**The New World Order**

**H G Wells 1940**

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**Whether it is attainable, how it can be attained, and what sort of world a world at peace will have to be.**

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1. THE END OF AN AGE

In this small book I want to set down as compactly, clearly and

usefully as possible the gist of what I have learnt about war and

peace in the course of my life. I am not going to write peace

propaganda here. I am going to strip down certain general ideas

and realities of primary importance to their framework, and so

prepare a nucleus of useful knowledge for those who have to go on

with this business of making a world peace. I am not going to

persuade people to say "Yes, yes" for a world peace; already we

have had far too much abolition of war by making declarations and

signing resolutions; everybody wants peace or pretends to want

peace, and there is no need to add even a sentence more to the vast

volume of such ineffective stuff. I am simply attempting to state

the things we MUST do and the price we MUST pay for world peace if

we really intend to achieve it.

Until the Great War, the First World War, I did not bother very

much about war and peace. Since then I have almost specialised

upon this problem. It is not very easy to recall former states of

mind out of which, day by day and year by year, one has grown, but

I think that in the decades before 1914 not only I but most of my

generation--in the British Empire, America, France and indeed

throughout most of the civilised world--thought that war was dying

out.

So it seemed to us. It was an agreeable and therefore a readily

acceptable idea. We imagined the Franco-German War of 1870-71 and

the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78 were the final conflicts between

Great Powers, that now there was a Balance of Power sufficiently

stable to make further major warfare impracticable. A Triple

Alliance faced a Dual Alliance and neither had much reason for

attacking the other. We believed war was shrinking to mere

expeditionary affairs on the outskirts of our civilisation, a sort

of frontier police business. Habits of tolerant intercourse, it

seemed, were being strengthened every year that the peace of the

Powers remained unbroken.

There was indeed a mild armament race going on; mild by our present

standards of equipment; the armament industry was a growing and

enterprising one; but we did not see the full implication of that;

we preferred to believe that the increasing general good sense

would be strong enough to prevent these multiplying guns from

actually going off and hitting anything. And we smiled indulgently

at uniforms and parades and army manoeuvres. They were the

time-honoured toys and regalia of kings and emperors. They were

part of the display side of life and would never get to actual

destruction and killing. I do not think that exaggerates the easy

complacency of, let us say, 1895, forty-five years ago. It was a

complacency that lasted with most of us up to 1914. In 1914 hardly

anyone in Europe or America below the age of fifty had seen anything

of war in his own country.

The world before 1900 seemed to be drifting steadily towards a

tacit but practical unification. One could travel without a

passport over the larger part of Europe; the Postal Union delivered

one's letters uncensored and safely from Chile to China; money,

based essentially on gold, fluctuated only very slightly; and the

sprawling British Empire still maintained a tradition of free

trade, equal treatment and open-handedness to all comers round and

about the planet. In the United States you could go for days and

never see a military uniform. Compared with to-day that was, upon

the surface at any rate, an age of easy-going safety and good

humour. Particularly for the North Americans and the Europeans.

But apart from that steady, ominous growth of the armament industry

there were other and deeper forces at work that were preparing

trouble. The Foreign Offices of the various sovereign states had

not forgotten the competitive traditions of the eighteenth century.

The admirals and generals were contemplating with something between

hostility and fascination, the huger weapons the steel industry was

gently pressing into their hands. Germany did not share the

self-complacency of the English-speaking world; she wanted a place in

the sun; there was increasing friction about the partition of the

raw material regions of Africa; the British suffered from chronic

Russophobia with regard to their vast appropriations in the East,

and set themselves to nurse Japan into a modernised imperialist

power; and also they "remembered Majuba"; the United States were

irritated by the disorder of Cuba and felt that the weak, extended

Spanish possessions would be all the better for a change of

management. So the game of Power Politics went on, but it went on

upon the margins of the prevailing peace. There were several wars

and changes of boundaries, but they involved no fundamental

disturbance of the general civilised life; they did not seem to

threaten its broadening tolerations and understandings in any

fundamental fashion. Economic stresses and social trouble stirred

and muttered beneath the orderly surfaces of political life, but

threatened no convulsion. The idea of altogether eliminating war,

of clearing what was left of it away, was in the air, but it was

free from any sense of urgency. The Hague Tribunal was established

and there was a steady dissemination of the conceptions of

arbitration and international law. It really seemed to many that

the peoples of the earth were settling down in their various

territories to a litigious rather than a belligerent order. If

there was much social injustice it was being mitigated more and

more by a quickening sense of social decency. Acquisitiveness

conducted itself with decorum and public-spiritedness was in

fashion. Some of it was quite honest public-spiritedness.

In those days, and they are hardly more than half a lifetime behind

us, no one thought of any sort of world administration. That

patchwork of great Powers and small Powers seemed the most

reasonable and practicable method of running the business of

mankind. Communications were far too difficult for any sort of

centralised world controls. Around the World in Eighty Days, when

it was published seventy years ago, seemed an extravagant fantasy.

It was a world without telephone or radio, with nothing swifter

than a railway train or more destructive than the earlier types of

H.E. shell. They were marvels. It was far more convenient to

administer that world of the Balance of Power in separate national

areas and, since there were such limited facilities for peoples to

get at one another and do each other mischiefs, there seemed no

harm in ardent patriotism and the complete independence of separate

sovereign states.

Economic life was largely directed by irresponsible private

businesses and private finance which, because of their private

ownership, were able to spread out their unifying transactions in a

network that paid little attention to frontiers and national,

racial or religious sentimentality. "Business" was much more of a

world commonwealth than the political organisations. There were

many people, especially in America, who imagined that "Business"

might ultimately unify the world and governments sink into

subordination to its network.

Nowadays we can be wise after the event and we can see that below

this fair surface of things, disruptive forces were steadily

gathering strength. But these disruptive forces played a

comparatively small rôle in the world spectacle of half a century

ago, when the ideas of that older generation which still dominates

our political life and the political education of its successors,

were formed. It is from the conflict of those Balance of Power and

private enterprise ideas, half a century old, with these ever-growing

disruptive forces, that one of the main stresses of our

time arises. These ideas worked fairly well in their period and it

is still with extreme reluctance that our rulers, teachers,

politicians, face the necessity for a profound mental adaptation of

their views, methods and interpretations to these disruptive forces

that once seemed so negligible and which are now shattering their

old order completely.

It was because of this belief in a growing good-will among nations,

because of the general satisfaction with things as they were, that

the German declarations of war in 1914 aroused such a storm of

indignation throughout the entire comfortable world. It was felt

that the German Kaiser had broken the tranquillity of the world

club, wantonly and needlessly. The war was fought "against the

Hohenzollerns." They were to be expelled from the club, certain

punitive fines were to be paid and all would be well. That was the

British idea of 1914. This out-of-date war business was then to be

cleared up once for all by a mutual guarantee by all the more

respectable members of the club through a League of Nations. There

was no apprehension of any deeper operating causes in that great

convulsion on the part of the worthy elder statesmen who made the

peace. And so Versailles and its codicils.

For twenty years the disruptive forces have gone on growing beneath

the surface of that genteel and shallow settlement, and for twenty

years there has been no resolute attack upon the riddles with which

their growth confronts us. For all that period the League of

Nations has been the opiate of liberal thought in the world.

To-day there is war to get rid of Adolf Hitler, who has now taken

the part of the Hohenzollerns in the drama. He too has outraged

the Club Rules and he too is to be expelled. The war, the

Chamberlain-Hitler War, is being waged so far by the British Empire

in quite the old spirit. It has learnt nothing and forgotten

nothing. There is the same resolute disregard of any more

fundamental problem.

Still the minds of our comfortable and influential ruling-class

people refuse to accept the plain intimation that their time is

over, that the Balance of Power and uncontrolled business methods

cannot continue, and that Hitler, like the Hohenzollerns, is a mere

offensive pustule on the face of a deeply ailing world. To get rid

of him and his Nazis will be no more a cure for the world's ills

than scraping will heal measles. The disease will manifest itself

in some new eruption. It is the system of nationalist individualism

and unco-ordinated enterprise that is the world's disease, and it is

the whole system that has to go. It has to be reconditioned down to

its foundations or replaced. It cannot hope to "muddle through"

amiably, wastefully and dangerously, a second time.

World peace means all that much revolution. More and more of us

begin to realise that it cannot mean less.

The first thing, therefore, that has to be done in thinking out the

primary problems of world peace is to realise this, that we are

living in the end of a definite period of history, the period of

the sovereign states. As we used to say in the eighties with

ever-increasing truth: "We are in an age of transition". Now we get

some measure of the acuteness of the transition. It is a phase of

human life which may lead, as I am trying to show, either to a NEW

WAY OF LIVING for our species or else to a longer or briefer

dégringolade of violence, misery, destruction, death and the

extinction of mankind. These are not rhetorical phrases I am using

here; I mean exactly what I say, the disastrous extinction of

mankind.

That is the issue before us. It is no small affair of parlour

politics we have to consider. As I write, in this moment,

thousands of people are being killed, wounded, hunted, tormented,

ill-treated, delivered up to the most intolerable and hopeless

anxiety and destroyed morally and mentally, and there is nothing in

sight at present to arrest this spreading process and prevent its

reaching you and yours. It is coming for you and yours now at a

great pace. Plainly in so far as we are rational foreseeing

creatures there is nothing for any of us now but to make this world

peace problem the ruling interest and direction of our lives. If

we run away from it it will pursue and get us. We have to face it.

We have to solve it or be destroyed by it. It is as urgent and

comprehensive as that.

2. OPEN CONFERENCE

Before we examine what I have called so far the "disruptive forces"

in the current social order, let me underline one primary necessity

for the most outspoken free discussion of the battling organisations

and the crumbling institutions amidst which we lead our present

uncomfortable and precarious lives. There must be no protection for

leaders and organisations from the most searching criticism, on the

plea that our country is or may be at war. Or on any pretence. We

must talk openly, widely and plainly. The war is incidental; the

need for revolutionary reconstruction is fundamental. None of us

are clear as yet upon some of the most vital questions before us, we

are not lucid enough in our own minds to be ambiguous, and a

mumbling tactfulness and indirect half-statements made with an eye

upon some censor, will confuse our thoughts and the thoughts of

those with whom we desire understanding, to the complete

sterilisation and defeat of every reconstructive effort.

We want to talk and tell exactly what our ideas and feelings are,

not only to our fellow citizens, but to our allies, to neutrals

and, above all, to the people who are marshalled in arms against

us. We want to get the same sincerity from them. Because until we

have worked out a common basis of ideas with them, peace will be

only an uncertain equilibrium while fresh antagonisms develop.

CONCURRENTLY WITH THIS WAR WE NEED A GREAT DEBATE. We want every

possible person in the world to take part in that debate. It is

something much more important than the actual warfare. It is

intolerable to think of this storm of universal distress leading up

to nothing but some "conference" of diplomatists out of touch with

the world, with secret sessions, ambiguous "understandings." . . .

Not twice surely can that occur. And yet what is going to prevent

its recurring?

It is quite easy to define the reasonable limits of censorship in a

belligerent country. It is manifest that the publication of any

information likely to be of the slightest use to an enemy must be

drastically anticipated and suppressed; not only direct

information, for example, but intimations and careless betrayals

about the position and movements of ships, troops, camps, depots of

munitions, food supplies, and false reports of defeats and

victories and coming shortages, anything that may lead to blind

panic and hysteria, and so forth and so on. But the matter takes

on a different aspect altogether when it comes to statements and

suggestions that may affect public opinion in one's own country or

abroad, and which may help us towards wholesome and corrective

political action.

One of the more unpleasant aspects of a state of war under modern

conditions is the appearance of a swarm of individuals, too clever

by half, in positions of authority, excited, conceited, prepared to

lie, distort and generally humbug people into states of

acquiescence, resistance, indignation, vindictiveness, doubt and

mental confusion, states of mind supposed to be conductive to a

final military victory. These people love to twist and censor

facts. It gives them a feeling of power; if they cannot create

they can at least prevent and conceal. Particularly they poke

themselves in between us and the people with whom we are at war to

distort any possible reconciliation. They sit, filled with the

wine of their transitory powers, aloof from the fatigues and

dangers of conflict, pulling imaginary strings in people's minds.

In Germany popular thought is supposed to be under the control of

Herr Dr Goebbels; in Great Britain we writers have been invited to

place ourselves at the disposal of some Ministry of Information,

that is to say at the disposal of hitherto obscure and

unrepresentative individuals, and write under its advice.

Officials from the British Council and the Conservative Party

Headquarters appear in key positions in this Ministry of

Information. That curious and little advertised organisation I

have just mentioned, the creation I am told of Lord Lloyd, that

British Council, sends emissaries abroad, writers, well-dressed

women and other cultural personages, to lecture, charm and win over

foreign appreciation for British characteristics, for British

scenery, British political virtues and so forth. Somehow this is

supposed to help something or other. Quietly, unobtrusively, this

has gone on. Maybe these sample British give unauthorised

assurances but probably they do little positive harm. But they

ought not to be employed at all. Any government propaganda is

contrary to the essential spirit of democracy. The expression of

opinion and collective thought should be outside the range of

government activities altogether. It should be the work of free

individuals whose prominence is dependent upon the response and

support of the general mind.

But here I have to make amends to Lord Lloyd. I was led to believe

that the British Council was responsible for Mr. Teeling, the

author of Crisis for Christianity, and I said as much in The Fate

of Homo Sapiens. I now unsay it. Mr. Teeling, I gather, was sent

out upon his journeys by a Catholic newspaper. The British Council

was entirely innocent of him.

It is not only that the Ministries of Information and Propaganda do

their level best to divert the limited gifts and energies of such

writers, lecturers and talkers as we possess, to the production of

disingenuous muck that will muddle the public mind and mislead the

enquiring foreigner, but that they show a marked disposition to

stifle any free and independent utterances that may seem to

traverse their own profound and secret plans for the salvation of

mankind.

Everywhere now it is difficult to get adequate, far-reaching

publicity for outspoken discussion of the way the world is going,

and the political, economic and social forces that carry us along.

This is not so much due to deliberate suppression as to the general

disorder into which human affairs are dissolving. There is indeed

in the Atlantic world hardly a sign as yet of that direct espionage

upon opinion that obliterates the mental life of the intelligent

Italian or German or Russian to-day almost completely; one may

still think what one likes, say what one likes and write what one

likes, but nevertheless there is already an increasing difficulty

in getting bold, unorthodox views heard and read. Newspapers are

afraid upon all sorts of minor counts, publishers, with such

valiant exceptions as the publishers of this matter, are morbidly

discreet; they get Notice D to avoid this or that particular topic;

there are obscure boycotts and trade difficulties hindering the

wide diffusion of general ideas in countless ways. I do not mean

there is any sort of organised conspiracy to suppress discussion,

but I do say that the Press, the publishing and the bookselling

organisations in our free countries, provide a very ill-organised

and inadequate machinery for the ventilation and distribution of

thought.

Publishers publish for nothing but safe profits; it would astound a

bookseller to tell him he was part of the world's educational

organisation or a publisher's traveller, that he existed for any

other purpose than to book maximum orders for best sellers and earn

a record commission--letting the other stuff, the highbrow stuff

and all that, go hang. They do not understand that they ought to

put public service before gain. They have no inducement to do so

and no pride in their function. Theirs is the morale of a

profiteering world. Newspapers like to insert brave-looking

articles of conventional liberalism, speaking highly of peace and

displaying a noble vagueness about its attainment; now we are at

war they will publish the fiercest attacks upon the enemy--because

such attacks are supposed to keep up the fighting spirit of the

country; but any ideas that are really loudly and clearly

revolutionary they dare not circulate at all. Under these baffling

conditions there is no thorough discussion of the world outlook

whatever, anywhere. The democracies are only a shade better than

the dictatorships in this respect. It is ridiculous to represent

them as realms of light at issue with darkness.

This great debate upon the reconstruction of the world is a thing

more important and urgent than the war, and there exist no adequate

media for the utterance and criticism and correction of any broad

general convictions. There is a certain fruitless and unproductive

spluttering of constructive ideas, but there is little sense of

sustained enquiry, few real interchanges, inadequate progress,

nothing is settled, nothing is dismissed as unsound and nothing is

won permanently. No one seems to hear what anyone else is saying.

That is because there is no sense of an audience for these

ideologists. There is no effective audience saying rudely and

obstinately: "What A. has said, seems important. Will B. and C.,

instead of bombinating in the void, tell us exactly where and why

they differ from A.? And now we have got to the common truth of

A., B., C., and D. Here is F. saying something. Will he be so

good as to correlate what he has to say with A., B., C., and D.?"

But there is no such background of an intelligently observant and

critical world audience in evidence. There are a few people here

and there reading and thinking in disconnected fragments. This is

all the thinking our world is doing in the face of planetary

disaster. The universities, bless them! are in uniform or silent.

We need to air our own minds; we need frank exchanges, if we are to

achieve any common understanding. We need to work out a clear

conception of the world order we would prefer to this present

chaos, we need to dissolve or compromise upon our differences so

that we may set our faces with assurance towards an attainable

world peace. The air is full of the panaceas of half-wits, none

listening to the others and most of them trying to silence the

others in their impatience. Thousands of fools are ready to write

us a complete prescription for our world troubles. Will people

never realise their own ignorance and incompletenesses, from which

arise this absolute necessity for the plainest statement of the

realities of the problem, for the most exhaustive and unsparing

examination of differences of opinion, and for the most ruthless

canvassing of every possibility, however unpalatable it may seem at

first, of the situation?

Before anything else, therefore, in this survey of the way to world

peace, I put free speech and vigorous publication. It is the thing

best worth fighting for. It is the essence of your personal

honour. It is your first duty as a world citizen to do what you

can for that. You have not only to resist suppressions, you have

to fight your way out of the fog. If you find your bookseller or

newsagent failing to distribute any type of publication whatever--

even if you are in entire disagreement with the views of that

publication--you should turn the weapon of the boycott upon the

offender and find another bookseller or newsagent for everything

you read. The would-be world citizen should subscribe also to such

organisation as the National Council for Civil Liberties; he should

use any advantage his position may give him to check suppression of

free speech; and he should accustom himself to challenge nonsense

politely but firmly and say fearlessly and as clearly as possible

what is in his mind and to listen as fearlessly to whatever is said

to him. So that he may know better either through reassurance or

correction. To get together with other people to argue and

discuss, to think and organise and then implement thought is the

first duty of every reasonable man.

This world of ours is going to pieces. It has to be reconstructed

and it can only be effectively reconstructed in the light. Only

the free, clear, open mind can save us, and these difficulties and

obstructions on our line of thought are as evil as children putting

obstacles on a railway line or scattering nails on an automobile

speed track.

This great world debate must go on, and it must go on now. Now

while the guns are still thudding, is the time for thought. It is

incredibly foolish to talk as so many people do of ending the war

and then having a World Conference to inaugurate a new age. So

soon as the fighting stops the real world conference, the live

discussion, will stop, too. The diplomats and politicians will

assemble with an air of profound competence and close the doors

upon the outer world and resume--Versailles. While the silenced

world gapes and waits upon their mysteries.

3. DISRUPTIVE FORCES

And now let us come to the disruptive forces that have reduced that

late-nineteenth-century dream of a powerful world patchwork of more

and more civilised states linked by an ever-increasing financial

and economic interdependence, to complete incredibility, and so

forced upon every intelligent mind the need to work out a new

conception of the World that ought to be. It is supremely

important that the nature of these disruptive forces should be

clearly understood and kept in mind. To grasp them is to hold the

clue to the world's present troubles. To forget about them, even

for a moment, is to lose touch with essential reality and drift

away into minor issues.

The first group of these forces is what people are accustomed to

speak of as "the abolition of distance" and "the change of scale"

in human operations. This "abolition of distance" began rather

more than a century ago, and its earlier effects were not

disruptive at all. It knit together the spreading United States of

America over distances that might otherwise have strained their

solidarity to the breaking-point, and it enabled the sprawling

British Empire to sustain contacts round the whole planet.

The disruptive influence of the abolition of distance appeared only

later. Let us be clear upon its essential significance. For what

seemed like endless centuries the swiftest means of locomotion had

been the horse on the high-road, the running man, the galley and

the uncertain, weather-ruled sailing ship. (There was the Dutchman

on skates on his canals, but that was an exceptional culmination of

speed and not for general application.) The political, social and

imaginative life of man for all those centuries was adapted to

these limiting conditions. They determined the distances to which

marketable goods could conveniently be sent, the limits to which

the ruler could send his orders and his soldiers, the bounds set to

getting news, and indeed the whole scale of living. There could be

very little real community feeling beyond the range of frequent

intercourse.

Human life fell naturally therefore into areas determined by the

interplay between these limitations and such natural obstacles as

seas and mountains. Such countries as France, England, Egypt,

Japan, appeared and reappeared in history like natural, necessary

things, and though there were such larger political efforts as the

Roman Empire, they never attained an enduring unity. The Roman

Empire held together like wet blotting-paper; it was always falling

to pieces. The older Empires, beyond their national nuclei, were

mere precarious tribute-levying powers. What I have already called

the world patchwork of the great and little Powers, was therefore,

under the old horse-and-foot and sailing-ship conditions, almost as

much a matter of natural necessity as the sizes of trees and

animals.

Within a century all this has been changed and we have still to

face up to what that change means for us.

First came steam, the steam-railway, the steamship, and then in a

quickening crescendo came the internal combustion engine,

electrical traction, the motor car, the motor boat, the aeroplane,

the transmission of power from central power stations, the

telephone, the radio. I feel apologetic in reciting this well-known

story. I do so in order to enforce the statement that all

the areas that were the most convenient and efficient for the old,

time-honoured way of living, became more and more inconveniently

close and narrow for the new needs. This applied to every sort of

administrative area, from municipalities and urban districts and

the range of distributing businesses, up to sovereign states. They

were--and for the most part they still are--too small for the new

requirements and far too close together. All over the social

layout this tightening-up and squeezing together is an inconvenience,

but when it comes to the areas of sovereign states it becomes

impossibly dangerous. It becomes an intolerable thing; human life

cannot go on, with the capitals of most of the civilised countries

of the world within an hour's bombing range of their frontiers,

behind which attacks can be prepared and secret preparations made

without any form of control. And yet we are still tolerant and

loyal to arrangements that seek to maintain this state of affairs

and treat it as though nothing else were possible.

The present war for and against Hitler and Stalin and Mr.

Chamberlain and so forth, does not even touch upon the essential

problem of the abolition of distance. It may indeed destroy

everything and still settle nothing. If one could wipe out all the

issues of the present conflict, we should still be confronted with

the essential riddle, which is the abolition of the boundaries of

most existing sovereign states and their merger in some larger Pax.

We have to do that if any supportable human life is to go on.

Treaties and mutual guarantees are not enough. We have surely

learnt enough about the value of treaties during the last

half-century to realise that. We have, because of the abolition of

distance alone, to gather human affairs together under one common

war-preventing control.

But this abolition of distance is only one most vivid aspect of the

change in the conditions of human life. Interwoven with that is a

general change of scale in human operations. The past hundred

years has been an age of invention and discovery beyond the

achievements of the preceding three millennia. In a book I

published eight years ago, The Work, Wealth and Happiness of

Mankind, I tried to summarise the conquest of power and substances

that is still going on. There is more power expended in a modern

city like Birmingham in a day than we needed to keep the whole of

Elizabethan England going for a year; there is more destructive

energy in a single tank than sufficed the army of William I for the

conquest of England. Man is able now to produce or destroy on a

scale beyond comparison greater than he could before this storm of

invention began. And the consequence is the continual further

dislocation of the orderly social life of our great-great-grandfathers.

No trade, no profession, is exempt. The old social routines

and classifications have been, as people say, "knocked

silly". There is no sort of occupation, fisheries, farming,

textile work, metal work, mining which is not suffering from

constant readjustment to new methods and facilities. Our

traditions of trade and distribution flounder after these changes.

Skilled occupations disappear in the general liquefaction.

The new power organisations are destroying the forests of the world

at headlong speed, ploughing great grazing areas into deserts,

exhausting mineral resources, killing off whales, seals and a

multitude of rare and beautiful species, destroying the morale of

every social type and devastating the planet. The institutions of

the private appropriation of land and natural resources generally,

and of private enterprise for profit, which did produce a fairly

tolerable, stable and "civilised" social life for all but the most

impoverished, in Europe, America and the East, for some centuries,

have been expanded to a monstrous destructiveness by the new

opportunities. The patient, nibbling, enterprising profit-seeker

of the past, magnified and equipped now with the huge claws and

teeth the change of scale has provided for him, has torn the old

economic order to rags. Quite apart from war, our planet is being

wasted and disorganised. Yet the process goes on, without any

general control, more monstrously destructive even than the

continually enhanced terrors of modern warfare.

Now it has to be made clear that these two things, the manifest

necessity for some collective world control to eliminate warfare

and the less generally admitted necessity for a collective control

of the economic and biological life of mankind, are ASPECTS OF ONE

AND THE SAME PROCESS. Of the two the disorganisation of the

ordinary life which is going on, war or no war, is the graver and

least reversible. Both arise out of the abolition of distance and

the change of scale, they affect and modify each other, and unless

their parallelism and interdependence are recognised, any projects

for world federation or anything of the sort are doomed inevitably

to frustration.

That is where the League of Nations broke down completely. It was

legal; it was political. It was devised by an ex-professor of the

old-fashioned history assisted by a few politicians. It ignored

the vast disorganisation of human life by technical revolutions,

big business and modern finance that was going on, of which the

Great War itself was scarcely more than a by-product. It was

constituted as though nothing of that sort was occurring.

This war storm which is breaking upon us now, due to the continued

fragmentation of human government among a patchwork of sovereign

states, is only one aspect of the general need for a rational

consolidation of human affairs. The independent sovereign state

with its perpetual war threat, armed with the resources of modern

mechanical frightfulness, is only the most blatant and terrifying

aspect of that same want of a coherent general control that makes

overgrown, independent, sovereign, private business organisations

and combinations, socially destructive. We should still be at the

mercy of the "Napoleons" of commerce and the "Attilas" of finance,

if there was not a gun or a battleship or a tank or a military

uniform in the world. We should still be sold up and dispossessed.

Political federation, we have to realise, without a concurrent

economic collectivisation, is bound to fail. The task of the

peace-maker who really desires peace in a new world, involves not

merely a political but a profound social revolution, profounder even

than the revolution attempted by the Communists in Russia. The

Russian Revolution failed not by its extremism but through the

impatience, violence and intolerance of its onset, through lack of

foresight and intellectual insufficiency. The cosmopolitan revolution

to a world collectivism, which is the only alternative to chaos and

degeneration before mankind, has to go much further than the

Russian; it has to be more thorough and better conceived and its

achievement demands a much more heroic and more steadfast thrust.

It serves no useful purpose to shut our eyes to the magnitude and

intricacy of the task of making the world peace. These are the

basic factors of the case.

4. CLASS-WAR

Now here it is necessary to make a distinction which is far too

frequently ignored. Collectivisation means the handling of the

common affairs of mankind by a common control responsible to the

whole community. It means the suppression of go-as-you-please in

social and economic affairs just as much as in international

affairs. It means the frank abolition of profit-seeking and of

every device by which human beings contrive to be parasitic on

their fellow men. It is the practical realisation of the

brotherhood of man through a common control. It means all that and

it means no more than that.

The necessary nature of that control, the way to attain it and to

maintain it have still to be discussed.

The early forms of socialism were attempts to think out and try out

collectivist systems. But with the advent of Marxism, the larger

idea of collectivism became entangled with a smaller one, the

perpetual conflict of people in any unregulated social system to

get the better of one another. Throughout the ages this has been

going on. The rich, the powerful generally, the more intelligent

and acquisitive have got away with things, and sweated, oppressed,

enslaved, bought and frustrated the less intelligent, the less

acquisitive and the unwary. The Haves in every generation have

always got the better of the Have-nots, and the Have-nots have

always resented the privations of their disadvantage.

So it is and so in the uncollectivised world it has always been.

The bitter cry of the expropriated man echoes down the ages from

ancient Egypt and the Hebrew prophets, denouncing those who grind

the faces of the poor. At times the Have-nots have been so

uneducated, so helplessly distributed among their more successful

fellows that they have been incapable of social disturbance, but

whenever such developments as plantation or factory labour, the

accumulation of men in seaport towns, the disbanding of armies,

famine and so forth, brought together masses of men at the same

disadvantage, their individual resentments flowed together and

became a common resentment. The miseries underlying human society

were revealed. The Haves found themselves assailed by resentful,

vindictive revolt.

Let us note that these revolts of the Have-nots throughout the ages

have sometimes been very destructive, but that invariably they have

failed to make any fundamental change in this old, old story of

getting and not getting the upper hand. Sometimes the Have-nots

have frightened or otherwise moved the Haves to more decent

behaviour. Often the Have-nots have found a Champion who has

ridden to power on their wrongs. Then the ricks were burnt or the

châteaux. The aristocrats were guillotined and their heads carried

on exemplary pikes. Such storms passed and when they passed, there

for all practical purposes was the old order returning again; new

people but the old inequalities. Returning inevitably, with only

slight variations in appearance and phraseology, under the

condition of a non-collective social order.

The point to note is that in the unplanned scramble of human life

through the centuries of the horse-and-foot period, these

incessantly recurring outbreaks of the losers against the winners

have never once produced any permanent amelioration of the common

lot, or greatly changed the features of the human community. Not

once.

The Have-nots have never produced the intelligence and the ability

and the Haves have never produced the conscience, to make a

permanent alteration of the rules of the game. Slave revolts,

peasant revolts, revolts of the proletariat have always been fits

of rage, acute social fevers which have passed. The fact remains

that history produces no reason for supposing that the Have-nots,

considered as a whole, have available any reserves of directive and

administrative capacity and disinterested devotion, superior to

that of the more successful classes. Morally, intellectually,

there is no reason to suppose them better.

Many potentially able people may miss education and opportunity;

they may not be inherently inferior but nevertheless they are

crippled and incapacitated and kept down. They are spoilt. Many

specially gifted people may fail to "make good" in a jostling,

competitive, acquisitive world and so fall into poverty and into

the baffled, limited ways of living of the commonalty, but they too

are exceptions. The idea of a right-minded Proletariat ready to

take things over is a dream.

As the collectivist idea has developed out of the original

propositions of socialism, the more lucid thinkers have put this

age-long bitterness of the Haves and Have-nots into its proper

place as part, as the most distressing part, but still only as

part, of the vast wastage of human resources that their disorderly

exploitation entailed. In the light of current events they have

come to realise more and more clearly that the need and possibility

of arresting this waste by a world-wide collectivisation is

becoming continually more possible and at the same time imperative.

They have had no delusions about the education and liberation that

is necessary to gain that end. They have been moved less by moral

impulses and sentimental pity and so forth, admirable but futile

motives, as by the intense intellectual irritation of living in a

foolish and destructive system. They are revolutionaries not

because the present way of living is a hard and tyrannous way of

living, but because it is from top to bottom exasperatingly stupid.

But thrusting athwart the socialist movement towards collectivisation

and its research for some competent directive organisation of the

world's affairs, came the clumsy initiative of Marxism with its

class-war dogma, which has done more to misdirect and sterilise

human good will than any other misconception of reality that has

ever stultified human effort.

Marx saw the world from a study and through the hazes of a vast

ambition. He swam in the current ideologies of his time and so he

shared the prevalent socialist drive towards collectivisation. But

while his sounder-minded contemporaries were studying means and

ends he jumped from a very imperfect understanding of the Trades

Union movement in Britain to the wildest generalisations about the

social process. He invented and antagonised two phantoms. One was

the Capitalist System; the other the Worker.

There never has been anything on earth that could be properly

called a Capitalist SYSTEM. What was the matter with his world was

manifestly its entire want of system. What the Socialists were

feeling their way towards was the discovery and establishment of a

world system.

The Haves of our period were and are a fantastic miscellany of

people, inheriting or getting their power and influence by the most

various means and methods. They had and have nothing of the

interbreeding social solidarity even of a feudal aristocracy or an

Indian caste. But Marx, looking rather into his inner consciousness

than at any concrete reality, evolved that monster "System" on his

Right. Then over against it, still gazing steadily into that

vacuum, he discovered on the Left the proletarians being steadily

expropriated and becoming class-conscious. They were just as

endlessly various in reality as the people at the top of the

scramble; in reality but not in the mind of the Communist seer.

There they consolidated rapidly.

So while other men toiled at this gigantic problem of

collectivisation, Marx found his almost childishly simple recipe.

All you had to do was to tell the workers that they were being

robbed and enslaved by this wicked "Capitalist System" devised by

the "bourgeoisie". They need only "unite"; they had "nothing to

lose but their chains". The wicked Capitalist System was to be

overthrown, with a certain vindictive liquidation of "capitalists"

in general and the "bourgeoisie" in particular, and a millennium

would ensue under a purely workers' control, which Lenin later on

was to crystallise into a phrase of supra-theological mystery, "the

dictatorship of the proletariat". The proletarians need learn

nothing, plan nothing; they were right and good by nature; they

would just "take over". The infinitely various envies, hatreds and

resentments of the Have-nots were to fuse into a mighty creative

drive. All virtue resided in them; all evil in those who had

bettered them. One good thing there was in this new doctrine of

the class war, it inculcated a much needed brotherliness among the

workers, but it was balanced by the organisation of class hate. So

the great propaganda of the class war, with these monstrous

falsifications of manifest fact, went forth. Collectivisation

would not so much be organised as appear magically when the incubus

of Capitalism and all those irritatingly well-to-do people, were

lifted off the great Proletarian soul.

Marx was a man incapable in money matters and much bothered by

tradesmen's bills. Moreover he cherished absurd pretensions to

aristocracy. The consequence was that he romanced about the lovely

life of the Middle Ages as if he were another Belloc and

concentrated his animus about the "bourgeoisie", whom he made

responsible for all those great disruptive forces in human society

that we have considered. Lord Bacon, the Marquis of Worcester,

Charles the Second and the Royal Society, people like Cavendish and

Joule and Watt for example, all became "bourgeoisie" in his

inflamed imagination. "During its reign of scarce a century", he

wrote in the Communist Manifesto, "the bourgeoisie has created more

powerful, more stupendous forces of production than all preceding

generations rolled into one. . . . What earlier generations had

the remotest inkling that such productive forces slumbered within

the wombs of associated labour?"

"The wombs of associated labour!" (Golly, what a phrase!) The

industrial revolution which was a consequence of the mechanical

revolution is treated as the cause of it. Could facts be muddled

more completely?

And again: ". . . the bourgeois system is no longer able to cope

with the abundance of wealth it creates. How does the bourgeoisie

overcome these crises? On the one hand, by the compulsory

annihilation of a quantity of the productive forces; on the other,

by the conquest of new markets and the more thorough exploitation

of old ones. With what results? The results are that the way is

paved for more widespread and more disastrous crises and that the

capacity for averting such crises is lessened.

"The weapons" (WEAPONS! How that sedentary gentleman in his vast

beard adored military images!) "with which the bourgeoisie

overthrew feudalism are now being turned against the bourgeoisie

itself.

"But the bourgeoisie has not only forged the weapons that will slay

it; it has also engendered the men who will use these weapons--the

modern workers, the proletarians."

And so here they are, hammer and sickle in hand, chest stuck out,

proud, magnificent, commanding, in the Manifesto. But go and look

for them yourself in the streets. Go and look at them in Russia.

Even for 1848 this is not intelligent social analysis. It is the

outpouring of a man with a B in his bonnet, the hated Bourgeoisie,

a man with a certain vision, uncritical of his own sub-conscious

prejudices, but shrewd enough to realise how great a driving force

is hate and the inferiority complex. Shrewd enough to use hate and

bitter enough to hate. Let anyone read over that Communist

Manifesto and consider who might have shared the hate or even have

got it all, if Marx had not been the son of a rabbi. Read Jews for

Bourgeoisie and the Manifesto is pure Nazi teaching of the 1933-8

vintage.

Stripped down to its core in this fashion, the primary falsity of

the Marxist assumption is evident. But it is one of the queer

common weaknesses of the human mind to be uncritical of primary

assumptions and to smother up any enquiry into their soundness in

secondary elaboration, in technicalities and conventional formulæ.

Most of our systems of belief rest upon rotten foundations, and

generally these foundations are made sacred to preserve them from

attack. They become dogmas in a sort of holy of holies. It is

shockingly uncivil to say "But that is nonsense". The defenders of

all the dogmatic religions fly into rage and indignation when one

touches on the absurdity of their foundations. Especially if one

laughs. That is blasphemy.

This avoidance of fundamental criticism is one of the greatest

dangers to any general human understanding. Marxism is no

exception to the universal tendency. The Capitalist System has to

be a real system, the Bourgeoisie an organised conspiracy against

the Workers, and every human conflict everywhere has to be an

aspect of the Class War, or they cannot talk to you. They will not

listen to you. Never once has there been an attempt to answer the

plain things I have been saying about them for a third of a

century. Anything not in their language flows off their minds like

water off a duck's back. Even Lenin--by far the subtlest mind in

the Communist story--has not escaped this pitfall, and when I

talked to him in Moscow in 1920 he seemed quite unable to realise

that the violent conflict going on in Ireland between the Catholic

nationalists and the Protestant garrison was not his sacred

insurrection of the Proletariat in full blast.

To-day there is quite a number of writers, and among them there are

men of science who ought to think better, solemnly elaborating a

pseudo-philosophy of science and society upon the deeply buried but

entirely nonsensical foundations laid by Marx. Month by month the

industrious Left Book Club pours a new volume over the minds of its

devotees to sustain their mental habits and pickle them against the

septic influence of unorthodox literature. A Party Index of

Forbidden Books will no doubt follow. Distinguished professors

with a solemn delight in their own remarkable ingenuity, lecture

and discourse and even produce serious-looking volumes, upon the

superiority of Marxist physics and Marxist research, to the

unbranded activities of the human mind. One tries not to be rude

to them, but it is hard to believe they are not deliberately

playing the fool with their brains. Or have they a feeling that

revolutionary communism is ahead, and are they doing their best to

rationalise it with an eye to those red days to come?\*

\* See Hogben's Dangerous Thoughts.

Here I cannot pursue in any detail the story of the Rise and

Corruption of Marxism in Russia. It confirms in every particular

my contention that the class-war idea is an entanglement and

perversion of the world drive towards a world collectivism, a

wasting disease of cosmopolitan socialism. It has followed in its

general outline the common history of every revolt of the Have-nots

since history began. Russia in the shadows displayed an immense

inefficiency and sank slowly to Russia in the dark. Its galaxy of

incompetent foremen, managers, organisers and so forth, developed

the most complicated system of self-protection against criticism,

they sabotaged one another, they intrigued against one another.

You can read the quintessence of the thing in Littlepage's In

Search of Soviet Gold. And like every other Have-not revolt since

the dawn of history, hero worship took possession of the insurgent

masses. The inevitable Champion appeared. They escape from the

Czar and in twenty years they are worshipping Stalin, originally a

fairly honest, unoriginal, ambitious revolutionary, driven to

self-defensive cruelty and inflated by flattery to his present

quasi-divine autocracy. The cycle completes itself and we see that

like every other merely insurrectionary revolution, nothing has changed;

a lot of people have been liquidated and a lot of other people have

replaced them and Russia seems returning back to the point at which

it started, to a patriotic absolutism of doubtful efficiency and

vague, incalculable aims. Stalin, I believe, is honest and

benevolent in intention, he believes in collectivism simply and

plainly, he is still under the impression that he is making a good

thing of Russia and of the countries within her sphere of

influence, and he is self-righteously impatient of criticism or

opposition. His successor may not have the same disinterestedness.

But I have written enough to make it clear why we have to

dissociate collectivisation altogether from the class war in our

minds. Let us waste no more time on the spectacle of the Marxist

putting the cart in front of the horse and tying himself up with

the harness. We have to put all this proletarian distortion of the

case out of our minds and start afresh upon the problem of how to

realise the NEW AND UNPRECEDENTED POSSIBILITIES OF WORLD

COLLECTIVISATION that have opened out upon the world in the past

hundred years. That is a new story. An entirely different story.

We human beings are facing gigantic forces that will either destroy

our species altogether or lift it to an altogether unprecedented

level of power and well-being. These forces have to be controlled

or we shall be annihilated. But competently controlled they can

abolish toil, they can abolish poverty, they can abolish slavery--

by the one sure means of making these things unnecessary. Class-war

communism has had its opportunity to realise all this, and it

has failed to make good. So far it has only replaced one

autocratic Russia by another. Russia, like all the rest of the

world, is still facing the problem of the competent government of a

collective system. She has not solved it.

The dictatorship of the proletariat has failed us. We have to look

for possibilities of control in other directions. Are they to be

found?

NOTE

A friendly adviser reading the passage on p.47 protests against

"the wombs of associated labour" as a mistranslation of the

original German of the Manifesto. I took it from the translation

of Professor Hirendranath Mukherjee in an Indian students' journal,

Sriharsha, which happened to be at my desk. But my adviser

produces Lily G. Aitken and Frank C. Budgen in a Glasgow Socialist

Labour Press publication, who gave it as "the lap of social

labour", which is more refined but pure nonsense. The German word

is "schoss", and in its widest sense it means the whole productive

maternal outfit from bosom to knees and here quite definitely the

womb. The French translation gives "sein", which at the first

glance seems to carry gentility to an even higher level. But as

you can say in French that an expectant mother carries her child in

her "sein", I think Professor Mukherjee has it. Thousands of

reverent young Communists must have read that "lap" without

observing its absurdity. Marx is trying to make out that the

increase of productive efficiency was due to "association" in

factories. A better phrase to express his (wrong-headed) intention

would have been "the co-ordinated operations of workers massed in

factories".

5. UNSATED YOUTH

We have now to examine these disruptive forces a little more

closely, these disruptive forces which are manifestly overstraining

and destroying the social and political system in which most of us

have been reared. At what particular points in our political and

social life are these disruptive forces discovering breaking-points?

Chief among these breaking-points, people are beginning to realise

more and more clearly, is the common, half-educated young man.

One particular consequence of this onrush of power and invention in

our time, is the release of a great flood of human energy in the

form of unemployed young people. This is a primary factor of the

general political instability.

We have to recognise that humanity is not suffering, as most animal

species when they suffer seem to do, from hunger or want in any

material form. It is threatened not by deficiency but by excess.

It is plethoric. It is not lying down to die through physical

exhaustion; it is knocking itself to pieces.

Measured by any standards except human contentment and ultimate

security, mankind appears to be much wealthier now than in 1918.

The quantities of power and material immediately available are much

greater. What is called productivity in general is greater. But

there is sound reason for supposing that a large part of this

increased productivity is really a swifter and more thorough

exploitation of irreplaceable capital. It is a process that cannot

go on indefinitely. It rises to a maximum and then the feast is

over. Natural resources are being exhausted at a great rate, and

the increased output goes into war munitions whose purpose is

destruction, and into sterile indulgences no better than waste.

Man, "heir of the ages", is a demoralised spendthrift, in a state

of galloping consumption, living on stimulants.

When we look into the statistics of population, there is

irrefutable proof that everywhere we are passing a maximum (see for

this Enid Charles's The Twilight of Parenthood, or R. R.

Kuczynski's Measurement of Population Growth) and that a rapid

decline is certain not only in Western Europe but throughout the

world. There is sound reason for doubting the alleged vast

increase of the Russian people (see Souvarine's Stalin).

Nevertheless, because of the continually increasing efficiency of

productive methods, the relative pressure of this new unemployed

class increases. The "mob" of the twentieth century is quite

different from the almost animal "mob" of the eighteenth century.

It is a restless sea of dissatisfied young people, of young women

who no longer bear children and young men who can find no outlet

for their natural urgencies and ambitions, young people quite ready

to "make trouble" as soon as they are shown how.

In the technically crude past, the illiterate Have-nots were

sweated and overworked. It was easy to find toil to keep them all

busy. Such surplus multitudes are wanted no more. Toil is no

longer marketable. Machines can toil better and with less

resistance.

These frustrated multitudes have been made acutely aware of their

own frustration. The gap of their always partly artificial

disadvantage has been greatly diminished because now they all read.

Even for incidental employment it has been necessary to teach them

that, and the new reading public thus created has evoked a press

and literature of excitement and suggestion. The cinema and the

radio dazzle them with spectacles of luxury and unrestricted

living. They are not the helpless Hodges and factory fodder of a

hundred years ago. They are educated up to what must have been the

middle-class level in 1889. They are indeed largely a squeezed-out

middle class, restless, impatient and as we shall see extremely

dangerous. They have assimilated almost all of the lower strata

that were formerly illiterate drudges.

And this modernised excess population has no longer any social

humility. It has no belief in the infallible wisdom of its rulers.

It sees them too clearly; it knows about them, their waste, vices

and weaknesses, with an even exaggerated vividness. It sees no

reason for its exclusion from the good things of life by such

people. It has lost enough of its inferiority to realise that most

of that inferiority is arbitrary and artificial.

You may say that this is a temporary state of affairs, that the

fall in population will presently relieve the situation, by getting

rid of this surplus of the "not wanted". But it will do nothing of

the sort. As population falls, consumption will fall. Industries

will still be producing more and more efficiently for a shrinking

market and they will be employing fewer and fewer hands. A state

of five million people with half a million of useless hands, will

be twice as unstable as forty million with two million standing

off. So long as the present state of affairs continues, this

stratum of perplexed young people "out of it" will increase

relatively to the total community.

It is still not realised as clearly as it should be, how much the

troubles of the present time are due to this new aspect of the

social puzzle. But if you will scrutinise the events of the past

half century in the light of this idea, you will see more and more

convincingly that it is mainly through this growing mass of

unfulfilled desire that the disruptive forces manifest themselves.

The eager and adventurous unemployed young are indeed the shock

troops in the destruction of the old social order everywhere. They

find guidance in some confident Party or some inspired Champion,

who organises them for revolutionary or counter-revolutionary ends.

It scarcely matters which. They become Communists or they become

Fascists, Nazis, the Irish Republican Army, Ku Klux Klansmen and so

forth and so on. The essence is the combination of energy,

frustration and discontent. What all such movements have in

common, is a genuine indignation at the social institutions that

have begotten and then cold-shouldered them, a quasi-military

organisation and the resolve to seize power for themselves embodied

in their leaders. A wise and powerful government would at any cost

anticipate and avert these destructive activities by providing

various and interesting new employment and the necessary condition

for a satisfyingly successful life for everyone. These young

people are life. The rise of the successful leader only puts off

the trouble for a time. He seizes power in the name of his

movement. And then? When the seizure of power has been effected,

he finds himself obliged to keep things going, to create

justification for his leadership, exciting enterprises, urgencies.

A leader of vision with adequate technical assistance might

conceivedly direct much of the human energy he has embodied into

creative channels. For example he could rebuild the dirty,

inadequate cities of our age, turn the still slovenly country-side

into a garden and playground, re-clothe, liberate and stimulate

imaginations, until the ideas of creative progress became a habit

of mind. But in doing this he will find himself confronted by

those who are sustained by the pre-emptions and appropriations of

the old order. These relatively well-off people will bargain with

him up to the last moment for their money and impede his seizure

and utilisation of land and material resources, and he will be

further hampered by the fact that in organising his young people he

has had to turn their minds and capacities from creative work to

systematic violence and militant activities. It is easy to make an

unemployed young man into a Fascist or gangster, but it is hard to

turn him back to any decent social task. Moreover the Champion's

own leadership was largely due to his conspiratorial and

adventurous quality. He is himself unfit for a creative job. He

finds himself a fighter at the head of a fighting pack.

And furthermore, unless his country is on the scale of Russia and

the United States, whatever he attempts in order to make good his

promises of an abundant life, has to be done in face of that mutual

pressure of the sovereign states due to the abolition of distance

and change of scale which we have already considered. He has no

elbow-room in which to operate. The resultant of these convergent

difficulties is to turn him and his fighting pack relentlessly

towards the simplifying, liberating and releasing flux of predatory

war.

Everywhere in the world, under varying local circumstances, we see

governments primarily concerned with this supreme problem of what

to do with these young adults who are unemployable under present

conditions. We have to realise that and bear it constantly in

mind. It is there in every country. It is the most dangerous and

wrong-headed view of the world situation, to treat the totalitarian

countries as differing fundamentally from the rest of the world.

The problem of reabsorbing the unemployable adult is the essential

problem in all states. It is the common shape to which all current

political dramas reduce. How are we to use up or slake this

surplus of human energy? The young are the live core of our

species. The generation below sixteen or seventeen has not yet

begun to give trouble, and after forty, the ebb of vitality

disposes men to accept the lot that has fallen to them.

Franklin Roosevelt and Stalin find themselves in control of vast

countries under-developed or so misdeveloped that their main

energies go into internal organisation or reorganisation. They do

not press against their frontiers therefore and they do not

threaten war. The recent Russian annexations have been

precautionary-defensive. But all the same both Russia and America

have to cater for that troublesome social stratum quite as much as

Europe. The New Deal is plainly an attempt to achieve a working

socialism and avert a social collapse in America; it is

extraordinarily parallel to the successive "policies" and "Plans"

of the Russian experiment. Americans shirk the word "socialism",

but what else can one call it?

The British oligarchy, demoralised and slack with the accumulated

wealth of a century of advantage, bought off social upheaval for a

time by the deliberate and socially demoralising appeasement of the

dole. It has made no adequate effort to employ or educate these

surplus people; it has just pushed the dole at them. It even tries

to buy off the leader of the Labour Party with a salary of £2000 a

year. Whatever we may think of the quality and deeds of the Nazi

or Fascist regimes or the follies of their leaders, we must at any

rate concede that they attempt, however clumsily, to reconstruct

life in a collectivist direction. They are efforts to adjust and

construct and so far they are in advance of the British ruling

class. The British Empire has shown itself the least constructive

of all governing networks. It produces no New Deals, no Five Year

Plans; it keeps on trying to stave off its inevitable dissolution

and carry on upon the old lines--and apparently it will do that

until it has nothing more to give away.

"Peace in our time", that foolishly premature self-congratulation

of Mr Chamberlain, is manifestly the guiding principle of the

British elder statesmen. It is that natural desire we all begin to

feel after sixty to sit down comfortably somewhere. Unprogressive

tranquillity they want at any price, even at the price of a

preventive war. This astonishing bunch of rulers has never

revealed any conception whatever of a common future before its

sprawling Empire. There was a time when that Empire seemed likely

to become the nexus of a world system, but now manifestly it has no

future but disintegration. Apparently its rulers expected it to go

on just as it was for ever. Bit by bit its component parts have

dropped away and become quasi-independent powers, generally after

an unedifying struggle; Southern Ireland for example is neutral in

the present war, South Africa hesitated.

Now, and that is why this book is being written, these people, by a

string of almost incredible blunders, have entangled what is left

of their Empire in a great war to "end Hitler", and they have

absolutely no suggestion to offer their antagonists and the world

at large, of what is to come after Hitler. Apparently they hope to

paralyse Germany in some as yet unspecified fashion and then to go

back to their golf links or the fishing stream and the doze by the

fire after dinner. That is surely one of the most astounding

things in history, the possibility of death and destruction beyond

all reckoning and our combatant governments have no idea of what is

to follow when the overthrow of Hitler is accomplished. They seem

to be as void of any sense of the future, as completely empty-headed

about the aftermath of their campaigns, as one of those

American Tories who are "just out against F.D.R. Damn him!"

So the British Empire remains, paying its way down to ultimate

bankruptcy, buying itself a respite from the perplexing problems of

the future, with the accumulated wealth and power of its past. It

is rapidly becoming the most backward political organisation in the

world. But sooner or later it will have no more money for the dole

and no more allies to abandon nor dominions to yield up to their

local bosses, and then possibly its disintegration will be complete

(R.I.P.), leaving intelligent English people to line up at last

with America and the rest of the intelligent world and face the

universal problem. Which is: how are we to adapt ourselves to

these mighty disruptive forces that are shattering human society as

it is at present constituted?

In the compressed countries which have little internal scope and

lack the vast natural resources of the Russian and Atlantic

communities, the internal tension makes more directly for

aggressive warfare, but the fundamental driving-force behind their

aggressiveness is still the universal trouble, that surplus of

young men.

Seen in this broader vision, the present war falls into its true

proportions as a stupid conflict upon secondary issues, which is

delaying and preventing an overdue world adjustment. That it may

kill hundreds of thousands of people does not alter that. An idiot

with a revolver can murder a family. He remains an idiot.

From 1914 to 1939 has been a quarter of a century of folly,

meanness, evasion and resentment, and only a very tedious and

copious historian would attempt to distribute the blame among those

who had played a part in the story. And when he had done it, what

he had done would not matter in the least. An almost overwhelmingly

difficult problem has confronted us all, and in some measure we have

all of us lost our heads in the face of it, lost our dignity, been

too clever by half, pinned ourselves to cheap solutions, quarrelled

stupidly among ourselves. "We have erred and strayed. . . . We

have left undone those things that we ought to have done and we have

done those things which we ought not to have done and there is no

health in us."

I do not see any way to a solution of the problem of World Peace

unless we begin with a confession of universal wrong-thinking and

wrong-doing. Then we can sit down to the question of a solution

with some reasonable prospect of finding an answer.

Now let us assume that "we" are a number of intelligent men,

German, French, English, American, Italian, Chinese and so forth,

who have decided in consequence of the war and in spite of the war,

while the war is still going on, to wipe out all these squabbling

bygones from our minds, and discuss plainly and simply the present

situation of mankind. What is to be done with the world? Let us

recapitulate the considerations that so far have been brought into

the case and then examine where they lead us, what other general

considerations can be brought in, and what prospects they open, if

any, of some hopeful concerted action, action that would so

revolutionise the human outlook as to end war and that hectic

recurrent waste of human life and happiness, for ever.

Firstly then it has been made apparent that humanity is at the end

of an age, an age of fragmentation in the management of its

affairs, fragmentation politically among separate sovereign states

and economically among unrestricted business organisations

competing for profit. The abolition of distance, the enormous

increase of available power, root causes of all our troubles, have

suddenly made what was once a tolerable working system--a system

that was perhaps with all its inequalities and injustices the only

practicable working system in its time--enormously dangerous and

wasteful, so that it threatens to exhaust and destroy our world

altogether. Man is like a feckless heir who has suddenly been able

to get at his capital and spend it as though it were income. We

are living in a phase of violent and irreparable expenditure.

There is an intensified scramble among nations and among

individuals to acquire, monopolise and spend. The dispossessed

young find themselves hopeless unless they resort to violence.

They implement the ever-increasing instability. Only a

comprehensive collectivisation of human affairs can arrest this

disorderly self-destruction of mankind. All this has been made

plain in what has gone before.

This essential problem, the problem of collectivisation, can be

viewed from two reciprocal points of view and stated in two

different ways. We can ask, "What is to be done to end the world

chaos?" and also "How can we offer the common young man a

reasonable and stimulating prospect of a full life?"

These two questions are the obverse and reverse of one question.

What answers one answers the other. The answer to both is that we

have to collectivise the world as one system with practically

everyone playing a reasonably satisfying part in it. For sound

practical reasons, over and above any ethical or sentimental

considerations, we have to devise a collectivisation that neither

degrades nor enslaves.

Our imaginary world conference then has to turn itself to the

question of how to collectivise the world, so that it will remain

collectivised and yet enterprising, interesting and happy enough to

content that common young man who will otherwise reappear, baffled

and sullen, at the street corners and throw it into confusion

again. To that problem the rest of this book will address itself.

As a matter of fact it is very obvious that at the present time a

sort of collectivisation is being imposed very rapidly upon the

world. Everyone is being enrolled, ordered about, put under

control somewhere--even if it is only in an evacuation or

concentration camp or what not. This process of collectivisation,

collectivisation of some sort, seems now to be in the nature of

things and there is no reason to suppose it is reversible.

Some people imagine world peace as the end of that process.

Collectivisation is going to be defeated and a vaguely conceived

reign of law will restore and sustain property, Christianity,

individualism and everything to which the respectable prosperous

are accustomed. This is implicit even in the title of such a book

as Edward Mousley's Man or Leviathan? It is much more reasonable

to think that world peace has to be the necessary completion of

that process, and that the alternative is a decadent anarchy. If

so, the phrase for the aims of liberal thought should be no Man or

Leviathan but Man masters Leviathan.

On this point, the inevitability of collectivisation as the sole

alternative to universal brigandage and social collapse, our world

conference must make itself perfectly clear.

Then it has to turn itself to the much more difficult and

complicated question of HOW.

6. SOCIALISM UNAVOIDABLE

Let us, even at the cost of a certain repetition, look a little

more closely now into the fashion in which the disruptive forces

are manifesting themselves in the Western and Eastern hemispheres.

In the Old World the hypertrophy of armies is most conspicuous, in

America it was the hypertrophy of big business. But in both the

necessity for an increasing collective restraint upon uncoordinated

over-powerful business or political enterprise is more and more

clearly recognised.

There is a strong opposition on the part of great interests in

America to the President, who has made himself the spear-head of

the collectivising drive; they want to put the brake now on his

progressive socialisation of the nation, and quite possibly, at the

cost of increasing social friction, they may slow down the drift to

socialism very considerably. But it is unbelievable that they dare

provoke the social convulsion that would ensue upon a deliberate

reversal of the engines or upon any attempt to return to the

glorious days of big business, wild speculation and mounting

unemployment before 1927. They will merely slow down the drive.

For in the world now all roads lead to socialism or social

dissolution.

The tempo of the process is different in the two continents; that

is the main difference between them. It is not an opposition.

They travel at different rates but they travel towards an identical

goal. In the Old World at present the socialisation of the

community is going on far more rapidly and thoroughly than it is in

America because of the perpetual war threat.

In Western Europe now the dissolution and the drive towards

socialisation progress by leaps and bounds. The British governing

class and British politicians generally, overtaken by a war they

had not the intelligence to avert, have tried to atone for their

slovenly unimaginativeness during the past twenty years in a

passion of witless improvisation. God knows what their actual war

preparations amount to, but their domestic policy seems to be based

on an imperfect study of Barcelona, Guernica, Madrid and Warsaw.

They imagine similar catastrophes on a larger scale--although they

are quite impossible, as every steady-headed person who can

estimate the available supplies of petrol knows--and they have a

terrible dread of being held responsible. They fear a day of

reckoning with their long-bamboozled lower classes. In their panic

they are rapidly breaking up the existing order altogether.

The changes that have occurred in Great Britain in less than a year

are astounding. They recall in many particulars the social

dislocation of Russia in the closing months of 1917. There has

been a shifting and mixing-up of people that would have seemed

impossible to anyone in 1937. The evacuation of the centres of

population under the mere exaggerated threat of air raids has been

carried out by the authorities in a mood of frantic recklessness.

Hundreds of thousands of families have been broken up, children

separated from their parents and quartered in the homes of more or

less reluctant hosts. Parasites and skin diseases, vicious habits

and insanitary practices have been spread, as if in a passion of

equalitarian propaganda, from the slums of such centres as Glasgow,

London and Liverpool, throughout the length and breadth of the

land. Railways, road traffic, all the normal communications have

been dislocated by a universal running about. For a couple of

months Great Britain has been more like a disturbed ant-hill than

an organised civilised country.

The contagion of funk has affected everyone. Public institutions

and great business concerns have bolted to remote and inconvenient

sites; the B.B.C. organisation, for example, scuffled off headlong

from London, needlessly and ridiculously, no man pursuing it.

There has been a wild epidemic of dismissals, of servants employed

in London, for example, and a still wilder shifting of unsuitable

men to novel, unnecessary jobs. Everyone has been exhorted to

serve the country, children of twelve, to the great delight of

conservative-minded farmers, have been withdrawn from school and

put to work on the land, and yet the number of those who have lost

their jobs and cannot find anything else to do, has gone up by over

100,000.

There have been amateurish attempts to ration food, producing waste

here and artificial scarcity there. A sort of massacre of small

independent businesses is in progress mainly to the advantage of

the big provision-dealing concerns, who changed in a night from

open profiteers to become the "expert" advisers of food supply.

All the expertise they have ever displayed has been the extraction

of profits from food supply. But while profits mount, taxation

with an air of great resolution sets itself to prune them.

The British public has always been phlegmatic in the face of

danger, it is too stout-hearted and too stupid to give way to

excesses of fear, but the authorities have thought it necessary to

plaster the walls with vast, manifestly expensive, posters, headed

with a Royal Crown, "YOUR courage, YOUR resolution, YOUR

cheerfulness will bring us victory."

"Oh yus," said the London Cockney. "YOU'LL get the victory all

right. Trust YOU. On MY courage, MY resolution, MY cheerfulness;

you'll use up 'Tommy Atkins' all right. Larf at 'im in a kindly

sort of way and use him. And then you think you'll put him back

again on the dust-heap. AGAIN? Twice?"

That is all too credible. But this time our rulers will emerge

discredited and frustrated from the conflict to face a disorganised

population in a state of mutinous enquiry. They have made

preposterous promises to restore Poland and they will certainly

have to eat their words about that. Or what is more probable the

government will have to give place to another administration which

will be able to eat those words for them with a slightly better

grace. There is little prospect of Thanksgiving Services or any

Armistice night orgy this time. People at home are tasting the

hardships of war even more tediously and irritatingly than the men

on active service. Cinemas, theatres, have been shut prematurely,

black-outs have diminished the safety of the streets and doubled

the tale of road casualties. The British crowd is already a sullen

crowd. The world has not seen it in such a bad temper for a

century and a half, and, let there be no mistake about it, it is

far less in a temper with the Germans than it is with its own

rulers.

Through all this swirling intimidating propaganda of civil disorder

and a systematic suppression of news and criticism of the most

exasperating sort, war preparation has proceeded. The perplexed

and baffled citizen can only hope that on the military side there

has been a little more foresight and less hysteria.

The loss of confidence and particularly confidence in the

government and social order is already enormous. No one feels

secure, in his job, in his services, in his savings, any longer.

People lose confidence even in the money in their pockets. And

human society is built on confidence. It cannot carry on without

it.

Things are like this already and it is only the opening stage of

this strange war. The position of the ruling class and the

financial people who have hitherto dominated British affairs is a

peculiar one. The cost of the war is already enormous, and there

is no sign that it will diminish. Income tax, super tax, death

duties, taxes on war profits have been raised to a level that

should practically extinguish the once prosperous middle strata of

society altogether. The very wealthy will survive in a shorn and

diminished state, they will hang on to the last, but the graded

classes that have hitherto intervened between them and the

impoverished masses of the population, who will be irritated by war

sacrifices, extensively unemployed and asking more and more

penetrating questions, will have diminished greatly. Only by the

most ingenious monetary manipulation, by dangerous tax-dodging and

expedients verging on sheer scoundrelism, will a clever young man

have the ghost of a chance of climbing by the old traditional

money-making ladder, above his fellows. On the other hand, the career

of a public employee will become continually more attractive. There

is more interest in it and more self-respect. The longer the war

continues, the completer and more plainly irreparable will be the

dissolution of the old order.

Now to many readers who have been incredulous of the statement of

the first section of this book, that we are living in the End of an

Age, to those who have been impervious to the account of the

disruptive forces that are breaking up the social order and to the

argument I have drawn from them, who may have got away from all

that, so to speak, by saying they are "scientific" or "materialistic"

or "sociological" or "highbrow", or that the Providence that has

hitherto displayed such a marked bias in favour of well-off,

comfortable, sluggish-minded people is sure to do something nice for

them at the eleventh hour, the real inconveniences, alarms, losses

and growing disorder of the life about them may at last bring a

realisation that the situation in Western Europe is approaching

revolutionary conditions. It will be a hard saying for many people

in the advantage-holding classes, and particularly if they are

middle-aged, that the old order has already gone to pieces and can

never be put back. But how can they doubt it?

A revolution, that is to say a more or less convulsive effort at

social and political readjustment, is bound to come in all these

overstrained countries, in Germany, in Britain and universally. It

is more likely than not to arise directly out of the exasperating

diminuendos and crescendos of the present war, as a culminating

phase of it. Revolution of some sort we must have. We cannot

prevent its onset. But we can affect the course of its

development. It may end in utter disaster or it may release a new

world, far better than the old. Within these broad limits it is

possible for us to make up our minds HOW it will come to us.

And since the only practical question before us is the question of

HOW we will take this world revolution we cannot possibly evade,

let me recall to your attention the reasons I have advanced in the

second section of this book for the utmost public discussion of our

situation at the present time. And also let me bring back to mind

the examination of Marxism in the fourth section. There it is

shown how easily a collectivist movement, especially when it is

faced by the forcible-feeble resistances and suppressions of those

who have hitherto enjoyed wealth and power, may degenerate into an

old-fashioned class-war, become conspiratorial, dogmatic and

inadaptable, and sink towards leader worship and autocracy. That

apparently is what has happened in Russia in its present phase. We

do not know how much of the original revolutionary spirit survives

there, and a real fundamental issue in the world situation is

whether we are to follow in the footsteps of Russia or whether we

are going to pull ourselves together, face the stern logic of

necessity and produce a Western Revolution, which will benefit by

the Russian experience, react upon Russia and lead ultimately to a

world understanding.

What is it that the Atlantic world finds most objectionable in the

Soviet world of to-day? Is it any disapproval of collectivism as

such? Only in the case of a dwindling minority of rich and

successful men--and very rarely of the sons of such people. Very

few capable men under fifty nowadays remain individualists in

political and social matters. They are not even fundamentally

anti-Communist. Only it happens that for various reasons the political

life of the community is still in the hands of unteachable old-fashioned

people. What are called "democracies" suffer greatly

from the rule of old men who have not kept pace with the times.

The real and effective disapproval, distrust and disbelief in the

soundness of the Soviet system lies not in the out-of-date

individualism of these elderly types, but in the conviction that it

can never achieve efficiency or even maintain its honest ideal of

each for all and all for each, unless it has free speech and an

insistence upon legally-defined freedoms for the individual within

the collectivist framework. We do not deplore the Russian

Revolution as a Revolution. We complain that it is not a good

enough Revolution and we want a better one.

The more highly things are collectivised the more necessary is a

legal system embodying the Rights of Man. This has been forgotten

under the Soviets, and so men go in fear there of arbitrary police

action. But the more functions your government controls the more

need there is for protective law. The objection to Soviet

collectivism is that, lacking the antiseptic of legally assured

personal freedom, it will not keep. It professes to be

fundamentally a common economic system based on class-war ideas;

the industrial director is under the heel of the Party commissar;

the political police have got altogether out of hand; and affairs

gravitate inevitably towards an oligarchy or an autocracy

protecting its incapacity by the repression of adverse comment.

But these valid criticisms merely indicate the sort of

collectivisation that has to be avoided. It does not dispose of

collectivism as such. If we in our turn do not wish to be

submerged by the wave of Bolshevisation that is evidently advancing

from the East, we must implement all these valid objections and

create a collectivisation that will be more efficient, more

prosperous, tolerant, free and rapidly progressive than the system

we condemn. We, who do not like the Stalinised-Marxist state,

have, as they used to say in British politics, to "dish" it by

going one better. We have to confront Eastern-spirited

collectivism with Western-spirited collectivism.

Perhaps this may be better put. We may be giving way to a sub-conscious

conceit here and assuming that the West is always going

to be thinking more freely and clearly and working more efficiently

than the East. It is like that now, but it may not always be like

that. Every country has had its phases of illumination and its

phases of blindness. Stalin and Stalinism are neither the

beginning nor the end of the collectivisation of Russia.

We are dealing with something still almost impossible to estimate,

the extent to which the new Russian patriotism and the new Stalin-worship,

have effaced and how far they have merely masked, the

genuinely creative international communism of the revolutionary

years. The Russian mind is not a docile mind, and most of the

literature available for a young man to read in Russia, we must

remember, is still revolutionary. There has been no burning of the

books there. The Moscow radio talks for internal consumption since

the Hitler-Stalin understanding betray a great solicitude on the

part of the government to make it clear that there has been no

sacrifice of revolutionary principle. That witnesses to the

vitality of public opinion in Russia. The clash between the

teachings of 1920 and 1940 may have a liberating effect on many

people's minds. Russians love to talk about ideas. Under the Czar

they talked. It is incredible that they do not talk under Stalin.

That question whether collectivisation is to be "Westernised" or

"Easternised", using these words under the caveat of the previous

paragraph, is really the first issue before the world to-day. We

need a fully ventilated Revolution. Our Revolution has to go on in

the light and air. We may have to accept sovietisation à la Russe

quite soon unless we can produce a better collectivisation. But if

we produce a better collectivisation it is more probable than not

that the Russian system will incorporate our improvements, forget

its reviving nationalism again, debunk Marx and Stalin, so far as

they can be debunked, and merge into the one world state.

Between these primary antagonists, between Revolution with its eyes

open and Revolution with a mask and a gag, there will certainly be

complications of the issue due to patriotism and bigotry and the

unteachable wilful blindness of those who do not want to see. Most

people lie a lot to themselves before they lie to other people, and

it is hopeless to expect that all the warring cults and traditions

that confuse the mind of the race to-day are going to fuse under a

realisation of the imperative nature of the human situation as I

have stated it here. Multitudes will never realise it. Few human

beings are able to change their primary ideas after the middle

thirties. They get fixed in them and drive before them no more

intelligently than animals drive before their innate impulses.

They will die rather than change their second selves.

One of the most entangling of these disconcerting secondary issues

is that created by the stupid and persistent intrigues of the Roman

Catholic Church.

Let me be clear here. I am speaking of the Vatican and of its

sustained attempts to exercise a directive rôle in secular life. I

number among my friends many Roman Catholics who have built the

most charming personalities and behaviour systems on the framework

provided them by their faith. One of the loveliest characters I

have ever known was G. K. Chesterton. But I think he was just as

fine before he became a Catholic as afterwards. Still he found

something he needed in Catholicism. There are saints of all creeds

and of none, so good are the better possibilities of human nature.

Religious observances provide a frame that many find indispensable

for the seemly ordering of their lives. And outside the ranks of

"strict" observers many good people with hardly more theology than

a Unitarian, love to speak of goodness and kindness as Christianity.

So-and-so is a "good Christian". Voltaire, says Alfred Noyes, the

Catholic writer, was a "good Christian". I do not use the word

"Christianity" in that sense because I do not believe that

Christians have any monopoly of goodness. When I write of

Christianity, I mean Christianity with a definite creed and militant

organisation and not these good kind people, good and kind but not

very fastidious about the exact use of words.

Such "good Christians" can be almost as bitterly critical as I am

of the continual pressure upon the faithful by that inner group of

Italians in Rome, subsidised by the Fascist government, who pull

the strings of Church policy throughout the world, so as to do this

or that tortuous or uncivilised thing, to cripple education, to

persecute unorthodox ways of living.

It is to the influence of the Church that we must ascribe the

foolish support by the British Foreign Office of Franco, that

murderous little "Christian gentleman", in his overthrow of the

staggering liberal renascence of Spain. It is the Roman Catholic

influence the British and French have to thank, for the fantastic

blundering that involved them in the defence of the impossible

Polish state and its unrighteous acquisitions; it affected British

policy in respect to Austria and Czechoslovakia profoundly, and now

it is doing its utmost to maintain and develop a political

estrangement between Russia and the Western world by its prejudiced

exacerbation of the idea that Russia is "anti-God" while we

Westerners are little children of the light, gallantly fighting on

the side of the Cross, Omnipotence, Greater Poland, national

sovereignty, the small uneconomic prolific farmer and shopkeeper

and anything else you like to imagine constitutes "Christendom".

The Vatican strives perpetually to develop the present war into a

religious war. It is trying to steal the war. By all the

circumstances of its training it is unteachable. It knows no

better. It will go on--until some economic revolution robs it of

its funds. Then as a political influence it may evaporate very

rapidly. The Anglican Church and many other Protestant sects, the

wealthy Baptists, for example, follow suit.

It is not only in British affairs that this propaganda goes on.

With the onset of war France becomes militant and Catholic. It has

suppressed the Communist Party, as a gesture of resentment against

Russia and a precaution against post-war collectivisation. The

Belgian caricaturist Raemaekers is now presenting Hitler day after

day as a pitiful weakling already disposed of and worthy of our

sympathy, while Stalin is represented as a frightful giant with

horns and a tail. Yet both France and Britain are at peace with

Russia and have every reason to come to a working understanding

with that country. The attitude of Russia to the war has on the

whole been cold, contemptuous and reasonable.

It is not as if these devious schemes can take us somewhere;

it is not that this restoration of the Holy Roman Empire is a

possibility. You confront these Catholic politicians, just as you

confront the politicians of Westminster, with these two cardinal

facts, the abolition of distance and the change of scale. In vain.

You cannot get any realisation of the significance of these things

into those idea-proofed skulls. They are deaf to it, blind to it.

They cannot see that it makes any difference at all to their

long-established mental habits. If their minds waver for a moment they

utter little magic prayers to exorcise the gleam.

What, they ask, has "MERE size" to do with the soul of man, "MERE

speed, MERE power"? What can the young do better than subdue their

natural urgency to live and do? What has MERE life to do with the

religious outlook? The war, these Vatican propagandists insist, is

a "crusade" against modernism, against socialism and free thought,

the restoration of priestly authority is its end; our sons are

fighting to enable the priest to thrust his pious uncleanliness

once again between reader and book, child and knowledge, husband

and wife, sons and lovers. While honest men are fighting now to

put an end to military aggression, to resume indeed that "war to

end war" that was aborted to give us the League of Nations, these

bigots are sedulously perverting the issue, trying to represent it

as a religious war against Russia in particular and the modern

spirit in general.

The well-trained Moslem, the American fundamentalist, the orthodox

Jew, all the fixed cultures, produce similar irrelevant and

wasteful resistances, but the Catholic organisation reaches further

and is more persistent. It is frankly opposed to human effort and

the idea of progress. It makes no pretence about it.

Such cross-activities as these complicate, delay and may even

sabotage effectively every effort to solve the problem of a lucid

collectivisation of the world's affairs, but they do not alter the

essential fact that it is only through a rationalisation and

coalescence of constructive revolutionary movements everywhere and

a liberal triumph over the dogmatism of the class war, that we can

hope to emerge from the present wreckage of our world.

7. FEDERATION

Let us now take up certain vaguely constructive proposals which

seem at present to be very much in people's minds. They find their

cardinal expression in a book called Union Now by Mr Clarence K.

Streit, which has launched the magic word "Federation" upon the

world. The "democracies" of the world are to get together upon a

sort of enlargement of the Federal Constitution of the United

States (which produced one of the bloodiest civil wars in all

history) and then all will be well with us.

Let us consider whether this word "Federation" is of any value in

organising the Western Revolution. I would suggest it is. I think

it may be a means of mental release for many people who would

otherwise have remained dully resistant to any sort of change.

This Federation project has an air of reasonableness. It is

attractive to a number of influential people who wish with the

minimum of adaptation to remain influential in a changing world,

and particularly is it attractive to what I may call the

liberal-conservative elements of the prosperous classes in America and

Great Britain and the Oslo countries, because it puts the most

difficult aspect of the problem, the need for a collective

socialisation, so completely in the background that it can be

ignored. This enables them to take quite a bright and hopeful view

of the future without any serious hindrance to their present

preoccupations.

They think that Federation, reasonably defined, may suspend the

possibility of war for a considerable period and so lighten the

burden of taxation that the present crushing demands on them will

relax and they will be able to resume, on a slightly more

economical scale perhaps, their former way of living. Everything

that gives them hope and self-respect and preserves their homes

from the worst indignities of panic, appeasement, treason-hunting

and the rest of it, is to be encouraged, and meanwhile their sons

will have time to think and it may be possible so to search,

ransack and rationalise the Streit project as to make a genuine and

workable scheme for the socialisation of the world.

In The Fate of Homo sapiens I examined the word "democracy" with

some care, since it already seemed likely that great quantities of

our young men were to be asked to cripple and risk their lives for

its sake. I showed that it was still a very incompletely realised

aspiration, that its complete development involved socialism and a

level of education and information attained as yet by no community

in the world. Mr Streit gives a looser, more rhetorical statement--

a more idealistic statement, shall we say?--of his conception of

democracy, the sort of statement that would be considered wildly

exaggerated even if it was war propaganda, and though unhappily it

is remote from any achieved reality, he proceeds without further

enquiry as if it were a description of existing realities in what

he calls the "democracies" of the world. In them he imagines he

finds "government of the people, by the people, for the people".

In the book I have already cited I discuss What is Democracy? and

Where is Democracy? I do my best there to bring Mr Streit down to

the harsh and difficult facts of the case. I will go now a little

more into particulars in my examination of his project.

His "founder democracies" are to be: "The American Union, the

British Commonwealth (specifically the United Kingdom, the Federal

Dominion of Canada, the Commonwealth of Australia, New Zealand, the

Union of South Africa, Ireland), the French Republic, Belgium, the

Netherlands, the Swiss Confederation, Denmark, Norway, Sweden and

Finland."

Scarcely one of these, as I have shown in that former book, is

really a fully working democracy. And the Union of South Africa is

a particularly bad and dangerous case of race tyranny. Ireland is

an incipient religious war and not one country but two. Poland, I

note, does not come into Mr Streit's list of democracies at all.

His book was written in 1938 when Poland was a totalitarian country

holding, in defiance of the League of Nations, Vilna, which it had

taken from Lithuania, large areas of non-Polish country it had

CONQUERED from Russia, and fragments gained by the dismemberment of

Czechoslovakia. It only became a democracy, even technically and

for a brief period, before its collapse in September 1939, when Mr

Chamberlain was so foolish as to drag the British Empire into a

costly and perilous war, on its behalf. But that is by the way.

None of these fifteen (or ten) "founder democracies" are really

democracies at all. So we start badly. But they might be made

socialist democracies and their federation might be made something

very real indeed--at a price. The U.S.S.R. is a federated

socialist system, which has shown a fairly successful political

solidarity during the past two decades, whatever else it has done

or failed to do.

Now let us help Mr Streit to convert his "federation" from a noble

but extremely rhetorical aspiration into a living reality. He is

aware that this must be done at a price, but I want to suggest that

that price is, from what I judge to be his point of view, far

greater, and the change much simpler, more general and possibly

even closer at hand, than he supposes. He is disposed to appeal to

existing administrative organisations, and it is questionable

whether they are the right people to execute his designs. One of

the difficulties he glosses over is the possible reluctance of the

India Office to hand over the control of India (Ceylon and Burma he

does not mention) to the new Federal Government, which would also,

I presume, take charge of the fairly well governed and happy fifty-odd

million people of the Dutch East Indies, the French colonial

empire, the West Indies and so on. This, unless he proposes merely

to re-christen the India Office, etc., is asking for an immense

outbreak of honesty and competence on the part of the new Federal

officialdom. It is also treating the possible contribution of

these five or six hundred million of dusky peoples to the new order

with a levity inconsistent with democratic ideals.

Quite a lot of these people have brains which are as good or better

than normal European brains. You could educate the whole world to

the not very exalted level of a Cambridge graduate in a single

lifetime, if you had schools, colleges, apparatus and teachers

enough. The radio, the cinema, the gramophone, the improvements in

both production and distribution, have made it possible to increase

the range and effectiveness of a gifted teacher a thousandfold. We

have seen intensive war preparations galore, but no one has dreamt

yet of an intensive educational effort. None of us really like to

see other people being educated. They may be getting an advantage

over our privileged selves. Suppose we overcome that primitive

jealousy. Suppose we speed up--as we are now physically able to

do--the education and enfranchisement of these huge undeveloped

reservoirs of human capacity. Suppose we tack that on to the Union

Now idea. Suppose we stipulate that Federation, wherever it

extends, means a New and Powerful Education. In Bengal, in Java,

in the Congo Free State, quite as much as in Tennessee or Georgia

or Scotland or Ireland. Suppose we think a little less about

"gradual enfranchisement" by votes and experiments in local

autonomy and all these old ideas, and a little more about the

enfranchisement of the mind. Suppose we drop that old cant about

politically immature peoples.

That is one direction in which Mr Streit's proposals are open to

improvement. Let us turn to another in which he does not seem to

have realised all the implications of his proposal. This great

Union is to have a union money and a union customs-free economy.

What follows upon that? More I think than he realises.

There is one aspect of money to which the majority of those that

discuss it seem to be incurably blind. You cannot have a theory of

money or any plan about money by itself in the air. Money is not a

thing in itself; it is a working part of an economic system. Money

varies in its nature with the laws and ideas of property in a

community. As a community moves towards collectivism and

communism, for example, money simplifies out. Money is as

necessary in a communism as it is in any other system, but its

function therein is at its simplest. Payment in kind to the worker

gives him no freedom of choice among the goods the community

produces. Money does. Money becomes the incentive that "works the

worker" and nothing more.

But directly you allow individuals not only to obtain goods for

consumption, but also to obtain credit to procure material for

types of production outside the staple productions of the state,

the question of credit and debt arises and money becomes more

complicated. With every liberation of this or that product or

service from collective control to business or experimental

exploitation, the play of the money system enlarges and the laws

regulating what you may take for it, the company laws, bankruptcy

laws and so forth increase. In any highly developed collective

system the administration will certainly have to give credits for

hopeful experimental enterprises. When the system is not

collectivism, monetary operations for gain are bound to creep in

and become more and more complicated. Where most of the

substantial side of life is entrusted to uncoordinated private

enterprise, the intricacy of the money apparatus increases

enormously. Monetary manipulation becomes a greater and greater

factor in the competitive struggle, not only between individuals

and firms, but between states. As Mr Streit himself shows, in an

excellent discussion of the abandonment of the gold standard,

inflation and deflation become devices in international

competition. Money becomes strategic, just as pipe lines and

railways can become strategic.

This being so it is plain that for the Federal Union a common money

means an identical economic life throughout the Union. And this

too is implied also in Mr Streit's "customs-free" economy. It is

impossible to have a common money when a dollar or a pound, or

whatever it is, can buy this, that or the other advantage in one

state and is debarred from anything but bare purchases for

consumption in another. So that this Federal Union is bound to be

a uniform economic system. There can be only very slight

variations in the control of economic life.

In the preceding sections the implacable forces that make for the

collectivisation of the world or disaster, have been exposed. It

follows that "Federation" means practically uniform socialism

within the Federal limits, leading, as state after state is

incorporated, to world socialism. There manifestly we carry Mr

Streit farther than he realises he goes--as yet. For it is fairly

evident that he is under the impression that a large measure of

independent private business is to go on throughout the Union. I

doubt if he imagines it is necessary to go beyond the partial

socialisation already achieved by the New Deal. But we have

assembled evidence to show that the profit scramble, the wild days

of uncorrelated "business" are over for ever.

And again though he realises and states very clearly that

governments are made for man and not man for governments, though he

applauds the great declarations of the Convention that created the

American Constitution, wherein "we the people of the United States"

overrode the haggling of the separate states and established the

American Federal Constitution, nevertheless he is curiously chary

of superseding any existing legal governments in the present world.

He is chary of talking of "We the people of the world". But many

of us are coming to realise that ALL existing governments have to

go into the melting pot, we believe that it is a world revolution

which is upon us, and that in the great struggle to evoke a

Westernised World Socialism, contemporary governments may vanish

like straw hats in the rapids of Niagara. Mr Streit, however,

becomes extraordinarily legal-minded at this stage. I do not think

that he realises the forces of destruction that are gathering and

so I think he hesitates to plan a reconstruction upon anything like

the scale that may become possible.

He evades even the obvious necessity that under a Federal

Government the monarchies of Great Britain, Belgium, Norway,

Sweden, Holland, if they survive at all, must become like the

mediatised sovereigns of the component states of the former German

Empire, mere ceremonial vestiges. Perhaps he thinks that, but he

does not say it outright. I do not know if he has pondered the New

York World Fair of 1939 nor the significance of the Royal Visit to

America in that year, and thought how much there is in the British

system that would have to be abandoned if his Federation is to

become a reality. In most of the implications of the word, it must

cease to be "British". His Illustrative Constitution is achieved

with an altogether forensic disregard of the fundamental changes in

human conditions to which we have to adapt ourselves or perish. He

thinks of war by itself and not as an eruption due to deeper

maladaptations. But if we push his earlier stipulations to their

necessary completion, we need not trouble very much about that

sample constitution of his, which is to adjust the balance so

fairly among the constituent states. The abolition of distance

must inevitably substitute functional associations and loyalties

for local attributions, if human society does not break up

altogether. The local divisions will melt into a world

collectivity and the main conflicts in a progressively unifying

Federation are much more likely to be these between different

world-wide types and associations of workers.

So far with Union Now. One of Mr Streit's outstanding merits is

that he has had the courage to make definite proposals on which we

can bite. I doubt if a European could have produced any such book.

Its naïve political legalism, its idea of salvation by constitution,

and its manifest faith in the magic beneficence of private

enterprise, are distinctly in the vein of an American, almost a

pre-New Deal American, who has become, if anything, more American,

through his experiences of the deepening disorder of Europe. So

many Americans still look on at world affairs like spectators at a

ball game who are capable of vociferous participation but still have

no real sense of participation; they do not realise that the ground

is moving under their seats also, and that the social revolution is

breaking surface to engulf them in their turn. To most of us--to

most of us over forty at any rate--the idea of a fundamental change

in our way of life is so unpalatable that we resist it to the last

moment.

Mr Streit betrays at times as vivid a sense of advancing social

collapse as I have, but it has still to occur to him that that

collapse may be conclusive. There may be dark ages, a relapse into

barbarism, but somewhen and somehow he thinks man MUST recover.

George Bernard Shaw has recently been saying the same thing.

It may be worse than that.

I have given Mr Streit scarcely a word of praise, because that

would be beside the mark here. He wrote his book sincerely as a

genuine contribution to the unsystematic world conference that is

now going on, admitting the possibility of error, demanding

criticism, and I have dealt with it in that spirit.

Unfortunately his word has gone much further than his book. His

book says definite things and even when one disagrees with it, it

is good as a point of departure. But a number of people have

caught up this word "Federation", and our minds are distracted by a

multitude of appeals to support Federal projects with the most

various content or with no content at all.

All the scores and hundreds of thousands of nice people who were

signing peace pledges and so forth a few years ago, without the

slightest attempt in the world to understand what they meant by

peace, are now echoing this new magic word with as little

conception of any content for it. They did not realise that peace

means so complicated and difficult an ordering and balancing of

human society that it has never been sustained since man became

man, and that we have wars and preparatory interludes between wars

because that is a much simpler and easier sequence for our wilful,

muddle-headed, suspicious and aggressive species. These people

still think we can get this new and wonderful state of affairs just

by clamouring for it.

And having failed to get peace by saying "Peace" over and over

again, they are now with an immense sense of discovery saying

"Federation". What must happen to men in conspicuous public

positions I do not know, but even an irresponsible literary man

like myself finds himself inundated with innumerable lengthy

private letters, hysterical post-cards, pamphlets from budding

organisations, "declarations" to sign, demands for subscriptions,

all in the name of the new panacea, all as vain and unproductive as

the bleating of lost sheep. And I cannot open a newspaper without

finding some eminent contemporary writing a letter to it, saying

gently, firmly and bravely, the same word, sometimes with bits of

Union Now tacked on to it, and sometimes with minor improvements,

but often with nothing more than the bare idea.

All sorts of idealistic movements for world peace which have been

talking quietly to themselves for years and years have been stirred

up to follow the new banner. Long before the Great War there was a

book by Sir Max Waechter, a friend of King Edward the Seventh,

advocating the United States of Europe, and that inexact but

flattering parallelism to the United States of America has recurred

frequently; as a phrase thrown out by Monsieur Briand for example,

and as a project put forward by an Austrian-Japanese writer, Count

Coudenhove-Kalergi, who even devised a flag for the Union. The

main objection to the idea is that there are hardly any states

completely in Europe, except Switzerland, San Marino, Andorra and a

few of the Versailles creations. Almost all the other European

states extend far beyond the European limits both politically and

in their sympathies and cultural relations. They trail with them

more than half mankind. About a tenth of the British Empire is in

Europe and still less of the Dutch Empire; Russia, Turkey, France,

are less European than not; Spain and Portugal have their closest

links with South America.

Few Europeans think of themselves as "Europeans". I, for example,

am English, and a large part of my interests, intellectual and

material, are Transatlantic. I dislike calling myself "British"

and I like to think of myself as a member of a great English-speaking

community, which spreads irrespective of race and colour

round and about the world. I am annoyed when an American calls me

a "foreigner"--war with America would seem to me just as insane as

war with Cornwall--and I find the idea of cutting myself off from

the English-speaking peoples of America and Asia to follow the flag

of my Austrian-Japanese friend into a federally bunched-up Europe

extremely unattractive.

It would, I suggest, be far easier to create the United States of

the World, which is Mr Streit's ultimate objective, than to get

together the so-called continent of Europe into any sort of unity.

I find most of these United States of Europe movements are now

jumping on to the Federation band-waggon.

My old friend and antagonist, Lord David Davies, for instance, has

recently succumbed to the infection. He was concerned about the

problem of a World Pax in the days when the League of Nations

Society and other associated bodies were amalgamated in the League

of Nations Union. He was struck then by an idea, an analogy, and

the experience was unique for him. He asked why individuals went

about in modern communities in nearly perfect security from assault

and robbery, without any need to bear arms. His answer was the

policeman. And from that he went on to the question of what was

needed for states and nations to go their ways with the same

blissful immunity from violence and plunder, and it seemed to him a

complete and reasonable answer to say "an international policeman".

And there you were! He did not see, he is probably quite incapable

of seeing, that a state is something quite different in its nature

and behaviour from an individual human being. When he was asked to

explain how that international policeman was to be created and

sustained, he just went on saying "international policeman". He

has been saying it for years. Sometimes it seems it is to be the

League of Nations, sometimes the British Empire, sometimes an

international Air Force, which is to undertake this grave

responsibility. The bench before which the policeman is to hale

the offender and the position of the lock-up are not indicated.

Finding our criticisms uncongenial, his lordship went off with his

great idea, like a penguin which has found an egg, to incubate it

alone. I hope he will be spared to say "international policeman"

for many years to come, but I do not believe he has ever perceived

or ever will perceive that, brilliant as his one inspiration was,

it still left vast areas of the problem in darkness. Being a man

of considerable means, he has been able to sustain a "New

Commonwealth" movement and publish books and a periodical in which

his one great idea is elaborated rather than developed.

But I will not deal further with the very incoherent multitude that

now echoes this word "Federation". Many among them will cease to

cerebrate further and fall by the wayside, but many will go on

thinking, and if they go on thinking they will come to perceive

more and more clearly the realities of the case. Federation, they

will feel, is not enough.

So much for the present "Federalist" front. As a fundamental basis

of action, as a declared end, it seems hopelessly vague and

confused and, if one may coin a phrase, hopelessly optimistic. But

since the concept seems to be the way to release a number of minds

from belief in the sufficiency of a League of Nations, associated

or not associated with British Imperialism, it has been worth while

to consider how it can be amplified and turned in the direction of

that full and open-eyed world-wide collectivisation which a study

of existing conditions obliges us to believe is the only

alternative to the complete degeneration of our species.

8. THE NEW TYPE OF REVOLUTION

Let us return to our main purpose, which is to examine the way in

which we are to face up to this impending World Revolution.

To many minds this idea of Revolution is almost inseparable from

visions of street barricades made of paving-stones and overturned

vehicles, ragged mobs armed with impromptu weapons and inspired by

defiant songs, prisons broken and a general jail delivery, palaces

stormed, a great hunting of ladies and gentlemen, decapitated but

still beautiful heads on pikes, regicides of the most sinister

quality, the busy guillotine, a crescendo of disorder ending in a

whiff of grapeshot. . . .

That was one type of Revolution. It is what one might call the

Catholic type of Revolution, that it is to say it is the ultimate

phase of a long period of Catholic living and teaching. People do

not realise this and some will be indignant at its being stated so

barely. Yet the facts stare us in the face, common knowledge, not

to be denied. That furious, hungry, desperate, brutal mob was the

outcome of generations of Catholic rule, Catholic morality and

Catholic education. The King of France was the "Most Christian

King, the eldest son of the Church", he was master of the economic

and financial life of the community, and the Catholic Church

controlled the intellectual life of the community and the education

of the people absolutely. That mob was the outcome. It is absurd

to parrot that Christianity has never been tried. Christianity in

its most highly developed form has been tried and tried again. It

was tried for centuries fully and completely, in Spain, France,

Italy. It was responsible for the filth and chronic pestilence and

famine of medieval England. It inculcated purity but it never

inculcated cleanliness. Catholic Christianity had practically

unchallenged power in France for generations. It was free to teach

as it chose and as much as it chose. It dominated the common life

entirely. The Catholic system in France cannot have reaped

anything it did not sow, for no other sowers were allowed. That

hideous mob of murderous ragamuffins we are so familiar with in

pictures of the period, was the final harvest of its regime.

The more Catholic reactionaries revile the insurgent common people

of the first French Revolution, the more they condemn themselves.

It is the most impudent perversion of reality for them to snivel

about the guillotine and the tumbrils, as though these were not

purely Catholic products, as though they came in suddenly from

outside to wreck a genteel Paradise. They were the last stage of

the systematic injustice and ignorance of a strictly Catholic

regime. One phase succeeded another with relentless logic. The

Marseillaise completed the life-cycle of Catholicism.

In Spain too and in Mexico we have seen undisputed educational and

moral Catholic ascendancy, the Church with a free hand, producing a

similar uprush of blind resentment. The crowds there also were

cruel and blasphemous; but Catholicism cannot complain; for

Catholicism hatched them. Priests and nuns WHO HAD BEEN THE SOLE

TEACHERS OF THE PEOPLE were insulted and outraged and churches

defiled. Surely if the Church is anything like what it claims to

be, the people would have loved it. They would not have behaved as

though sacrilege was a gratifying relief.

But these Catholic Revolutions are only specimens of one single

type of Revolution. A Revolution need not be a spontaneous storm

of indignation against intolerable indignities and deprivations.

It can take quite other forms.

As a second variety of Revolution, which is in sharp contrast with

the indignation-revolt in which so many periods of unchallenged

Catholic ascendancy have ended, we may take what we may call the

"revolution conspiracy", in which a number of people set about

organising the forces of discomfort and resentment and loosening

the grip of the government's forces, in order to bring about a

fundamental change of system. The ideal of this type is the

Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, provided it is a little simplified

and misunderstood. This, reduced to a working theory by its

advocates, is conceived of as a systematic cultivation of a public

state of mind favourable to a Revolution together with an inner

circle of preparation for a "seizure of power". Quite a number of

Communist and other leftish writers, bright young men, without much

political experience, have let their imaginations loose upon the

"technique" of such an adventure. They have brought the Nazi and

Fascist Revolutions into the material for their studies. Modern

social structure with its concentration of directive, information

and coercive power about radio stations, telephone exchangers,

newspaper offices, police stations, arsenals and the like, lends

itself to quasi-gangster exploitation of this type. There is a

great rushing about and occupation of key centres, an organised

capture, imprisonment or murder of possible opponents, and the

country is confronted with a fait accompli. The regimentation of

the more or less reluctant population follows.

But a Revolution need be neither an explosion nor a coup d'état.

And the Revolution that lies before us now as the only hopeful

alternative to chaos, either directly or after an interlude of

world communism, is to be attained, if it is attained at all, by

neither of these methods. The first is too rhetorical and chaotic

and leads simply to a Champion and tyranny; the second is too

conspiratorial and leads through an obscure struggle of masterful

personalities to a similar end. Neither is lucid enough and

deliberate enough to achieve a permanent change in the form and

texture of human affairs.

An altogether different type of Revolution may or may not be

possible. No one can say that it is possible unless it is tried,

but one can say with some assurance that unless it can be achieved

the outlook for mankind for many generations at least is hopeless.

The new Revolution aims essentially at a change in directive ideas.

In its completeness it is an untried method.

It depends for its success upon whether a sufficient number of

minds can be brought to realise that the choice before us now is

NOT a choice between further revolution or more or less reactionary

conservatism, but a choice between so carrying on and so organising

the process of change in our affairs as to produce a new world

order, or suffering an entire and perhaps irreparable social

collapse. Our argument throughout has been that things have gone

too far ever to be put back again to any similitude of what they

have been. We can no more dream of remaining where we are than

think of going back in the middle of a dive. We must go through

with these present changes, adapt ourselves to them, adjust

ourselves to the plunge, or be destroyed by them. We must go

through with these changes just as we must go through this

ill-conceived war, because there is as yet no possible end for it.

There will be no possible way of ending it until the new Revolution

defines itself. If it is patched up now without a clear-headed

settlement understood and accepted throughout the world, we shall

have only the simulacrum of a peace. A patched-up peace now will

not even save us from the horrors of war, it will postpone them

only to aggravate them in a few years time. You cannot end this

war yet, you can at best adjourn it.

The reorganisation of the world has at first to be mainly the work

of a "movement" or a Party or a religion or cult, whatever we

choose to call it. We may call it the New Liberalism or the New

Radicalism or what not. It will not be a close-knit organisation,

toeing the Party line and so forth. It may be a very loose-knit

and many faceted, but if a sufficient number of minds throughout

the world, irrespective of race, origin or economic and social

habituations, can be brought to the free and candid recognition of

the essentials of the human problem, then their effective

collaboration in a conscious, explicit and open effort to

reconstruct human society will ensue.

And to begin with they will do all they can to spread and perfect

this conception of a new world order, which they will regard as the

only working frame for their activities, while at the same time

they will set themselves to discover and associate with themselves,

everyone, everywhere, who is intellectually able to grasp the same

broad ideas and morally disposed to realise them.

The distribution of this essential conception one may call

propaganda, but in reality it is education. The opening phase of

this new type of Revolution must involve therefore a campaign for

re-invigorated and modernised education throughout the world, an

education that will have the same ratio to the education of a

couple of hundred years ago, as the electric lighting of a

contemporary city has to the chandeliers and oil lamps of the same

period. On its present mental levels humanity can do no better

than what it is doing now.

Vitalising education is only possible when it is under the

influence of people who are themselves learning. It is inseparable

from the modern idea of education that it should be knit up to

incessant research. We say research rather than science. It is

the better word because it is free from any suggestion of that

finality which means dogmatism and death.

All education tends to become stylistic and sterile unless it is

kept in close touch with experimental verification and practical

work, and consequently this new movement of revolutionary

initiative, must at the same time be sustaining realistic political

and social activities and working steadily for the collectivisation

of governments and economic life. The intellectual movement will

be only the initiatory and correlating part of the new revolutionary

drive. These practical activities must be various. Everyone engaged

in them must be thinking for himself and not waiting for orders.

The only dictatorship he will recognise is the dictatorship of the

plain understanding and the invincible fact.

And if this culminating Revolution is to be accomplished, then the

participation of every conceivable sort of human being who has the

mental grasp to see these broad realities of the world situation

and the moral quality to do something about it, must be welcomed.

Previous revolutionary thrusts have been vitiated by bad

psychology. They have given great play to the gratification of the

inferiority complexes that arise out of class disadvantages. It is

no doubt very unjust that anyone should be better educated,

healthier and less fearful of the world than anyone else, but that

is no reason why the new Revolution should not make the fullest use

of the health, education, vigour and courage of the fortunate. The

Revolution we are contemplating will aim at abolishing the

bitterness of frustration. But certainly it will do nothing to

avenge it. Nothing whatever. Let the dead past punish its dead.

It is one of the most vicious streaks in the Marxist teaching to

suggest that all people of wealth and capacity living in a

community in which unco-ordinated private enterprise plays a large

part are necessarily demoralised by the advantages they enjoy and

that they must be dispossessed by the worker and the peasant, who

are presented as endowed with a collective virtue capable of

running all the complex machinery of a modern community. But the

staring truth of the matter is that an unco-ordinated scramble

between individuals and nations alike, demoralises all concerned.

Everyone is corrupted, the filching tramp by the roadside, the

servile hand-kissing peasant of Eastern Europe, the dole-bribed

loafer, as much as the woman who marries for money, the company

promoter, the industrial organiser, the rent-exacting landlord and

the diplomatic agent. When the social atmosphere is tainted

everybody is ill.

Wealth, personal freedom and education, may and do produce wasters

and oppressive people, but they may also release creative and

administrative minds to opportunity. The history of science and

invention before the nineteenth century confirms this. On the

whole if we are to assume there is anything good in humanity at

all, it is more reasonable to expect it to appear when there is

most opportunity.

And in further confutation of the Marxist caricature of human

motives, we have the very considerable number of young people drawn

from middle-class and upper-class homes, who figure in the extreme

left movement everywhere. It is their moral reaction to the

"stuffiness" and social ineffectiveness of their parents and their

own sort of people. They seek an outlet for their abilities that

is not gainful but serviceable. Many have sought an honourable

life--and often found it, and death with it--in the struggle

against the Catholics and their Moorish and Fascist helpers in

Spain.

It is a misfortune of their generation that so many of them have

fallen into the mental traps of Marxism. It has been my absurd

experience to encounter noisy meetings of expensive young men at

Oxford, not one of them stunted physically as I was by twenty years

of under-nourishment and devitalised upbringing, all pretending to

be rough-hewn collarless proletarians in shocked revolt against my

bourgeois tyranny and the modest comfort of my declining years, and

reciting the ridiculous class-war phrases by which they protected

their minds from any recognition of the realities of the case. But

though that attitude demonstrates the unstimulating education of

their preparatory and public schools, which had thrown them thus

uncritical and emotional into the problems of the undergraduate

life, it does not detract from the fact that THEY HAD FOUND THE

IDEA OF ABANDONING THEMSELVES TO A REVOLUTIONARY RECONSTRUCTION OF

SOCIETY, that promised to end its enormous waste of potential

happiness and achievement, EXTREMELY ATTRACTIVE, notwithstanding

that their own advantages seemed to be reasonably secure.

Faced with the immediate approach of discomfort, indignity, wasted

years, mutilation--death is soon over but one wakes up again to

mutilation every morning--because of this ill-conceived war; faced

also by the reversion of Russia to autocracy and the fiscal

extinction of most of the social advantages of their families;

these young people with a leftish twist are likely not only to do

some very profitable re-examination of their own possibilities but

also to find themselves joined in that re-examination by a very

considerable number of others who have hitherto been repelled by

the obvious foolishness and insincerity of the hammer and sickle

symbols (workers and peasants of Oxford!) and the exasperating

dogmatism of the orthodox Marxist. And may not these young people,

instead of waiting to be overtaken by an insurrectionary revolution

from which they will emerge greasy, unshaven, class-conscious and

in incessant danger of liquidation, decide that before the

Revolution gets hold of them they will get hold of the Revolution

and save it from the inefficiency, mental distortions, disappointments

and frustrations that have over-taken it in Russia.

This new and complete Revolution we contemplate can be defined in a

very few words. It is (a) outright world-socialism, scientifically

planned and directed, PLUS (b) a sustained insistence upon law, law

based on a fuller, more jealously conceived restatement of the

personal Rights of Man, PLUS (c) the completest freedom of speech,

criticism and publication, and sedulous expansion of the

educational organisation to the ever-growing demands of the new

order. What we may call the eastern or Bolshevik Collectivism, the

Revolution of the Internationale, has failed to achieve even the

first of these three items and it has never even attempted the

other two.

Putting it at its compactest, it is the triangle of Socialism, Law

and Knowledge, which frames the Revolution which may yet save the

world.

Socialism! Become outright collectivists? Very few men of the

more fortunate classes in our old collapsing society who are over

fifty will be able to readjust their minds to that. It will seem

an entirely repulsive suggestion to them. (The average age of the

British Cabinet at the present time is well over sixty.) But it

need not be repulsive at all to their sons. They will be

impoverished anyhow. The stars in their courses are seeing to

that. And that will help them greatly to realise that an

administrative and constructive life may be far more interesting

than a life of mere acquisition and spending.

From administrative control to administrative participation and

then to direct administration are easy steps. They are being taken

now, first in one matter and then in another. On both sides of the

Atlantic. Reluctantly and often very disingenuously and against

energetic but diminishing resistances. Great Britain, like

America, may become a Socialist system without a definitive

Revolution, protesting all the time that it is doing nothing of the

sort.

In Britain we have now no distinctively educated class, but all up

and down the social scale there are well-read men and women who

have thought intensely upon these great problems we have been

discussing. To many of them and maybe to enough of them to start

the avalanche of purpose that will certainly develop from a clear

and determined beginning, this conception of Revolution to evoke a

liberal collectivised world may appeal. And so at last we narrow

down our enquiry to an examination of what has to be done now to

save the Revolution, what the movement or its Party--so far as it

may use the semblance of a Party--will do, what its Policy will be.

Hitherto we have been demonstrating why a reasonable man, of any

race or language anywhere, should become a "Western" Revolutionary.

We have now to review the immediate activities to which he can give

himself.

9. POLITICS FOR THE SANE MAN

Let us restate the general conclusions to which our preceding

argument has brought us.

The establishment of a progressive world socialism in which the

freedoms, health and happiness of every individual are protected by

a universal law based on a re-declaration of the rights of man, and

wherein there is the utmost liberty of thought, criticism and

suggestion, is the plain, rational objective before us now. Only

the effective realisation of this objective can establish peace on

earth and arrest the present march of human affairs to misery and

destruction. We cannot reiterate this objective too clearly and

too frequently. The triangle of collectivisation, law and

knowledge should embody the common purpose of all mankind.

But between us and that goal intervenes the vast and deepening

disorders of our time. The new order cannot be brought into

existence without a gigantic and more or less co-ordinated effort

of the saner and abler elements in the human population. The thing

cannot be done rapidly and melodramatically. That effort must

supply the frame for all sane social and political activities AND A

PRACTICAL CRITERION FOR ALL RELIGIOUS AND EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS.

But since our world is multitudinously varied and confused, it is

impossible to narrow down this new revolutionary movement to any

single class, organisation or Party. It is too great a thing for

that. It will in its expansion produce and perhaps discard a

number of organisations and Parties, converging upon its ultimate

objective. Consequently, in order to review the social and

political activities of sane, clear-headed people to-day, we have

to deal with them piecemeal from a number of points of view. We

have to consider an advance upon a long and various front.

Let us begin then with the problem of sanity in face of the

political methods of our time. What are we to do as voting

citizens? There I think the history of the so-called democracies

in the past half-century is fairly conclusive. Our present

electoral methods which give no choice but a bilateral choice to

the citizen and so force a two-party system upon him, is a mere

caricature of representative government. It has produced upon both

sides of the Atlantic, big, stupid, and corrupt party machines.

That was bound to happen and yet to this day there is a sort of

shyness in the minds of young men interested in politics when it

comes to discussing Proportional Representation. They think it is

a "bit faddy". At best it is a side issue. Party politicians

strive to maintain that bashfulness, because they know quite

clearly that what is called Proportional Representation with the

single transferable vote in large constituencies, returning a dozen

members or more, is extinction for the mere party hack and

destruction for party organisations.

The machine system in the United States is more elaborate, more

deeply entrenched legally in the Constitution and illegally in the

spoils system, and it may prove more difficult to modernise than

the British, which is based on an outworn caste tradition. But

both Parliament and Congress are essentially similar in their

fundamental quality. They trade in titles, concessions and the

public welfare, and they are only amenable in the rough and at long

last to the movements of public opinion. It is an open question

whether they are much more responsive to popular feeling than the

Dictators we denounce so unreservedly as the antithesis of

democracy. They betray a great disregard of mass responses. They

explain less. They disregard more. The Dictators have to go on

talking and talking, not always truthfully but they have to talk.

A dumb Dictator is inconceivable.

In such times of extensive stress and crisis as the present, the

baffling slowness, inefficiency and wastefulness of the party

system become so manifest that some of its worst pretences are put

aside. The party game is suspended. His Majesty's Opposition

abandons the pose of safeguarding the interests of the common

citizens from those scoundrels upon the government benches;

Republicans and Democrats begin to cross the party line to discuss

the new situation. Even the men who live professionally by the

Parliamentary (Congressional) imposture, abandon it if they are

sufficiently frightened by the posture of affairs. The appearance

of an All-Party National Government in Great Britain before very

long seems inevitable.

Great Britain has in effect gone socialist in a couple of months;

she is also suspending party politics. Just as the United States

did in the great slump. And in both cases this has happened

because the rottenness and inefficiency of party politics stank to

heaven in the face of danger. And since in both cases Party

Government threw up its hands and bolted, is there any conceivable

reason why we should let it come back at any appearance of victory

or recovery, why we should not go ahead from where we are to a less

impromptu socialist regime under a permanent non-party administration,

to the reality if not to the form of a permanent socialist government?

Now here I have nothing to suggest about America. I have never,

for example, tried to work out the consequences of the absence of

executive ministers from the legislature. I am inclined to think

that is one of the weak points in the Constitution and that the

English usage which exposes the minister to question time in the

House and makes him a prime mover in legislation affecting his

department, is a less complicated and therefore more democratic

arrangement than the American one. And the powers and functions of

the President and the Senate are so different from the consolidated

powers of Cabinet and Prime Minister, that even when an Englishman

has industriously "mugged up" the constitutional points, he is

still almost as much at a loss to get the living reality as he

would be if he were shown the score of an opera before hearing it

played or the blue prints of a machine he had never seen in action.

Very few Europeans understand the history of Woodrow Wilson, the

Senate and his League of Nations. They think that "America", which

they imagine as a large single individual, planted the latter

institution upon Europe and then deliberately shuffled out of her

responsibility for it, and they will never think otherwise. And

they think that "America" kept out of the war to the very limit of

decency, overcharged us for munitions that contributed to the

common victory, and made a grievance because the consequent debt

was not discharged. They talk like that while Americans talk as if

no English were killed between 1914 and 1918 (we had 800,000 dead)

until the noble American conscripts came forward to die for them

(to the tune of about 50,000). Savour for example even the title

of Quincy Howe's England expects every American to do his Duty.

It's the meanest of titles, but many Americans seem to like it.

On my desk as I write is a pamphlet by a Mr Robert Randall, nicely

cyclostyled and got up, which urges a common attack on the United

States as a solution of the problem of Europe. No countries will

ever feel united unless they have a common enemy, and the natural

common enemy for Europe, it is declared, is the United States. So

to bring about the United States of Europe we are to begin by

denouncing the Monroe doctrine. I believe in the honesty and good

intentions of Mr Robert Randall; he is, I am sure, no more in the

pay of Germany, direct or indirect, than Mr Quincy Howe or Mr Harry

Elmer Barnes; but could the most brilliant of Nazi war propagandists

devise a more effective estranging suggestion? . . .

But I wander from my topic. I do not know how sane men in America

are going to set about relaxing the stranglehold of the

Constitution, get control of their own country out of the hands of

those lumpish, solemnly cunning politicians with their great strong

jowls developed by chewing-gum and orotund speaking, whose

photographs add a real element of frightfulness to the pages of

Time, how they are going to abolish the spoils system, discover,

and educate to expand a competent civil service able to redeem the

hampered promises of the New Deal and pull America into line with

the reconstruction of the rest of the world. But I perceive that

in politics and indeed in most things, the underlying humour and

sanity of Americans are apt to find a way round and do the

impossible, and I have as little doubt they will manage it somehow

as I have when I see a street performer on his little chair and

carpet, all tied up with chains, waiting until there are sufficient

pennies in the hat to justify exertion.

These differences in method, pace and tradition are a great

misfortune to the whole English-speaking world. We English people

do not respect Americans enough; we are too disposed to think they

are all Quincy Howes and Harry Elmer Barneses and Borahs and

suchlike, conceited and suspicious anti-British monomaniacs, who

must be humoured at any cost; which is why we are never so frank

and rude with them as they deserve. But the more we must contain

ourselves the less we love them. Real brothers can curse each

other and keep friends. Someday Britannia will give Columbia a

piece of her mind, and that may clear the air. Said an exasperated

Englishman to me a day or so ago: "I pray to God they keep out of

the end of THIS war anyhow. We shall never hear the last of it if

they don't. . . ."

Yet at a different pace our two peoples are travelling towards

identical ends, and it is lamentable that a difference of accent

and idiom should do more mischief than a difference of language.

So far as Great Britain goes things are nearer and closer to me,

and it seems to me that there is an excellent opportunity now to

catch the country in a state of socialisation and suspended party

politics, and keep it at that. It is a logical but often

disregarded corollary of the virtual creation of All-Party National

Governments and suspension of electoral contests, that since there

is no Opposition, party criticism should give place to individual

criticism of ministers, and instead of throwing out governments we

should set ourselves to throw out individual administrative

failures. We need no longer confine our choice of public servants

to political careerists. We can insist upon men who have done

things and can do things, and whenever an election occurs we can

organise a block of non-party voters who will vote if possible for

an outsider of proved ability, and will at any rate insist on a

clear statement from every Parliamentary candidate of the concrete

service, if any, he has done the country, of his past and present

financial entanglements and his family relationships and of any

title he possesses. We can get these necessary particulars

published and note what newspapers decline to do so. And if there

are still only politicians to vote for, we can at least vote and

spoil our voting cards by way of protest.

At present we see one public service after another in a mess

through the incompetent handling of some party hack and the unseen

activities of interested parties. People are asking already why

Sir Arthur Salter is not in control of Allied Shipping again, Sir

John Orr directing our food supply with perhaps Sir Frederick

Keeble to help him, Sir Robert Vansittart in the Foreign Office.

We want to know the individuals responsible for the incapacity of

our Intelligence and Propaganda Ministries, so that we may induce

them to quit public life. It would be quite easy now to excite a

number of anxious people with a cry for "Competence not Party".

Most people in the British Isles are heartily sick of Mr

Chamberlain and his government, but they cannot face up to a

political split in wartime, and Mr Chamberlain sticks to office

with all the pertinacity of a Barnacle. But if we do not attack

the government as a whole, but individual ministers, and if we

replace them one by one, we shall presently have a government so

rejuvenated that even Mr Chamberlain will realise and accept his

superannuation. Quite a small body of public-spirited people could

organise an active Vigilance Society to keep these ideas before the

mass of voters and begin the elimination of inferior elements from

our public life. This would be a practical job of primary

importance in our political regeneration. It would lead directly

to a new and more efficient political structure to carry on after

the present war has collapsed or otherwise ended.

Following upon this campaign for the conclusive interment of the

played-out party system, there comes the necessity for a much more

strenuous search for administrative and technical ability

throughout the country. We do not want to miss a single youngster

who can be of use in the great business of making over Great

Britain, which has been so rudely, clumsily and wastefully

socialised by our war perturbations, so that it may become a

permanently efficient system.

And from the base of the educational pyramid up to its apex of

higher education for teachers, heads of departments and research,

there is need for such a quickening of minds and methods as only a

more or less organised movement of sanely critical men can bring

about. We want ministers now of the highest quality in every

department, but in no department of public life is a man of

creative understanding, bold initiative and administrative power so

necessary as in the Education Ministry.

So tranquil and unobtrusive has been the flow of educational

affairs in the British Empire that it seems almost scandalous, and

it is certainly "vulgar", to suggest that we need an educational

Ginger Group to discover and support such a minister. We want a

Minister of Education who can shock teachers into self-examination,

electrify and rejuvenate old dons or put them away in ivory towers,

and stimulate the younger ones. Under the party system the

Education Ministry has always been a restful corner for some

deserving party politician with an abject respect for his Alma

Mater and the permanent officials. During war time, when other

departments wake up, the Education Department sinks into a deeper

lethargy. One cannot recall a single British Education Minister,

since there have been such things in our island story as Ministers

for Education, who signified anything at all educationally or did

anything of his own impulse that was in the least worth while.

Suppose we found a live one--soon--and let him rip!

There again is something to be done far more revolutionary than

throwing bombs at innocent policemen or assassinating harmless

potentates or ex-potentates. And yet it is only asking that an

existing department be what it pretends to be.

A third direction in which any gathering accumulation of sanity

should direct its attention is the clumsy unfairness and

indirectness of our present methods of expropriating the former

well-to-do classes. The only observable principle seems to be

widows and children first. Socialisation is being effected in

Britain and America alike not by frank expropriation (with or

without compensation) but by increasing government control and

increasing taxation. Both our great communities are going into

socialism backward and without ever looking round. This is good in

so far as that technical experience and directive ability is

changed over step by step from entirely private employment to

public service, and on that side sane and helpful citizens have

little to do beyond making the process conscious of itself and the

public aware of the real nature of the change, but it is bad in its

indiscriminate destruction of savings, which are the most exposed

and vulnerable side of the old system. They are expropriated by

profit-control and taxation alike, and at the same time they suffer

in purchasing power by the acceleration of that process of monetary

inflation which is the unavoidable readjustment, the petition in

bankruptcy, of a community that has overspent.

The shareholding class dwindles and dies; widows and orphans, the

old who are past work and the infirm who are incapable of it, are

exposed in their declining years to a painful shrinkage of their

modes of living; there is no doubt a diminution of social waste,

but also there is an indirect impoverishment of free opinion and

free scientific and artistic initiative as the endless societies,

institutions and services which have enriched life for us and been

very largely supported by voluntary subscriptions, shrivel. At

present a large proportion of our scientific, artistic, literary

and social workers are educated out of the private savings fund.

In a class-war revolution these economically very defenceless but

socially very convenient people are subjected to vindictive

humiliation--it is viewed as a great triumph for their meaner

neighbours--but a revolution sanely conducted will probably devise

a system of terminable annuities and compensation, and of

assistance to once voluntary associations, which will ease off the

social dislocations due to the disappearance of one stratum of

relatively free and independent people, before its successors, that

is to say the growing class of retired officials, public

administrators and so forth, find their feet and develop their own

methods of assertion and enterprise.

10. DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF MAN

Let us turn now to another system of problems in the collectivisation

of the world, and that is the preservation of liberty in the

socialist state and the restoration of that confidence without which

good behaviour is generally impossible.

This destruction of confidence is one of the less clearly

recognised evils of the present phase of world-disintegration. In

the past there have been periods when whole communities or at least

large classes within communities have gone about their business

with a general honesty, directness and sense of personal honour.

They have taken a keen pride in the quality of their output. They

have lived through life on tolerable and tolerant terms with their

neighbours. The laws they observed have varied in different

countries and periods, but their general nature was to make an

orderly law-abiding life possible and natural. They had been

taught and they believed and they had every reason to believe:

"This (that or the other thing) is right. Do right and nothing,

except by some strange exceptional misfortune, can touch you. The

Law guarantees you that. Do right and nothing will rob you or

frustrate you."

Nowhere in the world now is there very much of that feeling left,

and as it disappears, the behaviour of people degenerates towards a

panic scramble, towards cheating, over-reaching, gang organisation,

precautionary hoarding, concealment and all the meanness and anti-social

feeling which is the natural outcome of insecurity.

Faced with what now amounts to something like a moral stampede,

more and more sane men will realise the urgency for a restoration

of confidence. The more socialisation proceeds and the more

directive authority is concentrated, the more necessary is an

efficient protection of individuals from the impatience of well-meaning

or narrow-minded or ruthless officials and indeed from all

the possible abuses of advantage that are inevitable under such

circumstances to our still childishly wicked breed.

In the past the Atlantic world has been particularly successful in

expedients for meeting this aspect of human nature. Our

characteristic and traditional method may be called the method of

the fundamental declaration. Our Western peoples, by a happy

instinct, have produced statements of Right, from Magna Carta

onwards, to provide a structural defence between the citizen and

the necessary growth of central authority.

And plainly the successful organisation of the more universal and

penetrating collectivism that is now being forced upon us all, will

be frustrated in its most vital aspect unless its organisation is

accompanied by the preservative of a new Declaration of the Rights

of Man, that must, because of the increasing complexity of the

social structure, be more generous, detailed and explicit than any

of its predecessors. Such a Declaration must become the COMMON

FUNDAMENTAL LAW of all communities and collectivities assembled

under the World Pax. It should be interwoven with the declared war

aims of the combatant powers now; it should become the primary fact

in any settlement; it should be put before the now combatant states

for their approval, their embarrassed silence or their rejection.

In order to be as clear as possible about this, let me submit a

draft for your consideration of this proposed Declaration of the

Rights of Man--using "man" of course to cover every individual,

male or female, of the species. I have endeavoured to bring in

everything that is essential and to omit whatever secondary issues

can be easily deduced from its general statements. It is a draft

for your consideration. Points may have been overlooked and it may

contain repetitions and superfluous statements.

"Since a man comes into this world through no fault of his own,

since he is manifestly a joint inheritor of the accumulations of

the past, and since those accumulations are more than sufficient to

justify the claims that are here made for him, it follows:

"(1) That every man without distinction of race, of colour or of

professed belief or opinions, is entitled to the nourishment,

covering, medical care and attention needed to realise his full

possibilities of physical and mental development and to keep him in

a state of health from his birth to death.

"(2) That he is entitled to sufficient education to make him a

useful and interested citizen, that special education should be so

made available as to give him equality of opportunity for the

development of his distinctive gifts in the service of mankind,

that he should have easy access to information upon all matters of

common knowledge throughout his life and enjoy the utmost freedom

of discussion, association and worship.

"(3) That he may engage freely in any lawful occupation, earning

such pay as the need for his work and the increment it makes to the

common welfare may justify. That he is entitled to paid employment

and to a free choice whenever there is any variety of employment

open to him. He may suggest employment for himself and have his

claim publicly considered, accepted or dismissed.

"(4) That he shall have the right to buy or sell without any

discriminatory restrictions anything which may be lawfully bought

or sold, in such quantities and with such reservations as are

compatible with the common welfare."

(Here I will interpolate a comment. We have to bear in mind that

in a collectivist state buying and selling to secure income and

profit will be not simply needless but impossible. The Stock

Exchange, after its career of four-hundred-odd-years, will

necessarily vanish with the disappearance of any rational motive

either for large accumulations or for hoarding against deprivation

and destitution. Long before the age of complete collectivisation

arrives, the savings of individuals for later consumption will

probably be protected by some development of the Unit Trust System

into a public service. They will probably be entitled to interest

at such a rate as to compensate for that secular inflation which

should go on in a steadily enriched world community. Inheritance

and bequest in a community in which the means of production and of

all possible monopolisation are collectivised, can concern little

else than relatively small, beautiful and intimate objects, which

will afford pleasure but no unfair social advantage to the

receiver.)

"(5) That he and his personal property lawfully acquired are

entitled to police and legal protection from private violence,

deprivation, compulsion and intimidation.

"(6) That he may move freely about the world at his own expense.

That his private house or apartment or reasonably limited garden

enclosure is his castle, which may be entered only with his

consent, but that he shall have the right to come and go over any

kind of country, moorland, mountain, farm, great garden or what

not, or upon the seas, lakes and rivers of the world, where his

presence will not be destructive of some special use, dangerous to

himself nor seriously inconvenient to his fellow-citizens.

"(7) That a man unless he is declared by a competent authority to

be a danger to himself and to others through mental abnormality, a

declaration which must be annually confirmed, shall not be

imprisoned for a longer period than six days without being charged

with a definite offence against the law, nor for more than three

months without a public trial. At the end of the latter period, if

he has not been tried and sentenced by due process of law, he shall

be released. Nor shall he be conscripted for military, police or

any other service to which he has a conscientious objection.

"(8) That although a man is subject to the free criticism of his

fellows, he shall have adequate protection from any lying or

misrepresentation that may distress or injure him. All

administrative registration and records about a man shall be open

to his personal and private inspection. There shall be no secret

dossiers in any administrative department. All dossiers shall be

accessible to the man concerned and subject to verification and

correction at his challenge. A dossier is merely a memorandum; it

cannot be used as evidence without proper confirmation in open

court.

"(9) That no man shall be subjected to any sort of mutilation or

sterilisation except with his own deliberate consent, freely given,

nor to bodily assault, except in restraint of his own violence, nor

to torture, beating or any other bodily punishment; he shall not be

subjected to imprisonment with such an excess of silence, noise,

light or darkness as to cause mental suffering, or to imprisonment

in infected, verminous or otherwise insanitary quarters, or be put

into the company of verminous or infectious people. He shall not

be forcibly fed nor prevented from starving himself if he so

desire. He shall not be forced to take drugs nor shall they be

administered to him without his knowledge and consent. That the

extreme punishments to which he may be subjected are rigorous

imprisonment for a term of not longer than fifteen years or death."

(Here I would point out that there is nothing in this to prevent

any country from abolishing the death penalty. Nor do I assert a

general right to commit suicide, because no one can punish a man

for doing that. He has escaped. But threats and incompetent

attempts to commit suicide belong to an entirely different

category. They are indecent and distressing acts that can easily

become a serious social nuisance, from which the normal citizen is

entitled to protection.)

"(10) That the provisions and principles embodied in this

Declaration shall be more fully defined in a code of fundamental

human rights which shall be made easily accessible to everyone.

This Declaration shall not be qualified nor departed from upon any

pretext whatever. It incorporates all previous Declarations of

Human Right. Henceforth for a new era it is the fundamental law

for mankind throughout the whole world.

"No treaty and no law affecting these primary rights shall be

binding upon any man or province or administrative division of the

community, that has not been made openly, by and with the active or

tacit acquiescence of every adult citizen concerned, either given

by a direct majority vote of the community affected or through the

majority vote of his publicly elected representatives. In matters

of collective behaviour it is by the majority decision men must

abide. No administration, under a pretext of urgency, convenience

or the like, shall be entrusted with powers to create or further

define offences or set up by-laws, which will in any way infringe

the rights and liberties here asserted. All legislation must be

public and definite. No secret treaties shall be binding on

individuals, organisations or communities. No orders in council or

the like, which extend the application of a law, shall be

permitted. There is no source of law but the people, and since

life flows on constantly to new citizens, no generation of the

people can in whole or in part surrender or delegate the

legislative power inherent in mankind."

There, I think, is something that keener minds than mine may polish

into a working Declaration which would in the most effective manner

begin that restoration of confidence of which the world stands in

need. Much of it might be better phrased, but I think it embodies

the general goodwill in mankind from pole to pole. It is certainly

what we all want for ourselves. It could be a very potent

instrument indeed in the present phase of human affairs. It is

necessary and it is acceptable. Incorporate that in your peace

treaties and articles of federation, I would say, and you will have

a firm foundation, which will continually grow firmer, for the

fearless cosmopolitan life of a new world order. You will never

get that order without some such document. It is the missing key

to endless contemporary difficulties.

And if we, the virtuous democracies, are not fighting for these

common human rights, then what in the name of the nobility and

gentry, the Crown and the Established Church, the City, The Times

and the Army and Navy Club, are we common British peoples fighting

for?

11. INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

And now, having completed our picture of what the saner elements in

human society may reasonably work for and hope for, having cleared

away the horrible nightmares of the class war and the totalitarian

slave-state from our imaginations, we are able to attack the

immediate riddles of international conflict and relationship with

some hope of a general solution. If we realise to the depths of

our being that a world settlement based in the three ideas of

socialism, law and knowledge, is not only possible and desirable,

but the only way of escape from deepening disaster, then manifestly

our attitude towards the resentments of Germany, the prejudices of

America or Russia, the poverty and undernourishment of India or the

ambitions of Japan, must be frankly opportunist. None of these are

primary issues. We sane men must never lose sight of our ultimate

objective, but our methods of getting there will have to vary with

the fluctuating variations of national feeling and national policy.

There is this idea of federalism upon which I have already

submitted a criticism in chapter 7. As I have shown there, the

Streit proposals will either take you further or land you nowhere.

Let us assume that we can strengthen his proposals to the extent of

making a socialistic economic consortium and adhesion to that

Declaration of Rights, primary conditions for any federal union;

then it becomes a matter of mood and occasion with what communities

the federal association may be begun. We can even encourage feeble

federal experiments which do not venture even so far as that along

the path to sanity, in the certainty that either they will fade out

again or else that they will become liberal realities of the type

to which the whole world must ultimately conform. Behind any such

half-hearted tentatives an educational propaganda can be active and

effective.

But when it comes to the rate and amount of participation in the

construction of a rational world order we can expect from any

country or group of countries, we are in a field where there is

little more than guessing and haphazard generalisations about

"national character" to work upon. We are dealing with masses of

people which may be swayed enormously by a brilliant newspaper or

an outstandingly persuasive or compelling personality or by almost

accidental changes in the drift of events. I, for example, cannot

tell how far the generality of educated and capable people in the

British Empire now may fall in with our idea of accepting and

serving a collectivism, or how strong their conservative resistance

may be. It is my own country and I ought to know it best, and I do

not know it detachedly enough or deeply enough to decide that. I

do not see how anyone can foretell these swirls and eddies of

response.

The advocacy of such movements of the mind and will as I am

speaking of here is in itself among the operating causes in

political adjustment, and those who are deepest in the struggle are

least able to estimate how it is going. Every factor in political

and international affairs is a fluctuating factor. The wise man

therefore will not set his heart upon any particular drift or

combination. He will favour everything that trends towards the end

at which he aims.

The present writer cherishes the idea that the realisation of a

common purpose and a common cultural inheritance may spread

throughout all the English-speaking communities, and there can be

no harm in efforts to give this concrete expression. He believes

the dissociation of the British Empire may inaugurate this great

synthesis. At the same time there are factors making for some

closer association of the United States of America with what are

called the Oslo powers. There is no reason why one of these

associations should stand in the way of the other. Some countries

such as Canada rest already under what is practically a double

guarantee; she has the security of the Monroe Doctrine and the

protection of the British fleet.

A Germany of eighty million people which has been brought to

acquiesce in the Declaration of the Rights of Man and which is

already highly collectivised, may come much earlier to a completely

liberal socialist regime than Great Britain or France. If she

participates in a consortium for the development of what are called

the politically backward regions of the world, she may no longer be

disposed for further military adventures and further stress and

misery. She may enter upon a phase of social and economic recovery

so rapid as to stimulate and react upon every other country in the

world. It is not for other countries to dictate her internal

politics, and if the German people want to remain united as one

people, in federated states or in one centralised state, there is

neither righteousness nor wisdom preventing them.

The Germans like the rest of the world have to get on with

collectivisation, they have to produce their pattern, and they

cannot give themselves to that if they are artificially divided up

and disorganised by some old-fashioned Quai d'Orsay scheme. They

must do the right thing in their own way.

That the belligerent tradition may linger on in Germany for a

generation or so, is a risk the Atlantic powers have to take. The

world has a right to insist that not simply some German government

but the people generally, recognise unequivocably and repeatedly,

the rights of man asserted in the Declaration, and it is reasonable

to insist also that Germany remain disarmed and that any aggressive

plant, any war plane, warship, gun or arsenal that is discovered in

the country shall be destroyed forthwith, brutally and completely.

But that is a thing that should not be confined to Germany.

Germany should not be singled out for that. Armament should be an

illegality everywhere, and some sort of international force should

patrol a treaty-bound world. Partial armament is one of those

absurdities dear to moderate-minded "reasonable" men. Armament

itself is making war. Making a gun, pointing a gun and firing it,

are all acts of the same order. It should be illegal to construct

anywhere upon earth, any mechanism for the specific purpose of

killing men. When you see a gun it is reasonable to ask: "Whom is

that intended to kill?"

Germany's rearmament after 1918 was largely tolerated because she

played off British Russophobia against the Russian fear of

"Capitalist" attack, but that excuse can no longer serve any

furtive war-mongers among her people after her pact with Moscow.

Released from the economic burthens and restrictions that crippled

her recovery after 1918, Germany may find a full and satisfying

outlet for the energy of her young men in her systematic

collectivisation, raising the standard of her common life

deliberately and steadily, giving Russia a lead in efficiency and

obliging the maundering "politics" and discursive inattention of

the Atlantic world to remain concentrated upon the realities of

life. The idea of again splitting up Germany into discordant

fragments so as to postpone her ultimate recovery indefinitely, is

a pseudo-democratic slacker's dream. It is diametrically opposed

to world reconstruction. We have need of the peculiar qualities of

her people, and the sooner she recovers the better for the whole

world. It is preposterous to resume the policy of holding back

Germany simply that the old order may enjoy a few more years of

self-indulgence in England, France and America.

A lingering fear of German military aggression may not be

altogether bad for the minor states of South-Eastern Europe and

Asia Minor, by breaking down their excessive nationalism and

inducing them to work together. The policy of the sane man should

be to welcome every possible experiment in international co-operations,

and if these supra-national understandings duplicate

and overlap one another, so much the better. He has to watch the

activities of his own Foreign Office with incessant jealousy, for

signs of that Machiavellian spirit which foments division among

foreign governments and peoples and schemes perpetually to

frustrate the progressive movement in human affairs by converting

it into a swaying indecisive balance of power.

This book is a discussion of guiding principles and not of the

endless specific problems of adjustment that arise on the way to a

world realisation of collective unity. I will merely glance at

that old idea of Napoleon the Third's, the Latin Union, at the

possibility of a situation in Spanish and Portuguese South America

parallel to that overlap of the Monroe Doctrine and the European

motherlands which already exists in practice in the case of Canada,

nor will I expatiate upon the manifold possibilities of sincere

application of the Declaration of the Rights of Man to India and

Africa--and particularly to those parts of the world in which more

or less black peoples are awakening to the realities of racial

discrimination and oppression.

I will utter a passing warning against any Machiavellian treatment

of the problem of Northern and Eastern Asia, into which the British

may be led by their constitutional Russophobia. The Soviet

collectivism, especially if presently it becomes liberalised and

more efficient through a recovery from its present obsession by

Stalin, may spread very effectively across Central Asia and China.

To anyone nourished mentally upon the ideas of an unending

competition of Powers for ascendancy for ever and ever, an alliance

with Japan, as truculent and militarised a Japan as possible, will

seem the most natural response in the world. But to anyone who has

grasped the reality of the present situation of mankind and the

urgent desirableness of world collectivisation, this immense

unification will be something to welcome, criticise and assist.

The old bugbear of Russia's "designs upon India" may also play its

part in distorting the Asiatic situation for many people. Yet a

hundred years of mingled neglect, exploitation and occasional

outbreaks of genuine helpfulness should have taught the British

that the ultimate fate of India's hundreds of millions rests now

upon no conquering ruler but wholly and solely upon the ability of

the Indian peoples to co-operate in world collectivisation. They

may learn much by way of precept and example from Russia and from

the English-speaking world, but the days for mere revolt or for

relief by a change of masters have passed. India has to work out

for itself, with its own abundant brains, its escape from chaos and

its own manner of participation in the struggle for a world order,

starting from the British raj as a datum line. No outside power

can work that out for the Indian peoples, nor force them to do it

if they have no will for it.

But I will not wander further among these ever-changing problems

and possibilities. They are, so to speak, wayside eventualities

and opportunities. Immense though some of them are they remain

secondary. Every year or so now the shifting channels of politics

need to be recharted. The activities and responses of the sane man

in any particular country and at any particular time will be

determined always by the overruling conception of a secular

movement towards a single world order. That will be the underlying

permanent objective of all his political life.

There is, however, another line of world consolidation to which

attention must be drawn before we conclude this section, and is

what we may call ad hoc international systems. The essential idea

of ad hoc internationalism is admirably set forth in Leonard

Woolf's International Government, a classic which was published in

1916 and still makes profitable reading.

The typical ad hoc organisation is the Postal Union, which David

Lubin, that brilliant neglected thinker, would have had extended

until it controlled shipping and equalised freights throughout the

world. He based his ideas upon his practical experience of the

mail order business from which he derived his very considerable

fortune. From that problem of freight adjustment he passed to the

idea of a controlled survey of world production week by week and

month by month, so that a shortage here or a glut there could be

foreseen and remedied in time. He realised the idea in the form of

the International Institute of Agriculture at Rome, which in its

heyday made treaties like an independent sovereign power for the

supply of returns from nearly every government upon earth. The war

of 1914 and Lubin's death in 1919 checked the development of this

admirable and most inspiring experiment in ad hoc internationalism.

Its history is surely something that should be made part of the

compulsory education of every statesman and publicist. Yet never

in my life have I met a professional politician who knew anything

whatever or wanted to know anything about it. It didn't get votes;

it seemed difficult to tax it; what was the good of it?

Another ad hoc organisation which might be capable of a

considerable extension of its functions is the Elder Brethren of

Trinity House, who control the lighthouses and charting of the seas

throughout the world. But it would need a very considerable

revision and extension of Mr Woolf's book and, in spite of the war

stresses that have delayed and in some cases reversed their

development, it would be quite beyond our present scope, to bring

up to date the lengthening tale of ad hoc international networks,

ranging from international business cartels, scientific and

technical organisations, white-slave-trade suppression and

international police co-operation, to health services and religious

missions. Just as I have suggested that the United States and

Great Britain may become complete socialisms unawares, so it is a

not altogether impossible dream that the world may discover to its

great surprise that it is already practically a cosmopolis, through

the extension and interweaving of these ad hoc co-operations. At

any rate we have this very powerful collateral process going on

side by side with the more definite political schemes we have

discussed.

Surveying the possibilities of these various attacks upon the

complicated and intricate obstacles that stand between us and a new

and more hopeful world order, one realises both the reasons for

hope in that great possibility and the absurdity of over-confidence.

We are all like soldiers upon a vast battlefield; we

cannot be sure of the trend of things; we may be elated when

disillusionment is rushing headlong upon us; we may be on the verge

of despair, not knowing that our antagonists are already in

collapse. My own reactions vary between an almost mystical faith

in the ultimate triumph of human reason and good-will, and moods of

stoical determination to carry on to the end in the face of what

looks like inevitable disaster. There are quantitative factors in

the outlook for which there are no data; there are elements of time

and opportunity beyond any estimating. Every one of these

activities we have been canvassing tends to delay the drift to

destruction and provides a foothold for a further counter-offensive

against the adversary.

In the companion predecessor to this book, The Fate of Homo

sapiens, I tried to drive home the fact that our species has no

more reason to believe it can escape defeat and extinction, than

any other organism that plays or has played its part in the drama

of life. I tried to make clear how precarious is our present

situation, and how urgent it is that we should make a strenuous

effort at adjustment now. Only a little while ago it seemed as

though that was an appeal to a deaf and blind world, invincibly set

in its habitual ways even if they led plainly to destruction. I

went into the question whether this inclination towards pessimism

reflected a mood or phase in myself, and I threw out a qualifying

suggestion or so; but for my own part I could not find any serious

reason to believe that the mental effort that was clearly necessary

if man was to escape the fate that marched upon him would ever be

made. His conservative resistances, his apathy, seemed incurable.

Now suddenly everywhere one meets with alarmed and open and

enquiring minds. So far the tremendous dislocations of the present

war have been immensely beneficial in stripping off what seemed to

be quite invincible illusions of security only a year ago. I never

expected to live to see the world with its eyes as widely open as

they are to-day. The world has never been so awake. Little may

come of it, much may come of it. We do not know. Life would

amount to nothing at all if we did.

12. WORLD ORDER IN BEING

There will be no day of days then when a new world order comes into

being. Step by step and here and there it will arrive, and even as

it comes into being it will develop fresh perspectives, discover

unsuspected problems and go on to new adventures. No man, no group

of men, will ever be singled out as its father or founder. For its

maker will be not this man nor that man nor any man but Man, that

being who is in some measure in every one of us. World order will

be, like science, like most inventions, a social product, an

innumerable number of personalities will have lived fine lives,

pouring their best into the collective achievement.

We can find a small-scale parallel to the probable development of a

new world order in the history of flying. Less than a third of a

century ago, ninety-nine people out of a hundred would have told

you that flying was impossible; kites and balloons and possibly

even a navigable balloon, they could imagine; they had known of

such things for a hundred years; but a heavier than air machine,

flying in defiance of wind and gravity! that they KNEW was

nonsense. The would-be aviator was the typical comic inventor.

Any fool could laugh at him. Now consider how completely the air

is conquered.

And who did it? Nobody and everybody. Twenty thousand brains or

so, each contributing a notion, a device, an amplification. They

stimulated one another; they took off from one another. They were

like excited ganglia in a larger brain sending their impulses to

and fro. They were people of the most diverse race and colour.

You can write down perhaps a hundred people or so who have figured

conspicuously in the air, and when you examine the rôle they have

played, you will find for the most part that they are mere

notorieties of the Lindbergh type who have put themselves modestly

but firmly in the limelight and can lay no valid claim to any

effective contribution whatever. You will find many disputes about

records and priority in making this or that particular step, but

the lines of suggestion, the growth and elaboration of the idea,

have been an altogether untraceable process. It has been going on

for not more than a third of a century, under our very eyes, and no

one can say precisely how it came about. One man said "Why not

this?" and tried it, and another said "Why not that?" A vast

miscellany of people had one idea in common, an idea as old as

Dædalus, the idea that "Man can fly". Suddenly, swiftly, it GOT

ABOUT--that is the only phrase you can use--that flying was

attainable. And man, man as a social being, turned his mind to it

seriously, and flew.

So it will certainly be with the new world order, if ever it is

attained. A growing miscellany of people are saying--it is GETTING

ABOUT--that "World Pax is possible", a World Pax in which men will

be both united and free and creative. It is of no importance at

all that nearly every man of fifty and over receives the idea with

a pitying smile. Its chief dangers are the dogmatist and the would-be

"leader" who will try to suppress every collateral line of work

which does not minister to his supremacy. This movement must be,

and it must remain, many-headed. Suppose the world had decided

that Santos Dumont or Hiram Maxim was the heaven-sent Master of the

Air, had given him the right to appoint a successor and subjected

all experiments to his inspired control. We should probably have

the Air Master now, with an applauding retinue of yes-men,

following the hops of some clumsy, useless and extremely dangerous

apparatus across country with the utmost dignity and

self-satisfaction. . . .

Yet that is precisely how we still set about our political and

social problems.

Bearing this essential fact in mind that the Peace of Man can only

be attained, if it is attained at all, by an advance upon a long

and various front, at varying speed and with diverse equipment,

keeping direction only by a common faith in the triple need for

collectivism, law and research, we realise the impossibility of

drawing any picture of the new order as though it was as settled

and stable as the old order imagined itself to be. The new order

will be incessant; things will never stop happening, and so it

defies any Utopian description. But we may nevertheless assemble a

number of possibilities that will be increasingly realisable as the

tide of disintegration ebbs and the new order is revealed.

To begin with we have to realise certain peculiarities of human

behaviour that are all too disregarded in general political

speculation. We have considered the very important rôle that may

be played in our contemporary difficulties by a clear statement of

the Rights of Man, and we have sketched such a Declaration. There

is not an item in that Declaration, I believe, which a man will not

consider to be a reasonable demand--so far as he himself is

concerned. He will subscribe to it in that spirit very readily.

But when he is asked not only to subscribe to it as something he

has to concede by that same gesture to everybody else in the world,

but as something for which he has to make all the sacrifices

necessary for its practical realisation, he will discover a

reluctance to "go so far as that". He will find a serious

resistance welling up from his sub-conscious and trying to justify

itself in his thoughts.

The things he will tell you will be very variable; but the word

"premature" will play a large part in it. He will display a

tremendous tenderness and consideration with which you have never

credited him before, for servants, for workers, for aliens and

particularly for aliens of a different colour from himself. They

will hurt themselves with all this dangerous liberty. Are they

FIT, he will ask you, for all this freedom? "Candidly, are they

fit for it?" He will be slightly offended if you will say, "As fit

as you are". He will say in a slightly amused tone, "But how CAN

you say that?" and then going off rather at a tangent, "I am afraid

you idealise your fellow-creatures."

As you press him, you will find this kindliness evaporating from

his resistance altogether. He is now concerned about the general

beauty and loveliness of the world. He will protest that this new

Magna Carta will reduce all the world to "a dead level of

uniformity". You will ask him why must a world of free-men be

uniform and at a dead level? You will get no adequate reply. It

is an assumption of vital importance to him and he must cling to

it. He has been accustomed to associate "free" and "equal", and

has never been bright-minded enough to take these two words apart

and have a good look at them separately. He is likely to fall back

at this stage upon that Bible of the impotent genteel, Huxley's

Brave New World, and implore you to read it. You brush that

disagreeable fantasy aside and continue to press him. He says that

nature has made men unequal, and you reply that that is no reason

for exaggerating the fact. The more unequal and various their

gifts, the greater is the necessity for a Magna Carta to protect

them from one another. Then he will talk of robbing life of the

picturesque and the romantic and you will have some difficulty in

getting these words defined. Sooner or later it will grow clear

that he finds the prospect of a world in which "Jack's as good as

his Master" unpleasant to the last degree.

If you still probe him with questions and leading suggestions, you

will begin to realise how large a part the NEED FOR GLORY OVER HIS

FELLOWS plays in his composition (and incidentally you will note,

please, your own secret satisfaction in carrying the argument

against him). It will become clear to you, if you collate the

specimen under examination with the behaviour of children, yourself

and the people about you, under what urgent necessity they are for

the sense of triumph, of being better and doing better than their

fellows, and having it felt and recognised by someone. It is a

deeper, steadier impulse than sexual lust; it is a hunger. It is

the clue to the unlovingness of so much sexual life, to sadistic

impulses, to avarice, hoarding and endless ungainful cheating and

treachery which gives men the sense of getting the better of

someone even if they do not get the upper hand.

In the last resort this is why we must have law, and why Magna

Carta and all its kindred documents set out to defeat human nature

in defence of the general happiness. Law is essentially an

adjustment of that craving to glory over other living things, to

the needs of social life, and it is more necessary in a

collectivist society than in any other. It is a bargain, it is a

social contract, to do as we would be done by and to repress our

extravagant egotisms in return for reciprocal concessions. And in

the face of these considerations we have advanced about the true

nature of the beast we have to deal with, it is plain that the

politics of the sane man as we have reasoned them out, must

anticipate a strenuous opposition to this primary vital implement

for bringing about the new world order.

I have suggested that the current discussion of "War Aims" may very

effectively be transformed into the propaganda of this new

Declaration of the Rights of Man. The opposition to it and the

attempts that will be made to postpone, mitigate, stifle and evade

it, need to be watched, denounced and combatted persistently

throughout the world. I do not know how far this Declaration I

have sketched can be accepted by a good Catholic, but the

Totalitarian pseudo-philosophy insists upon inequality of treatment

for "non-Aryans" as a glorious duty. How Communists would respond

to its clauses would, I suppose, depend upon their orders from

Moscow. But what are called the "democracies" are supposed to be

different, and it would be possible now to make that Declaration a

searching test of the honesty and spirit of the leaders and rulers

in whom they trust. These rulers can be brought to the point by

it, with a precision unattainable in any other fashion.

But the types and characters and authorities and officials and

arrogant and aggressive individuals who will boggle at this

Declaration and dispute and defy it, do not exhaust the resistances

of our unregenerate natures to this implement for the establishment

of elementary justice in the world. For a far larger proportion of

people among the "democracies" will be found, who will pay it lip

service and then set about discovering how, in their innate craving

for that sense of superiority and advantage which lies so near the

core of our individual wills, they may unobtrusively sabotage it

and cheat it. Even if they only cheat it just a little. I am

inclined to think this disingenuousness is a universal weakness. I

have a real passion for serving the world, but I have a pretty keen

disposition to get more pay for my service, more recognition and so

on than I deserve. I do not trust myself. I want to be under just

laws. We want law because we are all potential law-breakers.

This is a considerable digression into psychology, and I will do no

more than glance at how large a part this craving for superiority

and mastery has played in the sexual practices of mankind. There

we have the ready means for a considerable relief of this

egotistical tension in mutual boasting and reassurance. But the

motive for this digression here is to emphasise the fact that the

generalisation of our "War Aims" into a Declaration of Rights,

though it will enormously simplify the issue of the war, will

eliminate neither open and heartfelt opposition nor endless

possibilities of betrayal and sabotage.

Nor does it alter the fact that even when the struggle seems to be

drifting definitely towards a world social democracy, there may

still be very great delays and disappointments before it becomes an

efficient and beneficent world system. Countless people, from

maharajas to millionaires and from pukkha sahibs to pretty ladies,

will hate the new world order, be rendered unhappy by the

frustration of their passions and ambitions through its advent and

will die protesting against it. When we attempt to estimate its

promise we have to bear in mind the distress of a generation or so

of malcontents, many of them quite gallant and graceful-looking

people.

And it will be no light matter to minimise the loss of efficiency

in the process of changing the spirit and pride of administrative

work from that of an investing, high-salaried man with a handsome

display of expenditure and a socially ambitious wife, into a

relatively less highly-salaried man with a higher standard of

self-criticism, aware that he will be esteemed rather by what he puts

into his work than by what he gets out of it. There will be a lot

of social spill, tragi-comedy and loss of efficiency during the

period of the change over, and it is better to be prepared for

that.

Yet after making allowances for these transitional stresses we may

still look forward with some confidence to certain phases in the

onset of World Order. War or war fear will have led everywhere to

the concentration of vast numbers of workers upon munition work and

the construction of offensive and defensive structures of all

sorts, upon shipping, internal communications, replacement

structures, fortifications. There will be both a great

accumulation and control of material and constructive machinery and

also of hands already growing accustomed to handling it. As the

possibility of conclusive victory fades and this war muddle passes

out of its distinctively military phase towards revolution, and as

some sort of Peace Congress assembles, it will be not only

desirable but necessary for governments to turn over these

resources and activities to social reconstruction. It will be too

obviously dangerous and wasteful to put them out of employment.

They must surely have learnt now what unemployment means in terms

of social disorganisation. Governments will have to lay out the

world, plan and build for peace whether they like it or not.

But it will be asked, "Where will you find the credit to do that?"

and to answer this question we must reiterate the fact that money

is an expedient and not an end. The world will have the material

and the hands needed for a reconditioning of its life everywhere.

They are all about you now crying out to be used. It is, or at any

rate it has been, the function of the contemporary money-credit

system to bring worker and material together and stimulate their

union. That system always justified its activities on that ground,

that is its claim to exist, and if it does not exist for that

purpose then for what purpose does it exist and what further need

is there for it? If now the financial mechanism will not work, if

it confronts us with a non possumus, then clearly it resigns its

function.

Then it has to get out of the way. It will declare the world has

stopped when the truth will be that the City has stopped. It is

the counting-house that has gone bankrupt. For a long time now an

increasing number of people have been asking questions about the

world counting-house, getting down at last to such fundamental

questions as "What is money?" and "WHY are Banks?" It is

disconcerting but stimulating to find that no lucid answer is

forthcoming.

One might have imagined that long before this one of the many great

bankers and financial experts in our world would have come forward

with a clear and simple justification for the monetary practices of

to-day. He would have shown how completely reasonable and

trustworthy this money-credit system was. He would have shown what

was temporarily wrong with it and how to set it working again, as

the electrician does when the lights go out. He would have

released us from our deepening distress about our money in the

Bank, our little squirrel hoard of securities, the deflating

lifebelt of property that was to assure our independence to the

end. No one of that quality comes forward. There is not so much

as a latter-day Bagehot. It dawns upon more and more of us that it

is not a system at all and never has been a system, that it is an

accumulation of conventions, usages, collateral developments and

compensatory expedients, which creaks now and sways more and more

and gives every sign of a complete and horrifying social collapse.

Most of us have believed up to the last moment that somewhere

distributed among the banks and city offices in a sort of world

counting-house, there were books of accounts, multitudinous perhaps

and intricate, but ultimately proper accounts. Only now is it

dawning upon comfortable decent people that the counting-house is

in a desperate mess, that codes seem to have been lost, entries

made wrong, additions gone astray down the column, records kept in

vanishing ink. . . .

For years there has been a great and growing literature about

money. It is very various but it has one general characteristic.

First there is a swift exposure of the existing system as wrong.

Then there is a glib demonstration of a new system which is right.

Let this be done or that be done, "let the nation own its own

money", says one radio prophet earnestly, repeatedly, simply, and

all will be well. These various systems of doctrine run

periodicals, organise movements (with coloured shirt complete),

meet, demonstrate. They disregard each other completely and

contradict each other flatly. And without exception all these

monetary reformers betray signs of extreme mental strain.

The secret trouble in their minds is a gnawing doubt that their own

proper "plan", the panacea, is in some subtle and treacherous way

likely to fail them if it is put to the test. The internal fight

against this intolerable shadow betrays itself in their outer

behaviour. Their letters and pamphlets, with scarcely an

exception, have this much in common with the letters one gets from

lunatics, that there is a continual resort to capital letters and

abusive terms. They shout out at the slightest provocation or

none. They are not so much shouting at the exasperating reader who

remains so obstinate when they have been so clear, so clear, as at

the sceptical whisper within.

Because there is no perfect money system by itself and there never

can be. It is a dream like the elixir vitæ or perpetual motion.

It is in the same order of thought.

Attention has already been drawn, in our examination of Mr Streit's

proposals for Union Now, to the fact that money varies in its

nature and operations with the theory of property and distribution

on which society is based, that in a complete collectivism for

example it becomes little more than the check handed to the worker

to enable him to purchase whatever he likes from the resources of

the community. Every detachment of production or enterprise from

collective control (national or cosmopolitan) increases the

possible functions of money and so makes a different thing of it.

Thus there can be endless species of money--as many types of money

as there are types and varieties of social order. Money in Soviet

Russia is a different organ from money in Nazi Germany, and that

again is different from French or American money. The difference

can be as wide as that between lungs and swimming bladders and

gills. It is not simply a quantitative difference, as so many

people seem to imagine, which can be adjusted by varying the rate

of exchange or any such contrivance, it goes deeper, it is a

difference in quality and kind. The bare thought of that makes our

business and financial people feel uncomfortable and confused and

menaced, and they go on moving their bars of gold about from this

vault to that, hoping almost beyond hope that no one will say

anything more about it. It worked very well for a time, to go on

as though money was the same thing all the world over. They will

not admit how that assumption is failing to work now.

Clever people reaped a certain advantage from a more or less

definite apprehension of the variable nature of money, but since

one could not be a financier or business director without an

underlying faith in one's right to profit by one's superior

cleverness, there did not seem to be any reason for them to make a

public fuss about it. They got their profits and the flats got

left.

Directly we grasp this not very obscure truth that there can be,

and are, different sorts of money dependent on the economic usages

or system in operation, which are not really interchangeable, then

it becomes plain that a collectivist world order, whose fundamental

law is such a Declaration of Rights as we have sketched, will have

to carry on its main, its primary operations at least with a new

world money, a specially contrived money, differing in its nature

from any sort of money conventions that have hitherto served human

needs. It will be issued against the total purchasable output of

the community in return for the workers' services to the community.

There will be no more reason for going to the City for a loan than

for going to the oracle at Delphi for advice about it.

In the phase of social stress and emergency socialisation into

which we are certainly passing, such a new money may begin to

appear quite soon. Governments finding it impossible to resort to

the tangled expedients of the financial counting-house, may take a

short cut to recuperation, requisition the national resources

within their reach and set their unemployed hands to work by means

of these new checks. They may carry out international barter

arrangements upon an increasing scale. The fact that the

counting-house is in a hopeless mess because of its desperate attempts

to ignore the protean nature of money, will become more manifest as it

becomes less important.

The Stock Exchange and Bank credit and all the arts of loaning and

usury and forestalling will certainly dwindle away together as the

World Order establishes itself. If and when World Order

establishes itself. They will be superseded, like egg-shells and

foetal membranes. There is no reason for denouncing those who

devised and worked those methods and institutions as scoundrels and

villains. They did honestly according to their lights. They were

a necessary part of the process of getting Homo sapiens out of his

cave and down from his tree. And gold, that lovely heavy stuff,

will be released from its vaults and hiding-places for the use of

the artist and technician--probably at a price considerably below

the present quotations.

Our attempt to forecast the coming World Order is framed then in an

immense and increasing spectacle of constructive activity. We can

anticipate a rapid transfiguration of the face of the earth as its

population is distributed and re-distributed in accordance with the

shifting requirements of economic production.

It is not only that there is what is called a housing shortage in

nearly every region of the earth, but most of the existing

accommodation, by modern standards, is unfit for human occupation.

There is scarcely a city in the world, the new world as well as the

old, which does not need to have half its dwelling-places

destroyed. Perhaps Stockholm, reconditioned under a Socialist

regime, may claim to be an exception; Vienna was doing hopefully

until its spirit was broken by Dollfuss and the Catholic reaction.

For the rest, behind a few hundred main avenues and prospects, sea

and river fronts, capitols, castles and the like, filthy slums and

rookeries cripple childhood and degrade and devitalise its dulled

elders. You can hardly say people are born into such surroundings;

they are only half born.

With the co-operation of the press and the cinema it would be easy

to engender a worldwide public interest and enthusiasm for the new

types of home and fitment that are now attainable by everyone.

Here would be an outlet for urban and regional patriotism, for

local shame and pride and effort. Here would be stuff to argue

about. Wherever men and women have been rich enough, powerful

enough and free enough, their thoughts have turned to architecture

and gardening. Here would be a new incentive to travel, to see

what other towns and country-sides were doing. The common man on

his holidays would do what the English milord of the seventeenth

century did; he would make his Grand Tour and come back from his

journeys with architectural drawings and notions for home

application. And this building and rebuilding would be a

continuing process, a sustained employment, going on from good to

better, as the economic forces shifted and changed with new

discoveries and men's ideas expanded.

It is doubtful in a world of rising needs and standards if many

people would want to live in manifestly old houses, any more than

they would want to live in old clothes. Except in a few country

places where ancient buildings have wedded themselves happily to

some local loveliness and become quasi-natural things, or where

some great city has shown a brave façade to the world, I doubt if

there will be much to preserve. In such large open countries as

the United States there has been a considerable development of the

mobile home in recent years. People haul a trailer-home behind

their cars and become seasonal nomads. . . . But there is no need

to expatiate further on a limitless wealth of possibilities.

Thousands of those who have been assisting in the monstrous clumsy

evacuations and shiftings of population that have been going on

recently, must have had their imaginations stirred by dim

realisation of how much better all this might be done, if it were

done in a new spirit and with a different intention. There must be

a multitude of young and youngish people quite ripe for infection

by this idea of cleaning up and resettling the world. Young men

who are now poring over war maps and planning annexations and

strategic boundaries, fresh Maginot lines, new Gibraltars and

Dardanelles, may presently be scheming the happy and healthy

distribution of routes and residential districts in relation to

this or that important region of world supply for oil or wheat or

water-power. It is essentially the same type of cerebration,

better employed.

Considerations of this sort are sufficient to supply a background

of hopeful activities to our prospective world order. But we are

not all architects and gardeners; there are many types of minds and

many of those who are training or being trained for the skilled

co-operations of warfare and the development of a combatant morale,

may be more disposed to go on with definitely educational work. In

that way they can most easily gratify the craving for power and

honourable service. They will face a world in extreme need of more

teachers and fresh-minded and inspiring teachers at that. At every

level of educational work from the kindergarten to the research

laboratory, and in every part of the world from Capricornia to

Alaska and from the Gold Coast to Japan, there will be need of

active workers to bring minds into harmony with the new order and

to work out, with all the labour saving and multiplying apparatus

available, cinema, radio, cheap books and pictures and all the rest

of it, the endless new problems of human liaison that will arise.

There we have a second line of work along which millions of young

people may escape the stagnation and frustration which closed in

upon their predecessors as the old order drew to its end.

A sturdy and assertive variety of the new young will be needed for

the police work of the world. They will be more disposed for

authority and less for teaching or creative activities than their

fellows. The old proverb will still hold for the new order that it

takes all sorts to make a world, and the alternative to driving

this type of temperament into conspiracy and fighting it and, if

you can, suppressing it, is to employ it, win it over, trust it,

and give it law behind it to respect and enforce. They want a

loyalty and this loyalty will find its best use and satisfaction in

the service of world order. I have remarked in the course of such

air travel as I have done, that the airmen of all nations have a

common resemblance to each other and that the patriotic virus in

their blood is largely corrected by a wider professionalism. At

present the outlook before a young airman is to perish in a

spectacular dog-fight before he is five and twenty. I wonder how

many of them really rejoice in that prospect.

It is not unreasonable to anticipate the development of an ad hoc

disarmament police which will have its greatest strength in the

air. How easily the spirit of an air police can be de-nationalised

is shown by the instance of the air patrols on the United

States-Canadian border, to which President Roosevelt drew my attention.

There is a lot of smuggling along that border and the planes now

play an important part in its suppression. At first the United

States and Canada had each their own planes. Then in a wave of

common sense, the two services were pooled. Each plane now carries

a United States and a Canadian customs officer. When contraband is

spotted the plane comes down on it and which officer acts is

determined by the destination of the smuggled goods. There we have

a pattern for a world struggling through federation to collective

unity. An ad hoc disarmament police with its main strength in the

air would necessarily fall into close co-operation with the various

other world police activities. In a world where criminals can fly

anywhere, the police must be able to fly anywhere too. Already we

have a world-wide network of competent men fighting the white-slave

traffic, the drug traffic and so forth. The thing begins already.

All this I write to provide imaginative material for those who see

the coming order as a mere blank interrogation. People talk much

nonsense about the disappearance of incentive under socialism. The

exact opposite is the truth. It is the obstructive appropriation

of natural resources by private ownership that robs the prosperous

of incentive and the poor of hope. Our Declaration of Human Rights

assures a man the proper satisfaction of all his elementary needs

IN KIND, and nothing more. If he wants more than that he will have

to work for it, and the healthier he is and the better he is fed

and housed, the more bored he will be by inactivity and the more he

will want something to do. I am suggesting what he is likely to do

in general terms, and that is as much as one can do now. We can

talk about the broad principles upon which these matters will be

handled in a consolidating world socialism, but we can scarcely

venture to anticipate the detailed forms, the immense richness and

variety of expression, an ever-increasing number of intelligent

people will impose upon these primary ideas.

But there is one more structural suggestion that it may be

necessary to bring into our picture. So far as I know it was first

broached by that very bold and subtle thinker, Professor William

James, in a small book entitled The Moral Equivalent of War. He

pointed out the need there might be for a conception of duty, side

by side with the idea of rights, that there should be something in

the life of every citizen, man or woman alike, that should give him

at once a sense of personal obligation to the World State and

personal ownership in the World State. He brought that into

relation with the fact that there will remain in any social order

we can conceive, a multitude of necessary services which by no sort

of device can be made attractive as normal life-long occupations.

He was not thinking so much of the fast-vanishing problem of

mechanical toil as of such irksome tasks as the prison warder's,

the asylum attendant's; the care of the aged and infirm, nursing

generally, health and sanitary services, a certain residuum of

clerical routine, dangerous exploration and experiment. No doubt

human goodness is sufficient to supply volunteers for many of these

things, but are the rest of us entitled to profit by their

devotion? His solution is universal conscription for a certain

period of the adult life. The young will have to do so much

service and take so much risk for the general welfare as the world

commonwealth requires. They will be able to do these jobs with the

freshness and vigour of those who know they will presently be

released, and who find their honour in a thorough performance; they

will not be subjected to that deadening temptation to self-protective

slacking and mechanical insensitiveness, which assails

all who are thrust by economic necessity into these callings for

good and all.

It is quite possible that a certain percentage of these conscripts

may be caught by the interest of what they are doing; the asylum

attendant may decide to specialise in psycho-therapeutic work; the

hospital nurse succumb to that curiosity which underlies the great

physiologist; the Arctic worker may fall in love with his snowy

wilderness. . . .

One other leading probability of a collectivist world order has to

be noted here, and that is an enormous increase in the pace and

amount of research and discovery. I write research, but by that I

mean that double-barrelled attack upon ignorance, the biological

attack and the physical attack, that is generally known as

"Science". "Science" comes to us from those academic Dark Ages

when men had to console themselves for their ignorance by

pretending that there was a limited amount of knowledge in the

world, and little chaps in caps and gowns strutted about, bachelors

who knew a passable lot, masters who knew a tremendous lot and

doctors in crimson gowns who knew all that there was to be known.

Now it is manifest that none of us know very much, and the more we

look into what we think we know, the more hitherto undetected

things we shall find lurking in our assumptions.

Hitherto this business of research, which we call the "scientific

world", has been in the hands of very few workers indeed. I throw

out the suggestion that in our present-day world, of all the brains

capable of great and masterful contributions to "scientific"

thought and achievement, brains of the quality of Lord Rutherford's,

or Darwin's or Mendel's or Freud's or Leonardo's or Galileo's, not

one in a thousand, not one in a score of thousands, ever gets born

into such conditions as to realise its opportunities. The rest

never learn a civilised language, never get near a library, never

have the faintest chance of self-realisation, never hear the call.

They are under-nourished, they die young, they are misused. And of

the millions who would make good, useful, eager secondary research

workers and explorers, not one in a million is utilised.

But now consider how things will be if we had a stirring education

ventilating the whole world, and if we had a systematic and

continually more competent search for exceptional mental quality

and a continually more extensive net of opportunity for it.

Suppose a quickening public mind implies an atmosphere of

increasing respect for intellectual achievement and a livelier

criticism of imposture. What we call scientific progress to-day

would seem a poor, hesitating, uncertain advance in comparison with

what would be happening under these happier conditions.

The progress of research and discovery has produced such brilliant

and startling results in the past century and a half that few of us

are aware of the small number of outstanding men who have been

concerned in it, and how the minor figures behind these leaders

trail off into a following of timid and ill-provided specialists

who dare scarcely stand up to a public official on their own

ground. This little army, this "scientific world" of to-day,

numbering I suppose from head to tail, down to the last bottle-washer,

not a couple of hundred thousand men, will certainly be

represented in the new world order by a force of millions, better

equipped, amply co-ordinated, free to question, able to demand

opportunity. Its best will be no better than our best, who could

not be better, but they will be far more numerous, and its rank and

file, explorers, prospectors, experimental team workers and an

encyclopædic host of classifiers and co-ordinators and interpreters,

will have a vigour, a pride and confidence that will make the

laboratories of to-day seem half-way back to the alchemist's den.

Can one doubt that the "scientific world" will break out in this

way when the revolution is achieved, and that the development of

man's power over nature and over his own nature and over this still

unexplored planet, will undergo a continual acceleration as the

years pass? No man can guess beforehand what doors will open then

nor upon what wonderlands.

These are some fragmentary intimations of the quality of that wider

life a new world order can open to mankind. I will not speculate

further about them because I would not have it said that this book

is Utopian or "Imaginative" or anything of that sort. I have set

down nothing that is not strictly reasonable and practicable. It

is the soberest of books and the least original of books. I think

I have written enough to show that it is impossible for world

affairs to remain at their present level. Either mankind collapses

or our species struggles up by the hard yet fairly obvious routes I

have collated in this book, to reach a new level of social

organisation. There can be little question of the abundance,

excitement and vigour of living that awaits our children upon that

upland. If it is attained. There is no doubting their degradation

and misery if it is not.

There is nothing really novel about this book. But there has been

a certain temerity in bringing together facts that many people have

avoided bringing together for fear they might form an explosive

mixture. Maybe they will. They may blast through some obstinate

mental barriers. In spite of that explosive possibility, that

explosive necessity, it may be, this remains essentially an

assemblage, digest and encouragement of now prevalent but still

hesitating ideas. It is a plain statement of the revolution to

which reason points an increasing number of minds, but which they

still lack resolution to undertake. In The Fate of Homo sapiens I

have stressed the urgency of the case. Here I have assembled the

things they can and need to do. They had better summon up their

resolution.

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