932, to January, 1933, the conservative ministries of Colonel von Papen and General von Schleicher ruled with the support of President Hindenburg. Though striving desperately to gain some measure of popular approval they were finally obliged to recognize their failure. Von Schleicher's resignation paved the way for Hitler.

Among other sections of the population the response was frequently sympathetic, increasing perceptibly in volume and enthusiasm with the passage of time. Of great significance of course is the fact that the two types of dictatorship which offered a constructive vision of a reordered society, the Bolshevik and the Fascist, concentrated their chief propagandist efforts in Germany. In each instance national political self-interest and the propagation of the faith went hand in hand. The Soviets for their part had accepted the challenge that Germany be made the battleground in the strife between themselves and the adherents of capitalism. In prophesying that the victory of communism in Central Europe would be but the preface to its triumph throughout the continent they no more than echoed what a whole school of statesmen from Winston Churchill on had been anxiously predicting. On this one point Germans of every party were also in vociferous agreement, though they naturally regarded the prospect with very different feelings. Their unhappy country seemed fated to become a prey to alien political philosophies and rival national interests. Its alliance or benevolent neutrality constituted the first essential for any advance on the part of the western democracies against the Soviets. To the Russians it was similarly indispensable as an outpost and first line of defense.

All in all Italian policy toward Germany was inspired considerably less by missionary zeal than by practical political calculations. It was stimulated in the main by the rising consciousness that Italy's interests lay primarily with those of the "revisionist" states. Finding it difficult to qualify as a first-rate military power, her weight in the European scale

could not outbalance that of her French rival except in combination with others. The vision of a revived "Triple Alliance" under the aegis of Italy was certainly sufficiently alluring; nor did it seem beyond the possibility of practical realization. In general Italian propaganda in Germany, however, was much more discreet than the corresponding efforts of Moscow, for its ultimate goal was less clearly defined and its immediate prospects infinitely less promising.

Nevertheless the response, though temporarily less extensive than that enjoyed by the Soviets, was both genuine and whole-hearted, for it rested upon forces and ideas that had long been active. Germany, it has been aptly said, is not a "country of improvisations." Those who are disposed to regard the Hitlerite dictatorship as inspired in the main by the example of Mussolini and Italy forget that the National Socialist program was conceived two years before the *Fascisti* marched on Rome. This misconception goes hand in hand with the tendency to confine the search for the origins of Hitlerism to the sequelae of the World War, which is to forget that Nietzsche and Houston Stewart Chamberlain ever lived and to interpret Spenglerism as a post-war phenomenon. The fact that the first draft of *The Decline of the West* was completed before the outbreak of the war is ignored or is not known at all. Yet it is of the utmost significance in illustrating the extent to which the philosophical foundations of National Socialism represent a reaction against the old order as well as against the ideological basis of the Weimar Republic. The glorification of the "will to power" as the driving force in human progress, the substitution of an élite of masterful men for aristocracy of birth and wealth, the revolt against modern

leveling and standardizing tendencies, the contempt for humanity as an "essential requirement for a profound knowledge of humanity," these are shared alike by Nietzsche and Spengler—and by Hitler! That Nietzsche was also a "good European" is no longer of significance. Neither does it matter that *The Decline of the West* gained so wide a public because it harmonized with the apocalyptic mood of a vanquished country. Its contemporary importance is to be found less in its supposed expression of hopelessness than in the implied appeal to renounce a civilization without a future, to participate in the building of a new and better culture, and to prepare for the approaching conflict for universal power. "The throwing of the dice for world-mastery," cries Spengler, "has just begun. They will be strong players who finish the game. Are there not to be Germans as well as others among them?" The age of nation-states is drawing to a close and the "age of world wars" upon which we have already embarked signifies the transition to the *imperium mundi*.

What has been said above must not be interpreted to mean that we have to deal with nothing more than the speculations, however significant and representative of contemporary forces, of a few philosophers. To begin with, the German Empire was not the creation of either spontaneous popular action or the conscious direction of a ruling house. It owed both its existence and its form to the gradually perfected work of a single supreme political genius. Consequently the constitution presented something of an anomaly in its provisions concerning the executive. While instituting a chancellorship cut to Bismarck's gigantic figure, a veritable species of dictatorship by the grace of the sovereign, it neglected to

provide any means of reducing this enormous load of power and responsibility in the inevitable advent of successors of less heroic proportions. Following the departure of Bismarck the German people had continuously before their eyes the spectacle of an office that no one else appeared big enough to fill. The cry for responsible leadership thus rose ever louder among them while they were still at the height of their prosperity. It was more genuine and universal than that which demanded self-government, which had never been part of the religion of the German people. It received no satisfaction from the role adopted by the young emperor, who, delight as he might in autocratic poses, was temperamentally unfitted to exercise a steady directive influence. After the crisis of nerves which he suffered in 1908 his participation in affairs was also considerably reduced.

During the war the need for political leadership became ever more pressing. Indeed the history of the Empire from 1914 to 1918 amply demonstrates how its foundations were endangered by the requirements of modern war, in which the military and economic mobilization of the masses demands the utmost utilization of national energies. These the old authoritarian state could only partially arouse. Its belated efforts to plumb the depths of popular feeling were unavailing, for it had never had experience in the technique of making its actions comprehensible to the masses. The emperor, inadequate to the strain of the protracted struggle, renounced all initiative and strove anxiously to avoid the responsibility of making decisions. To the all-absorbing military command finally passed the decisive voice in political concerns as well. When the victory it had promised failed to materialize and the

prospect of defeat became certainty, a disillusioned people formed the desperate hope of averting complete catastrophe by internal political alterations.

Here lies the true *raison d'être* of the Weimar Republic, whose cause was already half lost when it was forced to accept a peace the severity of which could hardly have been exceeded if it had been concluded by the former regime. The history of the years that followed seemed only to confirm the suspicion that the liberalized Germany had no more to hope from the application of the Treaty than it had gained in the settlement itself. To many a German the Republic was henceforth simply a part of the "swindle" of which the Armistice had been the climax and the Treaty the anticlimax.

Though the movement for dictatorship in Germany thus grew out of indigenous beginnings, the Russian and Italian examples could hardly fail to exercise a powerful stimulus. A nation so inclined to worship energy, so readily impressed by the gesture demonstrative of energy, was bound to gaze wistfully upon neighbors who could afford and dared to employ them in their domestic and foreign dealings. Discouraged by the absence of decisive action in home affairs and utterly weary of the eternal compulsion of treading softly in their foreign relations, Germans were fast arriving at a point where any expression of forcefulness promised at least a sense of relief. A fist banged on the table might cause more harm than good, but for the moment the supreme consideration would seem the emotional satisfaction to be derived therefrom. The gradual but nevertheless considerable improvement of Germany's international position did not offer sufficiently tangible results to be appreciated. And of course the

tardiness and reluctance of the concessions wrung from enemies placed upon the latter a heavy load of responsibility for the conviction among Germans that their position would continue to remain ignoble and intolerable, a situation to be righted only by force. A mere policy of "fulfillment of obligations" whose moral justification had never been recognized could never be popular, nor were its possibilities ever thoroughly understood. The notion of rapid, unfettered decision and unhesitating action was far more in harmony with the growing national impatience. An Alexander who could sever Gordian knots was assured a cordial reception in the hope that by some mysterious short-cut such an unencumbered dictatorial will would free Germany of her hated shackles. A contributing factor was the excessive anonymity of the republican regime, whose electoral system gave practically no opportunity for direct contact between voters and candidates. Few personalities stood out on the political horizon. This among a people whose propensity for hero-worship is as old as its history.

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The stage was thus set, the situation made to order for the appearance of a leader. A natural tendency is to yield to the temptation of describing the characteristics of the eventually successful candidate and to assume that they formed an essential part of his equipment. We fail to consider the possibility that quite another type of person might also have qualified; it is not inconceivable, for example, that the leader might have sprung from the proletariat or even from the aristocracy. It cannot be denied of course that a person with the background and experience of Adolf Hitler possessed enor-

mous advantages. As a bourgeois whose earliest manhood had been devoted to a fierce resistance against proletarianization, his response to the despairing appeal of the German middle class was instant and complete. On the other hand, his extensive association with the workers, inharmonious as much of it appears to have been, procured him so deep an understanding of mass psychology that he has been called its greatest contemporary master. Certainly those sections of *Mein Kampf* which treat of propaganda contain the most profound observations in the entire work. Whether Hitler hates and despises the workers, as his more bitter opponents assert, or whether he is entirely devoted to them, as many even of his critics will admit, is here immaterial. In either case his contempt for the intelligence and discernment of the masses is equally unqualified and lies at the root of his frank cynicism as a propagandist, in which capacity he consistently directs his appeal to the emotions and instincts, ever willing to sacrifice understanding for conviction.

At least as significant as his social origin and experience is the fact that Hitler is an Austrian. As a German of the dispersion he found it easy to assign to race a disproportionate share in the history of human development. (Witness another example in the most ardent of Nazi racist apostles, Alfred Rosenberg.) Sectional ties ceased to interest him once he had consecrated himself before the altar of Germanism. From this moment the only remaining interest in the home locality is found in the mission to conquer it for the greater fatherland. Only one supreme enthusiasm remains—that which envisions a glorified Reich. Since the old German state was distracted by conflicting loyalties, none such, no matter how much they

are in conformity with habit and tradition, are in future to be tolerated. This explains why Hitler could never have become a conservative patriot. In every nerve and fiber of his being he is a devotee of the new *radical* nationalism.

His experience as an Austrian also contributed much to the formation of his attitude toward modern liberalism. *Mein Kampf* again gives testimony in recording his impressions of the antics of the Austrian Reichsrat. The fact that his acquaintance with the parliamentary system was limited to the state which least of any in Europe could hope to make it workable did not restrain him from making the most sweeping generalizations. There is no reason to believe that he ever seriously considered their revision.

The intellectual and emotional equipment essential to a dictator must of course be innate, in the personality of the aspiring candidate. Here Adolf Hitler appeared to many to approach the Nietzschean concept of the daemonic superman driven by a terrific will to power, but free in every way from petty self-interest. A thrust at dictatorial power can take place either in the form of a *coup d'état* or by "constitutional means," i. e., by the conversion of the electorate. In considering the course to adopt, the would-be dictator must begin by taking stock of the forces at his disposal. If his assets, among which his own talents as organizer and oratorical spellbinder play a major role, are sufficient, he will inevitably prefer the latter alternative as more likely to disarm opposition and to assure a broader basis of power. When Hitler in 1930 announced his choice of this road, he was henceforth bound to confine himself to political agitation. It had already been said of him that he had "talked his movement into being"; he

now proved himself beyond a doubt the most effective orator and the hardest working politician in Europe. In German politics he represented the first great nationalist and popular agitator since Luther. A significant combination! For if some movement of national self-assertion was inevitable in Germany, it was equally inevitable that it should be popular in origin and demagogically led. However much the traditionalist element would have liked to assume the direction of such an agitation, the motives of conservative patriotism were too much suspect to win for it the necessary wide support. Lacking the hope for anything better and having hardly dared expect so much, the conservative type of nationalist was only too happy to behold the masses nationally aroused, insignificant as might be his own share in guiding the revival. A source of additional gratification was also discovered in the militaristic and authoritarian aspects of the movement. On the whole one can therefore say that the old rightist groups were more easily reconciled to the popular aspects of the national awakening than some who are commonly counted among the spiritual godparents of National Socialism.

Among the ranks of the latter we recognize the Spenglerians. To them the National Socialist dictatorship represents as yet only a semi-solution or transition. In its approach to power it has chosen a path that they see beset with all the ghosts of a dying age. By basing itself upon a mass ideology it has prolonged the life of something that it is imperative to overthrow. With the "Caesarism of the future" as envisioned by Spengler it differs in essential points, for this will never stoop to persuade, to attempt to overthrow city mobs by "strong words and weak arguments." The future Caesar will

no longer confuse the nation with the masses but take his stand on small, strong minorities and "conquer by force of arms." Least of all will he stoop to idealizing the workers and treating them as a privileged class. "So long as a dictatorship has 'social service' ambitions, asserts that it is there for the 'worker's' sake, courts favor in the streets, or is 'popular,' so long it remains an interim form." (*The Hour of Decision*, page 186.) Spengler would clearly repudiate the ideological embellishment of the movement, if for no other reason than that any ideology looks forward to the definitiveness of its achievements. He emphatically condemns the striving of contemporary dictatorships for a system of status; future Caesars must have a deeper sense of the "fleetingness of all phenomena."

These views of Spengler are not only interesting but they strike at one of the roots of the problem of the future of dictatorship in Germany, perhaps of dictatorship in general. It may be true that with Hitler the democratic age (though without democracy) has for the first time really made its entry into Germany, albeit in an exceedingly novel and unconventional form. Surely no previous regime, not even that of the Republic, has so ardently devoted itself to soliciting the approval of the masses and posing as the political incarnation of the German people. Like the Bonapartism of the nineteenth century its claim to power is founded on a popular mandate, however unwilling it may be to permit any popular initiative in its decisions. It has even gone the length of submitting the more important of the latter to public review. Siéyès' celebrated maxim, "Power from above, confidence from below," has at last found its supreme application. Even

the single-party system subscribes in all essentials to this principle.

For that very reason it meets with the disapproval of the Spenglerians, who also advance an additional objection. To Spengler the perfection of dictatorship is not that of a party but rather that of a man against all parties, and, most of all, above his own. "Every revolutionary movement reaches its goal with its vanguard of praetorians, who are henceforth of no use but merely dangerous. The real master is known by the manner in which he dismisses them, ruthlessly and without thanks, intent only on his goal, to reach which he must first pick his men." Thus the final and most difficult victories of the dictator would be those won over his own supporters. It is interesting to note that Spengler was writing more than a year before the events of June, 1934, which represent, it may be, the passing of the first hurdle on the course he mapped out. It is a road already traversed by Mussolini, but it should prove more difficult to a man who has made a particularly emphatic profession of loyalty and gratitude to his followers.

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Nowhere does the human propensity for oversimplification find freer play than in attempting to explain phenomena which, though we are obliged to recognize them as legitimate children of our time, we would much prefer to regard as monstrous and doomed to an early extinction. We avert our faces in protest and horror, half hoping that each backward glance will reveal the hated vision dissolving into mist and fancy. The historic validity of the episode, its order in the logic of events, we strain to minimize and even to ignore. We

would rather recognize it as the child of our sins if we can thereby convince ourselves of its inherently ephemeral character. In the case of the National Socialist dictatorship we pursue this logic by confining ourselves to a survey of those miseries suffered by the German people in the fourteen years before its advent. Hitler's victory we seek to interpret as the last defiant recourse of a despondent people, the sole remaining alternative to the even more desperate one of communism. But in viewing it thus, we disregard all indications of the real historic continuity of events in Germany, the fact that all the forces and ideas contributing to the formulation of National Socialist doctrine existed in some form before 1914. When Hitler exalts pre-war traditions and precedents, we straightway label him a ferocious reactionary; we conceive of much of his work as a simple return to imperial antecedents; whereas we should really regard it as a resumption (though at a marvelously accelerated pace) of the thread of development interrupted by the World War.

It is not entirely easy to fix upon those elements that function toward the permanence of dictatorship in Germany, for not all the factors that contributed to its establishment now operate for its perpetuation. Most important of all is the fact that the dictatorial feature has been inseparably bound up with the National Socialist movement, centering in a magnification of the personality of the leader so unparalleled that any disillusionment of the country concerning him might bring down the entire edifice. It therefore becomes possible to discount somewhat Spengler's warning concerning the "praetorians," most of whom are well aware that they must stand or fall with their chief. Another factor making for self-perpetua-

tion is the system of status, by which the twentieth century type of dictatorship, once securely established, essays to reinforce the normal power of inertia.

One cannot refrain from emphasizing again the degree to which the vitality of the Hitlerite regime is derived from the fact that so many German precedents are in conformity with the pattern of dictatorship. Certainly no other European country could have shown an equal facility in adapting itself to the totalitarian state. Even the Republic had rivaled Fascists and Soviets in its efforts to tie up organized private activities with the state apparatus. Old Prussian habits and traditions here found a common ground with socialism, which equally envisaged the merging of the individual in organized society. Under the Nazis the state, already omnipresent, had little difficulty in taking the remaining steps by which it became omnipotent.

It is from this harmonization of old and new forces that the National Socialist dictatorship derives its chief strength and principal justification. It thereby deprives its rivals of their best thunder while it attacks their more vulnerable points. The traditional Prussian notion of expert public service *is exalted*, but room is provided for the republican concept of "*freedom for the talents*." Socialist theories are freely *appropriated*, while those ideals that put a strain upon human nature, such as international brotherhood, are ignored or ridiculed.

Even if in the final analysis this may all boil down to an extreme expression of the bourgeois policy of combating communism by means of social measures and nationalist propaganda, even though we may be dealing with nothing

more than the latest expedient of the old ruling classes in their efforts to rehabilitate themselves, there remains as a forecast of the future, if we are forecasting the future at all, the single, solitary figure of the leader. Try as we may, we cannot repudiate him as an upstart. He is the man of the new age, the legitimate son of his time. He is much more than a symbol, more than an instrument of class interests. If he can continue to subordinate his party and if he finds the courage, whenever necessary, to lead the retreat from ideologies, he may yet approximate the Spenglerian ideal of ruling alone, the veritable lord of his country. Ultimately his fate will of course depend upon his ability to deal successfully with the foreign and domestic difficulties of his country. The time must come when the German people will no longer be content with the continuous and reckless drawing of bills upon the future. Each renewal may entail a proportionate loss of confidence unless there is also some payment on account.



COMMUNIST AND FASCIST DICTATORSHIP
A COMPARATIVE STUDY
By HANS KOHN

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COMMUNIST AND FASCIST DICTATORSHIP

A COMPARATIVE STUDY

DICTATORSHIPS as they developed after the World War in Russia, Italy, and Germany have little in common with traditional forms of despotism and autocracy. Modern dictators exercise a more unlimited power, covering much wider fields of social and personal life, than despots of former ages ever did. But the authority of the despots of old sprang from an entirely different source, and the system of life they represented was based upon an entirely different intellectual and social structure. Their authority and their power were derived from theocratic traditions or from the support of the army, particularly of the generals and officers. In so far as dictatorships were not personal ventures of men of genius or of seekers after power and fortune, they represented the vested interests of castes and classes that had long been in power and in many cases were in decay.

These traditional dictatorships continued even into our own time. The despotic rules of King Alexander in Yugoslavia and of General Primo de Rivera in Spain may serve as examples. Primo de Rivera, who wished to imitate the contemporary dictatorship of Mussolini and who was animated by a sincere desire for modernization, failed partly, perhaps, because he was a lesser personality, but more because his dictatorship depended upon such traditional supports as the

church, the army, the monarchy. He belonged by virtue of his birth and his whole career to the ruling classes. Benito Mussolini, on the other hand, is the son of a village blacksmith of internationalist revolutionary and anti-religious opinions; and young Mussolini was an organizer of working class movements and a revolutionary journalist. In assuming the dictatorship he was helped by king, church, army, and big business, which saw in Mussolini a weapon against socialism, but he did not rely solely or even mainly upon them but upon a private army of his own, created by him, and directed—at least ostensibly and as many of his followers sincerely believed—against the existing order. A part of the Italian intelligentsia, prepared by the imperialistic nationalism preceding the Tripolitan War and by the irrationalism of *idealismo attuale*, joined Mussolini later and gave his actions the background of a new and messianic “philosophy” of life. Without such a philosophy and without the new propaganda technique for regimenting mass opinion modern dictatorships are impossible. Primo de Rivera enjoyed neither the backing of the intelligentsia nor that of the enthusiastic youth of a rising lower middle class. After having been a dictator for some time he created the *Unión Patriótica* to work “for the realization of ethical ideals in public life” as King Alexander created a party to work for Yugoslavian unity after having proclaimed himself an autocratic ruler. Both these parties and similar ones, such as the Shaab Party supporting the dictatorship of Ismail Sedky Pasha and King Fuad in Egypt, were artificial, post factum creations, uninspired and uninspiring, originating solely from above and without the participation of the masses.

Contemporary dictatorships are led by men who do not

belong to the ruling classes and who are proud of the fact. Adolf Hitler, whose father had been the son of a poor little cottier (*eines armen kleinen Häuslers*) did not dress in the uniform of a general; he remained *der Gefreite des Weltkrieges*, the private soldier who had fought the battle of the common man in the trenches of the war. The followers of the leaders belong to rising classes—to the lower middle classes and the wealthier peasantry in Italy and Germany, to the industrial proletariat and the poor rustics in Russia. In the beginning there is always an appeal to their conscious hostility against the ruling classes.

The movements centering around Mussolini and Hitler were, to begin with, emotional and confused uprisings, stimulated by propaganda, of the lower classes and of youth groups of the intelligentsia against "capitalism," the traditional aristocratic orders, and the powers of big business. These movements brought a new and youthful personnel into part of the administration and replaced many of the old officeholders in the central and local governments with men from groups and classes that had hitherto generally been excluded from such positions.

True, Mussolini and Hitler have been aided by the financial help of industrialists and big landowners; they have been protected by members of the old aristocracy. They have made their peace by compromise and concessions with the vested interests. They have made use of the established powers, and they have allowed themselves and their movements to be used by them. But it has been often a utilitarian cooperation, full of distrust and misgivings on both sides. There was a common enemy, internationalism and "Marxism," but no common plat-

form. It is an oversimplification to interpret Fascism only from the economic standpoint, as the last stage of decaying monopoly-capitalism.

The aim of dictators like Mussolini and Hitler was not social revolution but personal power through a more powerful integration of the nation, and the means by which they hoped to achieve this was to fuse all classes into a disciplined whole, to make the nation the supreme loyalty of every man, the foundation of his life, the mainspring of his personal and social actions. The people must become a docile and pliable instrument in the hands of the dictator if he was to realize his twofold aims, the maintenance of his own power and the aggrandizement of his nation. Since the older ruling classes possessed the experience and training valuable for the conduct of foreign affairs, for the prestige of the army, and for the efficiency of the complicated system of modern economic life, Mussolini and Hitler had to accept them and to keep them in at least a part of the key positions of the nation. To this end they sacrificed whatever existed of the social aspirations of their followers. Mussolini could do it less dramatically, for the social aspirations of his followers did not form an important part of their emotional make-up. Hitler did it most dramatically by his action of June 30, 1934, though the tension between the old ruling class and the aspirations of the lower classes originally represented by Fascism lasted on in Germany and were apparently not appeased by the meeting in the Opera House in Berlin on January 3, 1935. The National Socialist German Working Men's Party, composed largely of members of the lower middle class and the peasantry, considered itself the sole carrier of the political will of the state

and called all the opposition emanating from the upper and educated classes "reactionary."

The old type of despot could not exist in the modern world, for the French Revolution brought in its train democracy as a state of mind and made the masses conscious of their right to participate in the direction of their country's fate. Contemporary dictatorships are post-democratic movements. In his article on the "Political and Social Doctrine of Fascism," contributed to the *Enciclopedia Italiana* in 1932, Mussolini declares that the Fascist state, "which reposes upon the support of millions of individuals who recognize its authority, are continually conscious of its power, and are ready at once to serve it, is not the old tyrannical state of the medieval lord nor has it anything in common with the absolute governments either before or after 1789." The Fascist state reposes "upon broad and popular support." Pre-democratic despots cared little even in public for the support of the masses, which were not yet prepared to demand political rights.

Oswald Spengler has protested vehemently against the post-democratic character of German National Socialism, against its appeal to the masses and its wish to repose upon the support of the masses. In his *Jahre der Entscheidung*, the first part of which appeared in 1933, he expresses his desire for a return to the real despotism of the eighteenth century, to the relationship between the strong leader and the masses as it existed before the French Revolution. Spengler represents the upper classes, their disdain of the masses, their individual intellectualism. He accuses Fascism of merely continuing the democratic mass movements of the nineteenth century, of opposing communism by the same methods upon which com-

munism depends. The despot of the future whom Spengler wishes to come is Nietzsche's superman endowed with the Caesarism of a Renaissance *condottiere* or of Napoleon. He would not be the leader of Fascism. "Auch der Faschismus ist ein Uebergang. Er hat sich von der städtischen Masse her entwickelt als Massenpartei mit lärmender Agitation und Massenreden." Spengler detests popularity and the desire for popularity. He is a strict individualist. All despots are like him individualists but without his philosophical background. Fascism, however, is anti-individualistic.

Capitalism is the form of economic organization that prevails in an age of individualism. Its aim is the free and unfettered pursuit of individual happiness. The liberal nationalism that accompanied the rise and spread of capitalism was an effort to balance and to harmonize the individualism that was the fruit of eighteenth century enlightenment with the new group consciousness of the masses integrated into the nation. In this period of liberal nationalism the state declared the aim of national policy to be the happiness and welfare of the individual citizen. Only in the event of war was the individual and his happiness completely subordinated to the interests of the nation-state, which might even demand the sacrifice of life from its citizens. But war was regarded as an accident in political life, an abnormal manifestation of forces hostile to the life and progress not only of the individual but of the nation.

Fascism, on the other hand, represents a form of nationalism in which the claims and happiness of the individual are entirely subordinated to national prosperity and even more to national aspirations for greatness. War, with its complete

subordination of the individual to the state, now becomes a part, and a very important part, of the normal history of the nation. The nation, transcending the brief limits of individual life, represents the true and permanent foundation of the life of the individuals, who now become cells in the organic body of the state. In discussing the doctrine of Fascism Mussolini points out that its first article of faith is the glorification of war. "Above all, Fascism believes neither in the possibility nor the utility of perpetual peace. War alone brings up to its highest tension all human energy and puts the stamp of nobility upon the peoples who have the courage to meet it." The leading political philosopher of German National Socialism, Carl Schmitt, declares in his *Der Begriff des Politischen*, that war is the ever present supposition of the political attitude of man.

To an unprecedented extent contemporary dictatorships seek mass support and try to influence the masses and to arouse their enthusiasms. Modern methods of appeal to the imagination have been elaborated. Movement, color, and sound, handled with the consummate skill of the contemporary artist and technician, have been put into the service of propaganda. In discussing propaganda and organization in *Mein Kampf*, Hitler says, "Führen heisst: Massen bewegen können." In this respect Fascism is a continuation of "the stupid nineteenth century," of its sense for mass movements and their dynamic quality, its love of quantity, noise, and acceleration, its desire for gigantic size and stupendous manifestations of power. Though Fascist dictatorships are a new phenomenon in history and in many respects the very antithesis of the French Revolution and the nineteenth century,

they continue and even carry further three of the most important elements of the French Revolution—its secularism, its nationalism, and its mass democracy, all three of which are closely related in ideological origin.

Fascism has rejected all claims of theocracy and religion. For reasons of political expediency it may conclude a truce or an alliance with organized religion and may concede it a place within the state, but only under the strict supervision of the state. Nationalism, not religion, is the living faith; the national state is absolute, in no way subordinated to the *civitas Dei* or preparing for it, and the powers of the constitution are represented as emanating from the will of the nation. The popular sovereignty of the nation is theoretically maintained in the plebiscites, to which Fascism resorts in order to cloak important decisions of its leaders with a form of popular sanction. Thus the authoritarian corporate Christian state of Austria, although imitating some of the forms and ideas of Italian Fascism, is not a Fascist state. In its new constitution of May 1, 1934, it declares itself to be a Christian German federal state in the name of Almighty God, "from whom all laws emanate." The movement led by Engelbert Dollfus represented the traditions of the Catholic Habsburg monarchy. But Mussolini and Hitler disregarded church and monarchy; in their rise to power they relied on purely nationalistic symbols and on appeals awakening in the masses the memory of periods antedating church and monarchy, of the old Roman Empire, and of the martial virtues of pagan Teutons. To apply the term Fascism to those traditional dictatorships and autocracies that are based on the protection of feudal and theocratic or of capitalistic interests is to obscure

the real issues involved in the new forms of contemporary dictatorship.

The contemporary dictatorships that can be characterized as mass movements with a distinctive philosophy are the Fascist dictatorships in Italy and Germany and the Communist dictatorship in the Soviet Union. Fascism mobilizes the lower middle classes, but it does not identify itself ideologically or politically with their rise. It is nationalistic and militaristic; its totalitarian state aims at the complete integration of all the individuals of a race or a nation into a community which, conscious of its disciplined strength and superiority, regards the expansion of the nation as an essential manifestation of vitality, and regards preparedness for war, military education, and the willing acceptance of the risks that war implies as the noble way of life. It believes in the "immutable, beneficial, and fruitful inequality of mankind," of races and nations.

Communism mobilizes the proletariat and identifies itself ideologically and politically with its rise. It is supra-national and cosmopolitan; it believes in the equality of mankind, of races and nations; it aims or professes to aim at the creation of a society of free individuals living in security and peaceful cooperation.

The two types of dictatorship are entirely opposite as regards their aims and their philosophy of life. They are similar (and different from all other forms of dictatorship) in claiming absoluteness for their philosophy and in their effort to indoctrinate the masses and the youth with the new way of life.

To a certain extent both Communism and Fascism have influenced the aims and methods of most of the dictatorships and many of the political movements that have developed since the World War. Certain hybrid forms have been developed, as in Mexico or in Austria. But it would be a mistake to consider the dictatorship of parties and men in Mexico as Communistic or those in Austria and Poland as Fascist.

The nearest approach to Fascism outside Europe is to be found in the pseudo-Fascist movements in Japan. The Japanese have perhaps developed an even greater consciousness of their nationality and its superiority than have European nations under the influence of the Old Testament idea of the chosen people. The emperors of Japan descend, according to Japanese official history, in unbroken line from the first human emperor, whose name was Divine War Spirit and who was himself the fifth in direct line of descent from the Heaven Shining Goddess. The intense religious nationalism of the Japanese, their sense of cohesion and of loyalty to the emperor, their faith in the superiority of their race and in its mission was threatened in its undisputed validity by the introduction of European secular rationalism and by the precipitate industrial revolution, destroying traditional ties and customs. Fascist societies formed after the World War protested strongly against the foreign influence and the alleged corruption and luxury resulting from it. Evoking an ardent patriotism and the military spirit, they appealed to the people to restore to Japan its ancient simplicity of life and the virtues of self-discipline and loyalty embodied in the bushido, the code of honor of the warrior. The emotional unrest found expression in declamations of lofty morality against the cor-

ruption of officials and parliaments and against the luxury and influence of plutocracy. Hand in hand with it went the social unrest caused by the grave agrarian crisis and the misery among the lower middle classes, from which the junior officers of the army were recruited. The Fascist movement in Japan, led by these officers, had therefore many elements of true Fascism: a semi-religious nationalism, glorification of the past and insistence upon the mission of a chosen race, faith in the military virtues and in war, and the desire for the social rise of the lower middle classes and the peasantry. But, unlike Fascism in Germany and in Italy, the movement was too strongly bound to the theocratic loyalties of the past—monarchy and church, both of which centered in Japan in the emperor. That is why in Japan the Fascist drive for power, which culminated in the great plot of May 15, 1932, prepared by the Blood Brotherhood League and by the School of Love for the Native Soil, failed. The old ruling classes proved themselves too strong, as they were necessarily included in the loyalty to the emperor. Prince Saionji, the last of the Elder Statesmen, advised the emperor to form a coalition cabinet. Parliamentary life and the constitution were maintained, the influence of big business combined with that of the higher army and navy command, and political tension relaxed greatly.

Fascist dictatorships are founded on three principles: the state, authority, and the leader. All three are believed to be permanent, since they are held to correspond to unalterable elements in human nature. Dictatorship is therefore an essential part of Fascism. Fascism with its glorification of the nation-state and of the natural inequality of men is unthink-

able without a strong state and a strong leader. Communist dictatorship, on the other hand, is in theory a transitory phenomenon. Its professed aim is the realization of the absolute democracy of the Communist society. Communism means the abolition of the state, the establishment of a world-wide community of free individuals, free not only in the political sense as outlined by the French Revolution and by the Declaration of the Rights of Man but also in the new social sense of freedom from economic exploitation. Communism, which in its optimism believes in the goodness and the perfectibility of human nature, hopes for a society without authoritarian leadership. The messianic expectation of Fascism reposes on the charisma of the individual leader, the superman who by mystic identification embodies and represents the nation; the messianic expectation of Communism reposes on faith in a system of social philosophy and in an interpretation of history of which the leader becomes an exponent and an agent. The dictatorship of Fascism is charismatic, nationalistic, and permanent; the dictatorship of Communism is rational, international, and temporary.

Charismatic dictatorships work upon emotions that are bound up with the particular feelings and modes of thought and the historical memories of a nation. Rational dictatorships appeal to reason to master by study and logical understanding the laws underlying the process of history. This method and the results are of universal applicability. Fascism is intrinsically bound up with the past, and it regards man as unavoidably determined by the past. Communism is concerned entirely with the future, to which it sacrifices not only the past but even the present. Both types of dictatorship are

ruthless and without regard for the happiness and freedom of the present individual. His concrete rights here and now must yield to the abstract claims of a future society. Fascism holds this future society to be the nation. But the nation is not only a future society, it already exists; its goal of perfection is never reached, it is a forever uncompleted process, and therefore the individual must forever cede to the nation. Communism, however, believes in the future emergence of the free and happy individual. Its future society is professedly one in which there are no classes, states, or nations. Only within the limits of humanity will the individual be free. An undivided and peaceful humanity does not exist now because the free individual does not exist. Both are to be created. If the Communist interpretation of history is right and if Communist dictatorship is successful in achieving its aim, a new man and a new society would be created. In that way it would continue the work of the French Revolution, which in bringing about the rise of the third estate ushered in not only for France but for mankind an age of political democracy and of nationalism. The Russian Revolution, a social revolution representing the rise of the fourth estate, would usher in not only for Russia but for mankind an age of social democracy and internationalism.

Up to the present, history shows us only very imperfect realizations of ideals and tendencies. After the French Revolution man and society certainly did not correspond entirely to the image that had inspired the revolutionaries, but nevertheless the revolution has proved a great force, directing the movements of history. Communist dictatorship is a more systematic and coordinated effort than the French Revolution.

Herein it is clearly distinguished from the more ephemeral dictatorships of the period before the new age of democracy and rational organization. But at the same time it claims "scientifically" the possibility of a perfect realization of its ideals. It assumes the absolute certainty and confidence of religious or pseudo-religious eschatology. It perpetuates the enthusiasm which, otherwise, is characteristic only of the first months or years of a revolution. It combines a completely secularized organization and pragmatic experimentation, which belong distinctly to the period after the French Revolution, with the absoluteness, unknown to the nineteenth century, of a faith.

In the French Revolution the two ideals of nationalism and of liberalism found their first powerful modern expression. The history of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to the close of the World War represents the effort at harmonizing those two categories of political thought, their conflict and their compromise. After the World War the Fascist and Communist dictatorships tried to impose in an absolute form one of those two trends. Fascism accepts nationalism, but it repudiates all the other ideals of the French Revolution—the freedom and dignity of the individual, the natural rights of man, the belief that man can be trusted and that therefore every man must participate in the government of his country, the hope for a peaceful and fraternal cohabitation of all nations on earth. Those ideals, which we may call liberalism, are more nearly approximated by the Communist ideology.

The Soviet Union intensifies and spreads tendencies developed by the French and the contemporary industrial revolution. The Communist dictatorship is an organized, planned

effort to transform the backward and agrarian Russian Empire with its many primitive nationalities into a modern industrial and urban country. Joseph Stalin, in his report to the seventeenth All Union Communist Party Congress in Moscow in January, 1934, has pointed out that the U. S. S. R. "has become radically transformed; it has discarded the features of backwardness and medievalism. From an agrarian country it has become transformed into an industrial country. From a land of small individual agriculture it has become a land of collective, large-scale mechanized agriculture. From an ignorant, illiterate, and uncultured country it has become—or rather it is becoming—a literate and cultured country covered with a network of higher, middle, and elementary schools operating in the languages of the nationalities of the U. S. S. R."

In this way Communist dictatorship wishes to extend the industrialization, urbanization, and popular education of nineteenth century Western Europe to regions and races previously untouched by them and so far may serve as an example to similar tendencies in the backward countries of the Near and Far East and of Latin America. It has influenced profoundly the dictatorship of Mustafa Kemal in Turkey. Although his dictatorship and his Republican People's Party are deeply nationalistic, they are not Fascist. His aim is to bring the nineteenth century, regarded by the Fascists as stupid and unheroical, to its consummation and, as in the Soviet Union, to speed up the traditional tempo of Oriental life in agrarian and backward communities to the rhythm of modern industrial efficiency. In the precipitate and thorough breaking up of old traditions and of medievalism the Turkish

dictatorship can be compared only to the Soviet regime. It is imbued with the spirit of secularism and of liberalism, and it recognizes formally the dignity and necessity of parliamentarism and democracy, to which the people must be educated through a dictatorship that emphasizes and scrupulously guards all the traditional external forms of parliamentary democracy. The constitution of the Turkish Republic bears witness to it, and the first article of the statute of the Republican People's Party reads: "The goal of the party is government by the people and for the people, together with the elevation of Turkey to the status of a modern state." Other articles demand complete separation of religion and politics, social reorganization on the basis of modern civilization and the empirical and positive sciences, equal rights, without exception, for all citizens, the abolition of all privileges, equal rights for women, and cultural efforts for popular education. According to the letter of the constitution, which does not represent the reality but the goal and the tendency, the representatives of the people, elected in a democratic way, are invested with absolute power. Mustafa Kemal, while employing the methods of contemporary dictatorship, aims at a synthesis of nationalism and liberalism as represented by the progressive states in nineteenth century Europe.

Soviet dictatorship wishes to realize a socialism which, according to Joseph Stalin, "can only be built up on the basis of a rapid growth of the productive forces of society, on the basis of an abundance of products and goods, on the basis of a well-to-do standard of living for the toilers, and on the basis of the rapid growth of culture. For socialism, Marxian socialism, means not the cutting down of personal requirements

but their universal expansion; not the restriction or the abstention from satisfying these requirements but the all-sided and full satisfaction of all the requirements of culturally developed working people." The full satisfaction of individual needs, rights, and liberties, which seems impossible, according to Communism, in a capitalistic society, will be secured in the "socialist society" which the Communist dictatorship professedly wishes to create. This future society is represented as a true democracy with a truly free and active participation of the masses in the government of the country instead of the "crippled democracy" and "pseudo-parliamentarism" which alone, according to Communism, are possible in a capitalistic country. All the achievements of liberalism, freedom of conscience and thought, of expression and association, equality of all individuals without distinction of race or descent and complete equality of the sexes, equal opportunity for everybody and equal access to the sources of knowledge and science, can, according to Communism, be secured only in the future socialist society. The constitutions of the Soviet Republics that are members of the U. S. S. R. contain all these natural liberal rights of the individual in their first chapters. Whereas the penal law of Fascist states returns to pre-liberal notions, the penal code of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic continues the liberal efforts of the nineteenth century and crowns them by defining crimes as socially dangerous acts against which society must apply measures of social defense "to prevent the commission of further crimes and to adapt the offenders to the conditions of the community life" of society. "Measures of social defense shall not have as their object the infliction of physical suffering or personal humiliation. The

question of retaliation or punishment does not arise." In contrast with Fascism the principles of humanitarianism as developed in the age of rationalism and enlightenment are here accepted in theory, and not ridiculed.

The Communist dictatorship contends that it and it alone educates the working masses for an intelligent and active conduct of their affairs by the Soviet system. The guiding grip of the dictatorship on the expression of public opinion seems to be lessened with the progressive realization of the educational aim of the dictatorship. The "liberalization" of the methods of election to the Soviets as adopted by the All Union Soviet Congress at the beginning of 1935 seems to point in that direction. Communism professes to aim, with the anti-liberal and anti-democratic methods of contemporary dictatorship, at the realization of complete democracy and the consummation of liberalism. It is logically in a less fortunate position than is Fascism, in which means and ends agree. Fascism can claim that dictatorship is an essential element of its doctrine and therefore the justified means to achieve an end perfectly in harmony with the means. Communism regards dictatorship only as the necessity of a transitional period; for it the question remains open how far the way followed will influence the end pursued.

THE PROSPECTS FOR DEMOCRACY

By DENIS W. BROGAN

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THE PROSPECTS FOR DEMOCRACY

A CENTURY ago appeared the most famous and most remarkable book ever written about the United States, Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*. The thesis of this study, written under the influence of the triumph of Jacksonian democracy in America and of the final collapse of monarchy by divine right in France, is, briefly, that democracy is inevitable, that the psychological basis for governments not based on popular choice is increasingly lacking, that at some time, which may be delayed but cannot be far distant, democracy will triumph in Europe, as it already has triumphed in America. Tocqueville was too much of an aristocrat, by blood and by temperament, wholly to approve of this tendency; he had an acute sense of the dangers of majority rule; but he was sure, nevertheless, that the future lay with democracy.

We, a hundred years later, find so assured a confidence in the future startling, such a faith a cause for wonder or for admiration. In the years that have followed the war that was to "make the world safe for democracy," democracy has had to fight a series of desperate battles for survival, and in many if not all of them democracy has gone down to humiliating defeat. When President Wilson's words were ringing round the world, Mr. Chesterton remarked that the world would never be made safe for democracy, for "it is a dangerous trade," but neither he nor any other observer could have foreseen in 1918 how dangerous that trade was to be.

The system of government which seemed destined to conquer the world and which reached the height of its formal triumphs just after the war with the collapse of the last European monarchies by divine right and the formal if not substantial acceptance of democratic claims and institutions in Japan, in Afghanistan, all over the world, seems now doomed to retreat. It bids fair to be eclipsed by new principles of government which, however opposed they may be to each other, have this in common, that they deny with heat and passion any reverence for democratic premises or practices. Rome and Moscow combine to "trample on the rotting corpse of liberty," to despise the "petty-bourgeois liberalism" of the nineteenth century. The present and the future seem to many to lie with what the nineteenth century would have called tyranny. The defenders of democracy, the thinkers and writers who still believe in its merits, are in danger of suffering the fate of Aristotle, who kept his eyes fixedly on the city-state at a time when that form of government was being reduced to a shadow by the rise of Alexander's world empire. And the practical politicians who still cling to democratic institutions are in danger of suffering the fate of Demosthenes and Cicero, of defending, with words, institutions already condemned by the movement of history. Democracy may have nothing before it but another Chaeronea, another Philippi, and in a generation or so its last defenders may have only the pathetic interest that attaches to those men who threw themselves in the way of the nascent Roman Empire; the ideas and institutions they clung to may, by then, be but shadows of great names.

I think I have not painted democracy in darker colors than those in which many of its despondent friends and exult-

ant enemies see it. It is, then, to go against the tide to affirm a belief in the fundamental principles of democracy, or perhaps it would be juster to say in its fundamental *attitude* to the problem of government. What do I take that attitude to be? Less one of faith than of doubt, for democracy seems to me to live less by what it believes in than by what it doubts, less by its confidence in the many than by its doubts of the few. The democratic attitude is to be found in Lincoln's creed, "No man is good enough to be another man's master"; in the piece of proverbial wisdom attributed, perhaps with a slight sense of irony, to Napoleon, "There is one who is wiser than any of us, and that is everybody."

The democrat is skeptic both of the wisdom and of the probity of any body of rulers not answerable, fairly obviously and at not too long intervals, to the ruled. Power that is uncontrolled or is checked only by conscience, by a sense of the obligations of office, is a dangerous gift to make to any man, as that pessimistic but acute psychologist, Saint Augustine, saw. To accept power may be a duty, but acceptance of it as a duty does not diminish its dangers. Before the ruler, openly and in subtly hidden forms, will be the constant temptation to prefer his own private interests or private ideals to those of the community, a temptation so powerful that even the strongest and most upright souls will succumb to it, not knowing what they do. Saint Louis will pursue his private sanctification and leave his kingdom of France to die on a futile crusade; Marcus Aurelius will let his paternal feeling overcome his judgment and make his son his heir, although the rule of Commodus mean tyranny and civil war. Power corrupts; it is a food too strong for the most robust stomachs. Auto-intoxi-

cation is a danger to be guarded against in the interest of the ruler as well as of the ruled.

This skepticism was marked in all the great democratic teachers of the revolutionary age in which our modern world was born. Jefferson had no patience with the aristocratic claims of his political enemies, the Federalists, who styled themselves "the good, the wise, and the rich." He was sure that they would be good, to themselves; that they would be wise, for themselves; and that, above all, they would aim at staying rich and getting richer. Bentham and his disciples, the English Utilitarians, were never tired of emphasizing the part played by "sinister interests" in the opposition to reform: the sinister interest of the lawyers in a legal system unintelligible and irrational, whose labyrinths could be followed only with the aid of expensive guides; the sinister interest of the aristocracy in a system of government that provided sinecures for them. We may laugh at the excessively simple psychology of the Benthamites. They greatly underrated the powers of self-deception with which the human mind is gifted. Comparatively few men or women have the candor of the Irish peer who rejoiced that he had a country to sell. Nevertheless the Benthamites did get hold of one end of the political stick; they saw that advocacy of a particular course gains greatly in force and conviction if the change adds to the material or spiritual well-being of the person advocating it; that in all innocence of heart the reformer may propose and the conservative oppose change for motives that have a private reference, often not very obscure. With this point of view Jefferson and Bentham, although their formal approach was very different, were in agreement. They believed that a government would look

after those who controlled it, that fine words of trusteeship, of rule for the people, and so on, were fine words that buttered no parsnips, that a form of government that owed responsibility only to a small class would, in the long run, sacrifice the interests of the whole, or of the majority, to the interests of that class.

“Or of the majority,” there’s the rub. Why should the interests of a majority be preferred to those of a minority? May not the majority be composed of brutes and the minority of saints or sages? What reason have we to expect that wisdom, goodness, foresight, will result from the vulgar arithmetical practice of counting heads? None, but we have no reason to expect the contrary either. All attempts to identify moral or intellectual excellence with any group meet palpable contradictions between the social theory and the social fact. Even Aristotle—whose theory of natural slaves seems to me much more convincing than that of those moderately acute thinkers, the eugenists—even Aristotle had to admit that there were slaves who had the souls of freemen, and freemen who had the souls of slaves. At best the identification of moral worth or intellectual capacity with existing social classes will be only approximately accurate, and even then there will be a tendency to make of certain assumed stigmata of social difference not mere conventional marks but real criteria. A naïve English snob will be startled to be told that a man who drops his h’s may have as much to contribute to the state as the man who drops his g’s. The attempts of disciples of that modern version of phrenology, political anthropology, to make certain physical marks the indexes of political character rarely get a run for their money. It would be a bold man who dared

assert in Germany these days that no one should rule the country who was not blond and long-headed! In fact, Nordic is as Nordic does; and there are few conventions of conduct that cannot be inverted. In Russia, I believe, "she is a perfect lady" is now a term of reproach!

The democratic doctrine of equality, then, asserts not that all men are identical but that the marks of superiority setting one man off from another are so difficult to discern, so little likely to be reducible to a law, that better results are obtained by concentrating on the identity of men than on the differences among them. Men are more alike than different, and the differences that do exist are often the result of environment. The declaration that it is self-evident that "all men are created equal" is near enough the truth for the statesman if not for the philosopher.

It is true that these pragmatic justifications of democracy tended to be hidden by more metaphysical doctrines, that the early democrats devoted a great deal of attention to answering the question, By what authority do the rulers of the state command this or that? In its own time this interest in the legitimate basis of authority was reasonable enough. Against the government by divine right of kings or of custom, the government based on a proprietorial view of the relation between ruler and ruled, it was necessary to assert that "all governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed." It is still necessary to assert it. He who rules by right of machine gun and big stick can ask for obedience with a fair probability that his request will be heard, but when he asks to be obeyed because it is his right, when he talks of the duty of obedience, he enters on a domain in which he is not,

as a rule, at home—and one may ask, why should he be obeyed? All dictators, as I hope to show, spend a good deal of time trying to give an answer to that question!

What I have set out makes no pretense of being even an outline sketch of the case for democracy. It omits, for instance, the powerful experience of the generations that founded our modern democratic polities, the powerful experience of other systems of government. It was not without experience that that aristocratic believer in popular government, Count Cavour, said that the "worst chamber was better than the best antechamber," and Jefferson, Rousseau, Bentham were all familiar with governments that had no reason to cater to that demagogic instinct which, we are told, is the ruin of democratic government. I have merely attempted to suggest some of the practical difficulties in the way of establishing a government which is *not* based on popular choice and which finds it harder and harder to obtain that matter-of-fact acceptance of what is, an attitude that was the strength of the old governments of the old regime before the American and French revolutions destroyed the foundations of such venerable political structures as the Holy Roman Empire, the Republic of Venice, and many old but less antique forms of state. "Men are we, and must grieve when even the shade of that which once was great is passed away," but the days of "whatever is, is best" are gone.

The reasonableness of the founders of democracy was not always imitated by their successors. Both Jefferson and Rousseau were far from being far-fetched idealists. Jefferson was far too much the hundred per cent American to believe that the institutions that were fitted for the American farmer—

who was, in his opinion, the best raw material for a commonwealth in the world—were suited to countries whose inhabitants had not the good fortune to be Virginians, or even New Englanders. Rousseau had strong views as to the best form of government, but he did not believe that the political possibilities of Poland were those of the Canton of Geneva. Neither was ready to let the better be an enemy of the good. Their disciples were not always so prudent. In governmental matters the emphasis came more and more to be on the *rightness* of governmental forms rather than on their efficiency. I am not using *efficiency* in a question-begging fashion. By *efficiency* I mean simply the aid that a government can give to "the pursuit of happiness," to that "greatest good of the greatest number" which, in America and in England, were made fairly plain criteria of the efficiency of government. Rightness has its place in government; the legitimacy of government is not an irrelevant question at any time; but it is not the only question. There was during the nineteenth century a tendency to treat it as if it were the only question, to rest content with the creation of democratic forms of government and to take little or no heed of the indispensable duties of all governments. Democratic leaders tended to abandon responsibility; too many of them were in the position of Ledru-Rollin when he defended his participation in a prosperous émeute, "I am their leader, I had to follow them." The overthrow of democratic governments has filled the few remaining capitals of democracy with Ledru-Rollins who think themselves absolved for their sins of omission and commission if they can prove that they were not more timid, not more lacking in foresight than their followers. Many of them fail to do even that!

Another weakness of modern democracy has been the influence of party. Party is a necessity of government. Seldom do men and issues so conform that management and compromise are not necessary. Party is an indispensable means of arranging the raw materials of politics in comprehensible forms. In democratic governments party, for all its faults, is more open, more candid, less overpowering than are its corresponding organizations in absolute governments. The stress of an election, with the emphasis of party spirit that it involves, is dangerous, but such dangers are not confined to representative government. Have we not seen, in a state which boasts that it has abolished party as a source of weakness, sections arise in the one united party which was and is the state? Are the spiritual losses of a general election any greater than those of a lost shooting match, or are the injured feelings of a follower of Mr. Hoover likely to take longer to heal than those of a partisan of Captain Roehm?

But party has its dangers, and one danger from which democracy has suffered badly is the distortion of public opinion consequent on the following of the opinion of the party organization rather than that of the penumbra of voters who really supply the decisive block of support. The regular members of a party have more weight than is altogether good for them, and it is easy for a party in power to mistake the voice of the machine for the voice of the people, with disastrous results! Sometimes it is possible that wise men give way deliberately to party feeling in which they know the country does not share, for parties have long lives and punish and reward with more consistency than the public, and the career of a mugwump is not usually encouraging. Again, men may prefer

to lose control of the country rather than of the party. In 1912 it was fairly certain that the Republicans could not in any event win with Taft; yet the rulers of the party preferred to lose with Taft rather than win with a radical. But these distortions are not any worse than those imposed on the dictator by the nature of things.

There is moreover often a confusion as to the nature of the question put to the electorate. It is easy to say that the average elector is incapable of judging technical questions, that he is incapable of judging between men. Even this truth is only a half-truth and we have to remember its other half, that the diner, not the cook, is the judge of a meal. But in many cases the question submitted to the public is not the absolute rightness or wrongness of a policy. It is the different question, How far is the nation willing to go in its support of the necessary consequences of a course of action? Here the voice of the people is of great value because it answers—imperfectly, but better than any other force can—a question relevant to most political questions, How much can the people stand? It may be held, for instance, that it was a disaster for the world and a grave loss for the United States that the League of Nations had to get under way without American help. It may be held, too, that if the verdict of the American electorate *was* against the League it was wrong. But under the formal question was there not concealed the fundamental question, Are the American people prepared to make the adjustments of political attitude necessary to make their adherence to the League useful? That was a question to which a decisive answer was, I think, given, and it was therefore a useful answer since it destroyed illusions that might have been very

harmful. In a world remade to our heart's desire this type of question might be out of place, but it seems to me to be very necessary in the world of today. No doubt it is necessary for the Hitler regime in Germany to score resounding triumphs in its plebiscites, but is it not possible that, prestige apart, it would be more useful for the German government, faced with a crisis which will call on the loyalty of the German people, when speeches and processions may have to combat a food shortage, to know how much real support it could count on? Might not Signor Mussolini have similar reasons to wish for more accurate knowledge of Italian public opinion? Might not Napoleon, in the critical months of peace negotiations in 1814, have been better off if he had been able to take more accurate stock of French lassitude? May not the Soviets suffer in some degree for the suppression of internal discontent if anything goes badly wrong with the second Five Year Plan or if a war comes which puts the loyalty of the peasants to the test? It should not be forgotten as easily as it has been that the late war, certainly a hard test of survival for the governments concerned, was won in fact by the democratic governments, not by those governments which were more accustomed to giving orders than to discovering how they were received. To this type of question democracy does attempt to provide an answer. No doubt, as Vincenzo Cuoco, a Fascist before his time, remarked a hundred years ago, "there is more wisdom in the council chamber than in the ballot box." No doubt the wise ruler whom Cuoco had in mind, Napoleon, *was* better able than the elector to ask relevant questions and to choose the men who could answer them—as long as the questions were questions of fact; but when a time came in which the

most relevant question was, "Will the French people go on paying the price of my rule?" Napoleon could not ask it, nor had it been possible to ask it, is it likely that he would have stayed for an answer!

But, it will be said, all questions in a democracy are asked in such rhetorical forms, the truth is so distorted, so deformed, that an intelligent question is seldom asked and even more seldom answered. All public questions have to be cast in a dramatic form and questions that are not patient of such treatment are ignored. There is a good deal of truth in this, but the truth is not confined to popular governments. What is the kind of information put before the Russian or the German or the Italian peoples? In what terms are appeals made to these peoples for support of measures decided on by their rulers? Is Stalin, is Mussolini, is Hitler content to say, as did the French kings, "It is my good pleasure"? Have not these dictators to "sell" their ideas? Their methods of salesmanship may be excessively "high-power," but a firing party, or even a dose of castor oil, is a sort of salesmanship nevertheless.

With the collapse of the divine right of kings, of governments that were proprietors of their right to rule, constant popular support, at any rate in a negative form, has been a necessity for all rulers. Even under the old order it could not be altogether neglected: Louis XIV himself had to make appeals to his people in the last extremities of the War of the Spanish Succession. But since the revolutionary spirit did its work there is no going back on the principle that no government has now the right to govern wrong, and so all governments must pretend to govern right. In that pretense the faults of the demagogue are not all on one side. In appealing

to passion, to hate, to vague generalities, the dictators seem to me to sin as outrageously as do mere politicians. These men may be strong but they are far from silent, and if, as I am told, Stalin does no speaking, his party agents do. And even in democracy we have our silent, unobtrusive, unofficial rulers of communities who leave the formal aspects of rule to others and content themselves with power. In America you call them bosses.

Considerations of this kind are increasingly in the minds of citizens of the states which have not yet succumbed to either a dictatorship of the right or a dictatorship of the left. A long century of almost unquestioned advance made it easy for some of the primary democratic instincts to be neglected. Democratic leaders could, for the most part, afford to neglect their opponents and they despised them unduly, both from an intellectual and from a practical standpoint. In some countries at least, the weight of ability was by no means obviously on the democratic side, for its defenders were so confident of the rightness of their position, of its moral superiority, that they were too confident to bother taking their opponents seriously. That error was one for which democracy in some countries paid dearly. The attitude of the "legitimist" of democratic government, stronger in moral fervor, in conviction of virtue, than in objective comprehension of a given situation, has proved dangerous and in some cases fatal. It is not enough to point with pride to past triumphs; to talk glibly of "the principles of '89"; the "Spirit of '76"; to be supinely confident that the forces of "progress" must triumph. It is not enough to cling in blind devotion to possibly obsolete political institutions, to refuse to consider adjustments of

machinery that may be indispensable to the survival of democratic government in a country; for it must not be forgotten that a democratic government *is a government*, that democratic is the adjective, not the noun, and that too lofty a disregard for such practical matters as police and finance may be a betrayal of a nation into the hands of more rough and ready practitioners of the fundamental governmental technique of keeping order, of laying down and enforcing the law. Too easy a complacency with bad political housekeeping, with sporadic disorder, may create a vacuum into which Fascist bands may rush. Parliamentary government in Germany and Italy was too tolerant of explosions of bad temper disguised as political movements, too ready to overlook the challenge of anarchy that street fighting, for instance, presents to any government.

It would be well for modern democratic leaders to remember the form in which power was given to the rulers of ancient Rome, "to take care that no ill befall the republic." This is a task more important than keeping together a party or a parliamentary majority. Tradition has been too kind to leaders who have fallen down on the job. After all they were not forced to become politicians, to become leaders; since they chose that office, they should be held responsible for their success or failure in it. It is the business of the ruler to see further than do his following, to be able to separate the essential from the trivial; to see past the confusing details of the moment to the more general issues involved. This, I admit, is hard measure. It is hard measure because the task of the ruler is essentially hard, but also because the democratic statesman has his own peculiar temptations to disastrous illusion. He

and his party are elected formally on a program which of necessity comprises many items not particularly relevant one to another and which probably contains some items in contradiction with each other. This is one of the drawbacks of that necessity of politics, the party system. The motives for which the country has been led to support a party are always mixed and the proportions in which they are mixed vary from day to day. It is fatally easy for a democratic politician to forget this, to decide to stand or fall by some point perhaps little noticed by the country at the election or forgotten since. The "mandate" given to a party or to its leaders is always simple at bottom; it consists of two classes of popular desires, the things the country wants and the things it *wills* as well as wants. In the first class are those general principles which everyone approves of, universal peace (with honor of course), the abolition of rain during picnics, etc. All electors would like the government to reduce taxes and to increase expenditure at the same time. A wise government will pay as much attention to these wishes as they deserve, giving words to the purely verbal and deeds to the practicable in proportion to their practicability. A statesman who, in a storm, devotes too much attention to passing resolutions against excessive wind is wasting his time and failing in his duty, even if he can show that Article I of the party platform was decidedly in favor of the speedy abolition of storms, or of sea-sickness, or of both.

Resolutions of this kind have their place; they keep people interested and they stimulate enthusiasm, although not enthusiasm of the most valuable kind. Much more important are the things, usually few in number, which the country *wills* as well as wants, the things which it is willing to pay for, not

merely in money, but in sacrifice of habits of thought and action, things which the majority of the people involved think of as being worth taking a risk for—personally or collectively. Now the democratic ruler may neglect the comparatively simple wants which are really *willed* and, in pursuing the mere wishes, encounter the *willed* opposition, let us say, of the umbrella makers to the proposed abolition of rain during picnics. Then the opposition turns out to be formidable and the popular support lukewarm—and the statesman complains bitterly of the ingratitude of the people, forgetting that he does not stand in the relation of a lawyer to a client; that it is not his duty merely to give advice and carry out litigation, regardless of its prospects, if the client insists. He is a trustee, not merely for his party or for his own generation, but for the community and for the future and it is his business to put first things first.

To have any faith in the future of democracy, it is necessary to believe that these lessons are being learned. I think they are. The man in the street has more sagacity than his critics allow for; he can smell a rat (if not always a red herring) pretty quickly, and as the leaders of democracy have come out of their pleasant day-dreams of the inevitable triumphs of freedom and so on, they have begun to take a more practical view of their tasks and they have begun to realize that their responsibilities are not confined, like those of an Austrian general, to being beaten according to the rules.

Coincident with this sobering-up of the leaders of democracy has come a loss of the first glamour of Fascism and of revolutionary Communism. Not only have the boasted achievements of Fascism, ranging from balanced budgets to

punctual trains, proved to have been on a C. O. D. basis (and expensive at that) but it has become apparent that delivery has not always followed the cash. After the German example, we are hardly likely to hear such confident predictions of the golden economic future which results from getting rid of "government by talk," "putting the affairs of a country into the hands of men of action," and the like. No doubt you go faster if you remove the brakes and give the driver a free hand—but the car may run downhill as well as up.

Nor have some of the lessons of communistic activity been lost. It has been increasingly realized that revolutions are not made by brilliant theoretical demonstrations that a revolutionary situation exists; that revolutions are made by arms, not by theses—and that the chances of success or even of any kind of propaganda are not increased by constant denigration of democratic methods or by hard-boiled scorn for such effete ideas as liberty. The lesson of contempt for the rights, or even the sentiments, of others can be learned even faster by the middle classes than by the workers—if we may judge by the experience of Europe. Democracy in Western Europe and in the United States is holding its own better than its enemies thought likely, because the first force of the attack has been spent without carrying any of the main positions and without any of the rival systems giving such palpably superior results that conversion necessarily follows. Government of the people, by the people, for the people may be a myth, but it is a myth with as much chance of realization as have the rival paradises of government for the people by wise, unselfish dictators or parties who are to be provided by the expensive and uncertain gamble of a revolution.



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