MUST THE WAR SPREAD?

BY D. N. PRITT, K.C., M.P.

MUST THE WAR SPREAD?

by

D. N. PRITT, K.C., M.P.

"A spectre is haunting Europe—the spectre of Communism. All the powers of old Europe have entered into a holy alliance to exorcise this spectre: Pope and Czar, Metternich and Guizot, French Radicals and German police-spies."

K. MARX and F. ENGELS, 1848.

PUBLISHED AS A 'PENGUIN SPECIAL' BY
PENGUIN BOOKS LIMITED
HARMONDSWORTH MIDDLESEX ENGLAND
41, EAST 28TH STREET, NEW YORK, U.S.A.

First published JANUARY 1940
Reprinted JANUARY 1940

MADE AND PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN FOR PENGUIN BOOKS LTD., BY
WYMAN & SONS LIMITED, LONDON READING AND FAKENHAM

CONTENTS

PREFACE

WHEN I wrote "Light on Moscow"* in October, 1939, I emphasised the vital importance of stable and secure relations between Britain and the U.S.S.R., and the difficulty of achieving that mutual understanding which alone can be a satisfactory basis for such relations. At that time a storm was already brewing, and many interests were beginning to foment hostility to the Soviet Union in Britain and other capitalist countries. Early in November, 1939, I accordingly undertook to write the present book, in the cause of averting the storm and rebuilding a proper understanding between the two peoples.

Before the work had gone very far, the outbreak of hostilities between the U.S.S.R. and Finland intensified the storm, and made it in my view more important than ever that this book should be written. In view of the position which the Finnish question holds in the mind of many people, I have dealt with it very fully; but it is still only a part and not the whole of the problem.

January, 1940. D. N. PRITT.

* Penguin Special, S44.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

THIS book is not in any true sense a sequel to my " Light on Moscow," although both deal largely with the same subject, namely the relations between Great Britain and the U.S.S.R. I undertook this second book before the outbreak of hostilities between the U.S.S.R. and Finland at the end of November, 1939, as the need for a book on its central thesis was clear to me already before the end of the previous month. That central thesis is this, that powerful influences among the ruling group in this country and elsewhere have developed and brought near to fruition a plan for forming a common front of capitalist nations against the U.S.S.R., by which her power shall be crushed and the spread of Socialism throughout the world shall, as they hope, be postponed or averted.

I believe that the danger of this plan being put into operation in the near future is real and urgent, that the forces working for it are powerful, and the number of people unconsciously abetting the plan is great; I also believe—and feel that millions of people who have no sympathy with Socialism and no interest in the Soviet Union equally believe—that such a war would be a terrible disaster. This disaster can be averted if, and only if, the great mass of people in the United Kingdom are once convinced of the danger, for their opposition will be sufficient to deter their rulers from carrying out the plan.

It is my purpose in this book to convince the man in the street of the reality of the danger; although it is a commonplace to students of politics, it may seem incredible to him, and to convince him I shall have to investigate not only the immediate facts but also the general technique of foreign

politics and the political history of recent years. When he has studied the evidence and arguments that I have to put before him, I trust that he will in his hundreds of thousands join in building up a body of public opinion to render it impossible for the plotters to carry out the scheme. (If he does that, he will be helping history to repeat itself, for at the end of the last World War it was largely the hostility of British and other workers which brought to grief the efforts of the British and other governments to crush the then puny Soviet Republic.)

The first thing that the man in the street, the ordinary decent citizen, has to do, if he is to face and understand the realities of the situation, is to grasp that in the technique of foreign politics, in the relations between states, moral standards have always been extremely low, and that in the last thirty years they have been forced down even lower than they previously were.

Nations, or rather the governments of nations, seek the furtherance of their own interests by whatever methods will best achieve the end desired. This means in practice that the interests thus furthered are those which appear most important to the government of the nation, the group of people who really decide what is to be called the policy of the nation and how it is to be carried out. It also means that the methods employed are selected almost exclusively from the standpoint of results; ethics has very little to do with it; the states "fight dirty" if they can best achieve their ends that way; they buy or trample on the right of other states, and acquiesce in or condemn aggression, regardless of merits or morals; and they turn from the weapons of peace to those of war whenever they think the aim is worth the cost. There are real advantages to be gained by fighting ruthlessly, and hitting below the belt, when there is no superior authority to keep order or restrain murder; and governments will not forego such advantages on moral grounds.

The horror of this picture is increased by the fact that with the ever-growing economic difficulties of the period, wars grow more frequent as well as more terrible. There have been both more warfare and more destruction in the first forty years of

this century than in the whole of the last century, or the century before, or the century before that. The historians of a thousand years hence will probably pick out the times we live in as those of the most bloody and destructive warfare for over 1,000 years. Nor is this evil record of international misbehaviour to be attributed solely to the War of 1914–18 and this present war. We are all too apt to forget the smaller wars that have taken place, or even the greater wars when they have been conducted in areas remote from Britain. In the first ten years alone after the last Great War, there were no less than twenty-five wars. In short, war, so far from decreasing in our lifetime, or for that matter in the last few hundred years, has been increasing both in quantity and in the quality of its destructiveness, and what we call peace in this century is merely a truce in which arms are being prepared for each succeeding war.

Nor can we lessen the effect of this gloomy description by asserting that in all the many wars Britain has been involved in in the last couple of centuries she was on every occasion forced to go to war either by a threat to her interests—that is, the interests of her rulers—or by a threat to essential principles, or both combined. Precisely the same standpoint is held in every other country with regard to its participation in wars. All these wars, whether Britain was involved in them or not, were in truth " continuations of policy by other means," wars embarked upon in the defence or furtherance of the policies of ruling groups in various states, when those policies could not be furthered without resorting thus to wholesale murder; they all of necessity involved further deterioration of moral standards in international affairs; and they all serve to confirm my statement that the relations between states are governed by no code of ethics and that the resort to war has been so readily undertaken during this century that it may well come to be considered one of the most dreadful in this respect in all the records of history.

This is an unpleasant picture, and it is made worse by the sickness of the present time; for this is a very sick time, and the whole social and economic system is in such chaos that no people, no government, no ruling group—no individual indeed

—can have much confidence as to where they will be in even six months' time.

In such a time states, like men, lower even a low standard of honesty. Small wonder is it that the high hopes built on the League of Nations twenty years ago have had so many disappointments. The poor League was seldom allowed by selfish national interests to do more than, so to speak, provide boxing gloves for the contestants; and now Sir Samuel Hoare and his accomplices have even burnt the gloves, and the fighting is with naked fists, the "Queensberry rules" are replaced by open power politics, by the unchecked rule of material force.*

"THE FATAL DUALISM"

The position is rendered more confused and uncertain by two new closely-related features of present-day political development. The first of these is what some thinkers call "the fatal dualism" of British government policy, that is to say, the permanent political dilemma caused by the standing conflict of interest within our ruling class. More clearly now than in any earlier period, our ruling class has two wholly distinct policies to serve; the first to maintain the Imperial strength of the British Empire against rival empires and powers, and the second to preserve the capitalist structure of society, both here and elsewhere, against the advance of Socialism. As a result, whenever our rulers are confronted with a choice of two courses, one of which will strengthen Great Britain and her Empire against other states at the risk of her governing class losing its powerful and privileged position, and the other of which will consolidate the latter position at the risk of weakening Great Britain and the Empire, they are in a grave dilemma as to how far they can serve the one policy without doing too much injury to the other.

Lenin described the dilemma very well in the following words :—

* On the recent resuscitation of the League of Nations, see Chapter IX.

" Two tendencies exist; one which renders the alliance of all imperialists unavoidable; a second which drives one group of imperialists against the other. Two tendencies, neither of which rests on a firm basis."

The difficulty was well illustrated on repeated occasions during the war in Spain and was perceived quite plainly by writers who were not socialists but who were looking upon the Spanish situation from the impartial standpoint of an expert. For example, the military expert, Captain Liddell Hart, writing of the failure of British politicians to appreciate the threat to Empire communications involved in a Fascist domination of Spain, expressed himself thus :

" Strategically the danger is so obvious that it is difficult to understand the eagerness with which some of the most avowedly patriotic sections of the British public have desired the rebels' success. Class sentiment and property sense would seem to have blinded their strategic sight."

This is not the view of the party politician or of a man swayed by strong political prejudice. It is the opinion of one of the best known military historians, who at the time he wrote those words was the military correspondent of *The Times*.

In exactly the same way as the British Government and ruling class appeared in their encouragement of the Spanish Fascists and their failure to check German and Italian intervention to be to Captain Liddell Hart " strategically blind," so to the varied industrial and business interests represented by the leading shipping paper, *The Syren and Shipping*, the British Government appeared " decadent." In their issue of the 9th November, 1938, *Syren and Shipping's* editorial ran :—

" We cannot but feel that Herr Hitler had some justification for the remark he is alleged to have made to Dr. Schuschnigg last year to the effect that Great Britain was on the point of complete breakdown. Foreign observers cannot be blamed for their tendency to think of us now as a second-rate power, when they see British ships bombed out of their

legitimate trades by a rebel commander to whom no belligerent rights have been granted, while the British government complaisantly watches and congratulates itself when only twenty-one vessels are attacked in three months, compared with forty in the previous quarter. . . . We applauded Mr. Neville Chamberlain's recent outburst against M.P.'s who spend their time declaiming the decadence of Britain, but we are compelled to temper our applause with the reflection that Mr. Chamberlain's own government is largely responsible for that state of affairs. If we are to be truthful —and it is a pity that truth is not more widely used in political and diplomatic circles—we must admit that many of this country's actions (or inactions) can only be described as decadent."

At first sight it might appear that this refusal of the British government to defend British shipping was merely a betrayal of the capitalist interests of the shipowners; but in truth it was serving a wider and more fundamental class interest; and, as *The Syren and Shipping* itself points out, the shipowners concerned were not important enough to compel the government to secure them their legal rights. It put the matter baldly and cynically thus: "In discussing the Spanish situation recently with a shipowner we were shocked to hear him say that, personally, he had no hope of ever seeing the government bestir themselves to help British owners trading to Spain, because none of these owners was powerful enough, politically or financially, to exercise any pressure in the precincts of Westminster."[2]

In other words, the British Government was unwilling to protect British seamen engaged in lawful trade against aggression by a Fascist power, and would only do so if the shipowners concerned were strong enough "politically or financially" to force it to act. Had the government thus "twisting the lion's tail" been a left-wing government, the reaction would have been very different.

We are in truth definitely presented with the phenomenon that the dividing lines in Europe which used in the Middle Ages to run horizontally, and which for several centuries have

run vertically, are now once again swinging to the horizontal. In the early Middle Ages the ruling class in Western Europe did not regard themselves as Englishmen or Frenchmen or Italians, but as persons having a certain class position which they might find themselves exercising in any particular country. The dividing line is said to have been horizontal, because they felt more closely associated in interests, sympathies and understanding with those of their own class in another state than with their fellow-countrymen in another class. Later, for several centuries, " national " feeling prevailed, and the sense of identity with one's fellow-countrymen outweighed that of identity with those of a similar class in other countries. Now, in this sorely battered century, the dividing lines are swinging again to the horizontal, another ruling class is beginning to regard itself not merely as more closely allied to corresponding groups in other capitalist countries, but also as hostile to the classes (even in its own nation) below the horizontal frontier in a fashion and to an extent unknown in the Middle Ages. The conception of patriotism has changed greatly, and is gravely weakened. An upper-class Englishman is only too often first of all a member of his class, conscious of the " class war " and loyal to his class in that war, and only secondarily an Englishman. An interesting example is found in the declaration of Major Yeats Brown, author of " Bengal Lancer," that if Britain were to support the Republican Government of Spain, he would be found fighting on the other side—the side of Franco, the big landlords, and the capitalists. " If we," wrote Major Yeats Brown, meaning thereby his own country, " were to enter the lists against Germany and Italy to support a gang of ruffians "—meaning thereby the democratically elected Spanish Republican Government—" who have committed crimes unparalleled in the history of the world, I for one shall fight on the other side."

A still more striking example is to be found in the thousands of French fascists who up to only a year or two ago, in a time of great tension and peril for France, with Germany and Italy ranged as her potential enemies on three of her frontiers, were openly arming themselves with German weapons and Italian ammunition to fight their own working-class. The very

name of "Cagoulard" still stinks in the nostrils of decent people.

The second of the two features is the emergence of the U.S.S.R. The coming into being of a country where there are no longer any landlords, any capitalists or finance magnates, where the power of wealth as such has not merely been diminished but has utterly ceased to exist, makes a difference in the world of states so great that it can hardly be overestimated. Even before the outbreak of the present war, this new feature brought with it the urgent danger that substantial proportions of the populations of many and various countries might begin to agitate, with more or less insistence and more or less revolutionary fervour, for their own country to become Socialist; and, now that the three greatest capitalist powers in Europe are at war with one another, the rulers of those and other countries, with a clear knowledge how near most of Europe was to going Bolshevik at the end of the last war, when capitalism was by twenty years less near to collapse than it is now, must have most of their actions and policies guided by the anxiety to preserve the economic structure of their own countries. For them, as will be seen in later chapters of this book, the dividing lines have swung almost the whole way from the perpendicular to the horizontal, and it is part of their tragedy that the surviving conflicts of interests between the capitalist rulers of Britain and France and of Germany have brought about a war across the perpendicular barriers when the balance of their interests really called for a war of capitalism against the Socialist state.

To sum up what I have written in this chapter, I say that modern government is an affair of soulless and cynical serving of "national" interests, and at the same time an affair of a difficult tight-rope dance for the rulers, who have to balance the clash of interests between one state and another against the clash of interests between classes in their own state and throughout the world. This latter clash becomes more and more urgent as the interests of classes diverge more acutely; and the problem for the ruling class in the present war is to seek to win the war against Germany without causing or allowing Germany to go Bolshevik, and thus ultimately losing the war of classes, the war against Socialism.

BAMBOOZLEMENT

There is one more point, a very important point, to be borne in mind, the question of bamboozlement, generally called propaganda. The majority of people prefer honesty to dishonesty, and most even of those who do not do so prefer at any rate the pretence of honesty to a cynical parade of dishonesty. It is thus necessary for the ruling groups, who seek as I have explained to further their own interests by any means, however amoral, and whose interests are often diametrically opposed to those of the general mass—for example, their real or supposed interests often call for war, whilst the mass is almost always better served by peace—to maintain an elaborate machinery for persuading the man in the street that in what they are doing they are in fact both obeying the dictates of good morals and serving the interests of the mass. Our everyday life, the street, so to speak, along which the " man in the street " is passing, still seems to many of us so relatively well ordered and managed that we are apt to accept things at their face value, and it is not easy for us to do what must be done if we are ever to grasp the truth—that is, to realise that scarcely anything now means what it says, to suspect everything that we are told by our government and our Press, to search all the time for the truth behind the false front, in short to avoid being bamboozled.

I propose to give in some little detail one small example of bamboozlement, which shows exactly how the Press and the British Government work together to create a totally false impression.

It may be remembered that, as I pointed out in " Light on Moscow," immediately before the German occupation of Prague in March, 1939, the British Press suddenly became filled with prophecies of a—to use Sir Samuel Hoare's phrase—" Golden Age." The diplomatic correspondents of the various newspapers with one accord described how in " well-informed circles " it was believed that the political situation was improving. To take only one example, *The Times*, in the course of a most optimistic survey by their diplomatic correspondent,

remarked on March 10th, " In general the international situation seems now to give less cause for anxiety than for some time past." Exactly five days later German troops marched into Prague.

Diplomatic correspondents base statements of this nature, of course, on information supplied to them semi-officially by the Government Departments, and these forecasts, so absurdly grotesque in retrospect, could only have been produced either by colossal ignorance of the European situation or by a definite desire to deceive.

At the time when I wrote " Light on Moscow," no direct proof was available to show that the British Government when it inspired this propaganda knew that Hitler intended to move against Prague in the near future; but proof has now been supplied by the French Government in their " Yellow Book of the Documents relative to the Events and Negotiations which preceded the outbreak of war," J. 7307–39.

A study of this " Yellow Book " shows that throughout the period in question Britain and France were, as was only to be expected, in the closest collaboration. It emerges from the Yellow Book's narrative that throughout February the French and British Governments had been pressing the German Government to enter into the guarantee of the frontiers of Czecho-Slovakia which had been provided for under the Munich Agreement. Finally, on the 28th February, the German Government delivered to the ambassadors of both Governments brusquely worded notes of identical tenour, in which it warned them in the clearest possible terms that it regarded the " general evolution " of Czecho-Slovakia as belonging to Germany's " sphere of most essential interests," and at the same time made it pretty clear that it did not regard its own guarantee as having so far come into force.

This reply, M. Coulondre, the French Ambassador in Berlin, regarded as extremely ominous, and he wrote on the 2nd March as follows to M. Bonnet, the French Foreign Minister:

> " The German note gives us to understand in substance that according to the view of the Government of the Reich the preliminary conditions of the first annex of the Munich

Agreement for German adhesion to the international guarantee of the new Czecho-Slovakian frontier have in no way been fulfilled up to the present time. . . .

" All this part of Europe is henceforth to be a reserve of the Reich. . . .

" The Western powers have no longer any right to be considered in Central Europe. . . .

" This document is far from reassuring in relation to the immediate intentions of Hitler's policy in regard to Czecho-Slovakia."

Indeed, quite obviously the German note was a plain warning to the democracies that Hitler intended to strike in Czecho-Slovakia and that he would brook no interference.

It will be remembered that at this time Britain regarded itself as bound to come to the assistance of Czecho-Slovakia. The then Dominion Secretary had said on the 4th October, 1938: " His Majesty's Government feel under a moral obligation to Czecho-Slovakia to treat the guarantee as being now in force."

Obviously, if there was a general belief that Czecho-Slovakia was likely to be attacked, the British Government would have had to declare their attitude and could scarcely have avoided standing by their pledge. The reason for the campaign of optimism is now obvious. It was designed to prevent the public, until it was too late, realising the truth—that a highly critical situation had arisen—and thereupon compelling the British Government to honour their promise. By bamboozlement the British Government created the illusion that the quarrels between Slovakia and the Czech provinces (clearly inspired by Germany) were of no great importance. Consequently, when the final crisis came public opinion was unprepared for it and the government was able to evade their guarantee upon the " Lawyer's Excuse " that since Slovakia had declared its independence the Czecho-Slovakia guarantee no longer existed.

I have set out in some detail the incidents of this particular bamboozlement because it is essential to grasp that very often the British Government definitely inspires false news.

Incidentally, this additional information makes it still more illuminating to recall that Mr. Chamberlain, when he first spoke in the House of Commons immediately after the seizure of Czecho-Slovakia, tried to " water down " what had happened, and to suggest that it involved no breach of faith. (One realises that, if the British Government had desired the British public to acquiesce in the advance of the Soviet troops into Finland on the 30th November, 1939, it would only have needed ten days' " bamboozlement " to bring this about.)

This " trimming " of news has been carried so far of recent years that the *Statesman* of Calcutta, the leading conservative paper of British India, has thus expressed itself in a recent article :

> " The growth of the private News-Letter circulated only to subscribers and containing no advertisements is a remarkable development in the course of the last ten years. It would seem that there is a public seriously dissatisfied with the London Press. . . . The accusation brought against the London Newspapers is that the public are not told the really important facts. Advertisers insist on optimism, and there are other influences brought to bear."

The writer then goes on to state that private News-Services often informs their subscribers of political events long before any mention of them appears in the public press. Referring to the *Week*, one of such News-Letters published in London, he remarks :

> " It has generally been well in advance of any information given to parliament or the public. It published as a matter of course the German plan for occupying Prague and taking Czecho-Slovakia, which was later announced as a surprise in the Daily Papers. . . . We see the *Week's* public informed on the Wednesday of the Italian seizure of Albania as already a settled fact. On Thursday, Parliament quietly rose with nothing said. The Prime Minister went to Aberdeen and the Cabinet dispersed. It is not possible to suppose that what was known to the *Week* was not known to the Cabinet."

When a leading conservative journal of the reputation of the Calcutta *Statesman* publicly admits that the Cabinet conceals vital information from Parliament and that in the interests of advertisers and " other influences " the public Press suppresses the truth, then indeed bamboozlement has gone a long way.

It is partly for that reason that I have dealt in such length with the recent history of Finland in Chapter V of this book. The public has been persuaded that Finland is a democracy. In Chapter V, I set out a series of quotations from *The Times* and other conservative newspapers to show that so far as its government is concerned, this is quite untrue. The public is now told that in 1918 Finland fought a war of " Liberation " against the Soviet Union. I show by quotations from among other sources the semi-official Finnish history of the war that all Russian troops had been withdrawn from Finland before any of the major engagements of the 1918 war were fought. The reader will ask himself why he is being told these untruths. In the case of Czecho-Slovakia the seriousness of the crisis was withheld from him because the British Government did not wish to take any steps to save from Hitlerism a democratic state in Central Europe. In this book I hope to explain why the public is at present bamboozled about Finland and even more so about the policy, intentions and strength of the Soviet Union.

It is plain, indeed, that the work of fooling the mass of the people into supporting or accepting the policy of the government at any rate sufficiently to enable the government to carry its policy through without too much difficulty—more important in time of war, but never unimportant—is so supremely well done that often enough a considerable section of the ruling class itself begins to bamboozle itself, and to accept as valid notions which were introduced in the first place only in order to keep people quiet. We are at times entertained by the spectacle of the more realist sections complaining of this self-deception. For example, the Lord Esher who in the early years of this century helped to build up our military organisation, and was closely attached to successive cabinets by his connection with the reigning monarch of those days, when he heard the first news of the Russian Revolution in

November, 1917, complained as follows in a letter to Lord Stamfordham, then the Private Secretary of King George V :—

> "All this jargon about 'democracy' is recoiling on the heads of those who use it. Our Tories are worse in this respect than our Radicals for they sin against the light."

If these facts be borne in mind, the study of the central thesis of this book should be relatively easy. It may still appear horrible, but it will no longer be incredible—indeed it will be seen to be true. I propose to develop this thesis as follows :

I shall examine the economic and political structure of the modern state, to see where the true seat of power is to be found in the great states, and how and to what extent the smaller states are under the direct or indirect control of greater ones. I shall study the long record of the hostility of our ruling class to the Soviet Union, and the history of Finland since 1917. I shall consider in detail the immense and widespread campaign of accusation against the U.S.S.R. in respect to her dealings with the Finnish Government, and set out the facts in their proper perspective.

The next stage will be to set out with some fullness the evidence which already exists in the columns of the Press and elsewhere of the preparation and elaboration of the plan to destroy the Soviet Union. And finally I shall draw, and ask my readers to draw, certain conclusions.

CHAPTER II

POWER IN THE MAJOR STATES

In this chapter I must examine the true nature of the major states of to-day, the industrial states, of which Britain is a good example, and see where power really resides. Historically, in the absence of violent revolution, great changes of substance often occur with but little change of form, and are obscured from view by the forms which survive more or less unaltered. If, in examining the structure of Britain of to-day, I begin with the legal and constitutional point of view, and move from that to the substance behind the form, I shall help the reader both to understand the substance and to get a little practice in the difficult and important art of seeing that almost everything is different from what it seems.

To begin, then, this country is of course a monarchy; by the old theory of the Constitution the law-making authority is the King, the Lords and the Commons, or "King-in-Parliament," and the executive is the King with his Privy Council, the "King-in-Council." As for the administration of justice, in theory the King is the fountain of justice; the Judges are "His Majesty's Judges" and are appointed by him. The King is also the head of the Church. We have thus a completely monarchical form of government. It is obvious, however, that within this form of government the substance may vary from one time to another. The mere form of government has not varied much since the time of the Plantagenets; and the modern King is anointed and enthroned with the same rites as accompanied the crowning of the Saxon King, Edward the Confessor.

Now, whilst it must not be thought that these old forms

have no validity, no one supposes that the King is the real seat of power, and the substance behind the forms is far more important; and when we study this we discover that in the last few centuries, and especially in the last hundred and fifty years, there have taken place many changes in the constitution, subordinate in form to the old theory, but profoundly altering its spirit and content. When the new manufacturing class, the forerunners of the capitalists of to-day, first emerged, they had very little say in the government of the country; but in course of time, with little change in governmental forms, they achieved, step by step, and largely by the extension of the suffrage, a predominant voice in the government of the country. This extension was not granted to them as a class, but they were able, by invoking the aid of the mass of the people to secure it, to obtain for themselves a dominant voice in Parliament.

In the course of the nineteenth century, this change in substance, within the framework of the old forms, was accompanied by a change in spirit and outlook, expressed in such phrases as "democracy," "sovereignty of the people," and other English versions of the French Revolutionary phrases, "*Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité.*" There thus came to be a new constitutional theory, superimposed as it were upon the old, so that the country whilst continuing to be a monarchy was at the same time described as a democracy. The divine order of society remained (even if the theory of the divine right of kings was no longer put forward with the same insistence), and at the same time a "natural" order of society developed in the nineteenth century; in theory everyone had become equal before the law. In the words of one jurist, there was a "change from status to contract"; that is to say, the rules governing for example the relations between a master and a servant, originally provided by the law as part of the legal clothing of the status of the two classes, were later simply terms of a contract arrived at by the "free" consent of the two parties, employer and employee, bargaining together in equality before the law. (Whether either party came off in actual fact better or worse depended of course on their respective strength in bargaining, which in its turn depended

on—to use a modern description of an old phenomenon—the state of the labour market.)

So far, then, we have a sort of palimpsest, on which a "manufacturers' democracy" has been overwritten on to the monarchical constitution; but to come up to date and understand the twentieth century we must take into account a further reconstruction of substance which has taken place in Britain, as in other industrial states. When we investigate this, we begin to understand the fundamental present-day reality, underlying all forms, in the economic structure on which the social life of the country rests. Whether the form be republic or monarchy, dictatorship or democracy, this economic structure necessarily produces in every modern industrial state a substantially similar reality of power, which must be briefly explained.

THE UNDERLYING REALITY

As one would expect, this structure is by no means simple in itself, and it is rendered all the more complicated by the various forms in which it is expressed; but I believe that its elements can be presented very simply. We begin with the knowledge that all men and women in Britain, subjects of the King according to the oldest theory, are equal before the law according to the later theory. But if far the greater number of the adult population depend for their bare existence on being regularly hired by a small minority, there are consequences, perhaps unforeseen, which affect considerably the theory of equality. If, for example, there are 1,400,000 registered unemployed and many more not registered, and if the tragedy presented by those figures has persisted more or less steadily since the end of 1920, so that it is a habitual condition of life in Britain, and not some accidental catastrophe which everyone knows to be as transient as it was unexpected, what must follow? The man who hires, or as the Americans say, "who hires and fires," has great power given to him by this mere circumstance. By this alone he is like the man in the Bible; "I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he

doeth it." The reason for this is clear. In these past twenty years, for the majority of the " gainfully occupied " section of the population, the chance of being unemployed has been as high as 1 in 4 in the years of the worst crisis, and has never been better than 1 in 10. This is on the average of the whole working population; and, when we exclude certain occupations which are spoken of as " steady jobs," then in other occupations the risk has been far greater than this average. For example, in certain Lancashire towns during the period that followed on the great increase of unemployment eight years ago, there were between one-third and one-half of the textile operatives unemployed. A Lancashire cotton operative (and it is still more true of such occupations as shipbuilding during those years) had only a " fifty-fifty " chance of earning a meagre livelihood.

INSECURITY AND ITS RESULTS

This appalling state of insecurity is so overwhelming as to condition a man's whole outlook, his whole life. He must *depend* on the man who has the power to hire him and fire him. In democratic legal theory, the man who hires is only making an equal contract with the man who is hired, but his actual power in these circumstances makes the contract very unequal. He is able to offer a certain wage and to say, " Take it or leave it." The man who is hired, if he chooses to leave the job, knows that he is thereby condemning his family to grinding poverty, to the Means Test, and to the malnutrition which Medical Officers of Health have revealed to be the lot of the vast majority of poorer families.

This accumulated and special insecurity, deriving from the high rate of unemployment in certain trades, such as textiles and shipbuilding, spreads its effect throughout the whole range of wage-earning life, depressing wages, and increasing the general sense of insecurity and helpless dependence.

This insecurity and dependence, of course, concentrate more and more power in the hands of employers (whom the Germans expressively call " Work-givers "), and we thus have the position in the modern industrial state and particularly in Britain

to-day that almost every member of the population falls into one or other of two classes of the population, one very small and the other very large indeed. The one may be called the " master class," the other is the " working class." There are of course other not unimportant sections of the population—the professions, the small shopkeepers, the share fishermen, the small farmers—who may have more or less harmonious or inharmonious relations with the " master class " ; but, important as they are, the relations between them and the " master class " are in no way comparable in the quantity or quality of their effects to the relations between the " master class " and the " working class " ; and the outstanding new feature of the grouping of these classes, as it is seen to-day, is to be found in the concentration of wealth and therefore of power in the hands, not merely of a minority but of a very small minority indeed. This is the effect of the " trustification " of industry which has been going on so rapidly during this century and with such increasing speed precisely during these last twenty years. The effect of it is the creation of a new and formidable type of industrial " boss," very different from the members of the master class of, say, a century ago ; for the new bosses are not only industrial but commercial and, above all, financial bosses in addition. Such bosses not only have no contact or understanding or sympathy with their workers ; they often know little even of the industry they control. In many of the very largest concerns, employing tens or scores of thousands of employees, the effective head is frequently a man who has little enough knowledge of the industrial processes, but a very great knowledge of finance, of the share market, of loan flotations, of " big business " in general, and finally of the ways in which politics can be made to serve industrial and financial ends.

This change, often unnoticed by the man in the street, is in fact freely acknowledged by political observers of all parties. In his famous " Give Us Peace in Our Time, O Lord " speech in 1925, Earl Baldwin, then Prime Minister, put it thus :

> " I often wonder if people in this country realise the inevitable changes that are coming over the industrial system

in England. People are apt to get their knowledge of the industrial system from text-books, which must be half a generation behind, or from some circumstance familiar to them at a fixed and static point in their lives, whereas, as a matter of fact, ever since the industrial system began in this country, it has been not only in a state of evolution but in a state of evolution that, I think, historians in the centuries to come . . . will acknowledge to be an evolution that has developed at a far more rapid rate than was visible to the people who lived in these times."

He then went on to deal with the difficulties of smaller businesses and particularly with those of his own firm of Baldwin's. He explained them thus:

"We were passing into a new state of industry when the small firms and the small industries were being squeezed out, and business was all tending towards great amalgamations. On the one side of employers and on the other side of the men, and when we came in any form between these two forces, God help those who stood outside."

But, of the two forces here mentioned, it is clear which of them is at present dominant in Britain.*

POWER TO THE FEW

It is plain to close students of politics and economics, although largely unknown to the majority of people, who have not hitherto "bothered" about politics—and are as a result destined to be bothered very much *by* politics—that the real power in the modern industrial state rests in the hands of these few and great "captains" of finance and industry. Their power is so far the last writing on the palimpsest, these few rich old men with the power to send millions of young men to death on the battlefield or to half death in depressed industries,

* This speech is reprinted with others in "On England," Penguin, No. 116.

who can give peace and withhold it, give work and withhold it, at the dictates of their own interests.

Their power is primarily economic rather than political; but politics and economics are more closely allied than ever, and alterations of the law and decisions of national policy both involve the use of the political machinery, so that the finance bosses come into direct contact with the political world. They have their representatives on the benches of the House of Commons; the Ministry will consist to some extent of members of their own group and in a high proportion of men who at any rate share their outlook and approve of the protection of their interests. Individually or by their organisations they can and do, within certain limits, dictate to the government what policy is to be adopted. Often, the dictation is delicately concealed, but occasionally their intervention is " visible to the naked eye " of the most innocent of us, as when they make a " cartel " agreement with their " opposite numbers" in European countries which involves a change in British import tariffs, and the tariffs are altered—quite legally, of course—in a few days, or when some Crown Colony seeks to protect some nascent industry and the large-scale British exporters of the product involved command the Colonial Office to make the Crown Colony abandon the tariff. In war-time, when things are more difficult and dangerous, they station their sentries more openly in the various ministries and control-offices.

All the time, of course, as Britain is a constitutional country, the forms of law have to be observed; the Government must not do anything illegal, the voters have to select the government, and nothing must be seen to be done which will outrage public opinion and bring the Government down (unless it is certain that an equally " useful " government will take its place).

But our ruling bosses are equal to that; a sufficient number of voters can be influenced by the Press, and the Press is either directly controlled by the finance bosses or has a sufficient identity of interest with them to co-operate in the work. At times a gaffe like the Hoare-Laval plot—or rather a gaffe like its premature disclosure—serves to illustrate the fact that public opinion can still achieve something and that our " bosses "

are not omnipotent; but even for gaffes like that neither the "bosses" nor their government are unseated. Humbler folk may "lobby" members of Parliament; but these men dictate to Ministers.

"COINING THEIR BLOOD FOR DRACHMAS"

It is naturally easier to find definite illustrations of the activities of the great finance bosses in other countries than in Britain, partly because they work less crudely here, and still more because for a variety of cogent reasons the British Press tells us less of the activities of the "home-product" than it does of the foreigner's. The carrying on of the brutal "Chaco" war in South America in the interests of rival industrial bosses, the engineering of a revolution in Colombia in order to create a weak and subservient new republic in Panama with a view to arranging the construction of the Panama Canal, the establishment of Hitler and his party in power in Germany by the financial rulers of that country in order to stem the advance towards Socialism, the virtual omnipotence of Cecil Rhodes in South Africa, the dominance of the great armament-drummer Zaharoff in Greece, the indirect rule of the great forger Ivar Kreuger in the Baltic countries, the dependence of General Franco on the millionaire smuggler Juan March, are all illustrations of the cruder forms of this type of government; but Britain herself occasionally lifts the veil and discloses similar manœuvres. It was for example startling for many people just twenty years ago to read the acrid correspondence that passed between the American Secretary of State, Colby, and the British Foreign Secretary, the Marquess Curzon, on a matter which quite clearly arose from nothing but a quarrel between the Standard Oil Company on the one hand and the Royal Dutch Shell Oil Company on the other.

The emergence of rulers of this type is of course common to a number of developed industrial countries, and it is not surprising to learn that many of them have extensive international connexions; they will almost always have at the least cartel or trust arrangements for the control of the international markets in the products of their companies, but in the majority of cases

they go farther and have a share in the real government not merely of their own country but also of other countries. They form indeed a real Anti-Communist International.

Occasionally, very occasionally, the real powers behind the democratic façade incautiously reveal a glimpse of the truth. In 1921, when Mr. Lloyd George was involved in a difference of opinion with the Banks, the *Financial Times* angrily reproved him:

> " Does he and do his colleagues realise that ' half a dozen men ' at the top of the big five banks could upset the whole fabric of government finance by refraining from renewing Treasury Bills ? "

This has already travelled so far that some of the smaller countries are governed in substance by half a dozen bosses from one or more foreign countries, and by few or none of their own nationals ; and a war between two major capitalist countries is, in spite of the national passions whipped up for its support in the mass of people in the respective states, in essence a civil war between groups of rulers. An interesting example of enlightened international control in this field was seen in the war of 1914-18 when certain industrial territories in France were left unscathed by the Germans at the dictate of German industrial rulers who had large interests in those territories. The war was prolonged, and many additional lives lost ; but the industrial properties were preserved.

It is unnecessary to multiply illustrations. The sum and substance of the matter is that as an outcome of the economic development of this century, which made the well-known German Economist Hilferding (afterwards Finance Minister of the Weimar Reich) and other economists describe it as " the epoch of Finance-Capital," power in the modern industrial state has fallen into the hands of a very small group of extremely rich men. It is in the interests of these lords of Finance-Capital that the majority of the population are reduced to poverty and to an insecurity which has begun to affect the middle class as well ; that peasants toil under a tropic or an arctic sun for a pittance that shrinks from decade to decade ;

and that in the British Empire and its dependencies alone over a quarter of mankind are deprived of even a shadow of democratic rights. Finally, when the clash of interests between the various ruling groups of Finance-Capital has become acute, it is their rival claims to dominate the colonies and the small states, the markets and the raw-materials of the world, which has led in this century to one destructive war after another and to incalculable horrors and miseries for mankind.

CHAPTER III

OUR RULERS HATE THE U.S.S.R.

BEFORE proceeding to the study of the minor states, we must examine the history of the relations between our government and ruling class and the Soviet Union. When we do so, we shall realise that from the foundation of the Soviet Republic until the present time the attitude of the rulers of Britain to the newcomer has been almost consistently one of hostility; ranging from attempts at complete destruction to a grudging and suspicious toleration, it has been imbued the whole time with a clear determination to scotch the Socialist experiment if possible.

Here too the position will be better understood if it is treated historically. The "Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic" came into existence, in the fourth year of the war of 1914-18, with the establishment of Soviet power on the 7th and 8th November, 1917, by the Second Congress of Soviets.

One of the first steps of the new state was to propose a general armistice in the great war then raging, as a preliminary to the conclusion of an immediate general peace, to be based on the principle of no annexations and no indemnities. When this proposal was rejected by the Allies, the Soviet Government then made a proposal of armistice to the enemy Powers, and finally, in March, 1918, signed with them the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk.

The Allied Powers asserted that this was a breach of the alliance between (Tsarist) Russia and themselves, and through their ambassadors expressed the strongest disapproval. It would, however, be a mistake to suppose that this "desertion"

by Soviet Russia of the allied cause in the war was even a main reason for the hostility or the hostilities against the Soviet Union, which began soon after and continued for so long. Had the attitude to Soviet Russia been due to this fact, one would have expected the Allies to take up a similar attitude to Roumania, for Roumania signed a separate peace with the Central Empires at about the same time as the Soviet Union. Moreover, it should be noted that when in April 1918 (as will come to be discussed in more detail in Chapter V) a very large body of German troops under General von der Goltz landed in Finland, then a Socialist Republic, and it seemed probable that they would push upwards to the Arctic and establish a German submarine base there, the British forces which were landed on the Murman coast immediately co-operated with the Finnish Red troops with a view to forestalling this move. This one fact is probably enough to show that the Allies did not in fact take up any intransigent attitude on account of the separate peace, and that their subsequent adoption of this step as the reason for their anti-Soviet policy was merely an excuse. The sequel will show that the real determinant of the attitude of the Allies was not so much what the Soviet Government did as what it was. It was the kind of Government and its internal policy to which they objected; it was a Socialist state.

By the end of the first six months of the new republic's existence, the attitude of the Allied Powers had hardened into an anti-Soviet policy which was hardly modified in principle, though altered from time to time in application, during the whole of the following twenty years.

The policy was not of course immediately fixed and settled. There was a period of fluidity when it seems in retrospect as though there might have been another attitude, sparing a good deal of suffering to the people of all countries. In particular the attitude of America was not immediately determined, although in the end the U.S.A. turned out to be the last of all the Great Powers to enter into normal relations with the Soviet Government, ten years after Britain and France had found themselves compelled to do so.

OUR RULERS HATE THE U.S.S.R.

THE FAMOUS "ACID TEST"

It is interesting to recall the earlier attitude of the U.S.A., all the more so because that attitude was set forth in one of the famous 14 Points which have been quoted over and over again and have been the subject of so much controversy with regard to the treatment of Germany after the War of 1914–18.

Here, as set forth in the President's message to the U.S.A. Congress on January 18th, 1918, is the Sixth of the famous Points:

> "The evacuation of all Russian territory and such a settlement of all questions affecting Russia as will secure the best and freest co-operation of the other nations of the world in obtaining for her an unembarrassed and unhampered opportunity for the independent determination of her own political and national policy, and assure her of a sincere welcome into the society of free nations under institutions of her own choosing, and, more than a welcome, assistance of every kind that she may need and may herself desire. The treatment accorded Russia by her sister nations in the months to come will be the acid test of their good will, and of their appreciation of her needs as distinguished from their own interests, and of their intelligent and unselfish sympathy."

The Archbishop of York as recently as the 12th December, 1939, in a letter to the *Daily Telegraph*, recalled the fact that the statesmen at Versailles had considered themselves bound to accept these 14 Points as a basis and guide for the policy in arriving at a peace settlement. His Grace did not on that occasion recall, nor as far as I am aware is there any record of his having recalled earlier, the way in which the stipulations of Clause 6 were trampled upon in the years that followed. (Lest there should be any doubt as to the interpretation of this Clause, or any question as to whether it applied to Soviet power and the Bolsheviks, it may be well to state that when the Fourth Congress of Soviets met on the 11th March, 1918,

it received a special message from President Woodrow Wilson, of an extremely warm and sympathetic nature.)

Before midsummer, 1918, the invasions of Soviet Russia by both the Allies and the Central Empires (who were still locked in deadly war with one another) had begun. The British forces that had landed at Murmansk and had accepted the co-operation of the local Red troops, as mentioned above, now turned into troops of intervention.* The peace which the Soviet Government had secured for its people only lasted a few weeks.

The Central Empires had made peace with Soviet Russia in the preceding March, the Allies were not and never had been at war with her; but nevertheless the Germans began an invasion on the Ukraine front and the British, presently to be joined by other Allies, landed forces at Murmansk and Archangel. By the end of the summer Allied troops in the South had seized part of the Caucasus, and in the Far East a mixed force, consisting mainly of Japanese, was advancing through the Maritime territories of Soviet Siberia.

Under protection of these armies, local anti-Soviet Governments were set up and anti-Bolshevik forces were armed and equipped on northern, eastern and southern frontiers, while similar counter-revolutionary governments were also set up in the West.

Thus, amidst the culminating struggles of 1918, both British and German governments found it possible to devote some of their energies, with remarkable unanimity, to the object of invading and weakening Soviet Russia.

In these circumstances it is not surprising that on October 24th, 1918, the Peoples Commissary for Foreign Affairs, when it was known that the main war (i.e. the war of the allied and associated powers against Germany) was likely to be brought to an end on the basis of acceptance of the 14 Points, should have sent a Note to the President of the United States, com-

* "Intervention" at this period meant the invasion by pure aggression of the territory of a state with which the "intervener" professed to be at peace. Confusion is often caused by the fact that similar aggression in Spain was called "non-intervention."

paring in rather caustic language the facts of the intervention with the policy set forth in the Congressional address:

> "The acid test," it ran, "of the relations between the United States and Russia has not given exactly the kind of results that one would have expected after your message to Congress, Mr. President. But we have cause to be not entirely dissatisfied even with these results, for the outrages of the counter-revolutionaries in the East and in the North have shown to the Russian working men and peasants what the Russian counter-revolution and its foreign supporters are aiming at, and as a result of this there has been created among the Russian masses an iron will to defend their freedom, to defend the conquests of the revolution—the land, which has now been given to the peasants, the factories, which have now been given to the workers." (*Soviet Russia and Her Neighbours*, R. PAGE ARNOT, page 146)

The Soviet Government, which found it necessary thus to address President Wilson, might justifiably have sent a still more caustic Note to the British or the French Governments, which had "intervened" by means of armed force even more vigorously than the Americans, and had spoken and written in terms of the frankest hostility to the new state. Mr. Winston Churchill, for example, who played a dominant part in the British Government, had publicly expressed his view some months earlier that the Bolsheviks were a greater danger to civilisation than the Prussians themselves.

"SWITCHING THE WAR"

Still, at the armistice of November 11th, 1918, it might have been expected that the occasion would be taken to bring about the cessation of warfare in every part of Europe, and on November 7th, 1918, the Sixth Soviet Congress made a solemn offer to the Entente Powers to begin peace negotiations. No reply was received to this communication. In the next twelve months that offer was repeated no less than ten times, but did not on any occasion have any effect; on the contrary, the

termination of hostilities between the coalition headed by Germany and the coalition headed by Britain was the signal for "switching" round to a war against the Bolsheviks on a scale and with a ferocity that had not yet been attempted. The operations of 1918 above mentioned were followed by three separate Allied expeditions against the Soviet Union, undertaken respectively in the spring of 1919, the autumn of the same year, and the last three quarters of 1920. Even after the defeat of these three Allied expeditions and of the puppet régimes of "White Guards" set up or maintained by them, armed intervention on the part of the Allies did not come wholly to an end until late in 1922, when the Japanese were forced to leave Vladivostok.

The first Allied invasion, in the spring of 1919, was based in the North upon a considerably reinforced expedition to Archangel and Murmansk. Over 50,000 troops were employed, of whom more than half were British, while the remainder were mainly Americans, Italians, and Serbs under British officers. The French forces were in the South at Odessa. At one time or another during this period, the armies of fourteen nations were invading Soviet Russia. Meanwhile within this ring of hostile States, and in co-operation with them, civil war was being fiercely waged by Monarchist "White Guards" and other kinds of counter revolutionaries against the Socialist state.

The British Government, however, were at first interested in the Northern front where, under the leadership of Sir Edmund Ironside, now our Chief of the Imperial General Staff, an effort was made to effect a junction with the forces of Admiral Kolchak advancing Eastwards from Siberia.

In the Army Blue Book published a year later where these (ultimately unsuccessful) operations are described, there is also contained the text of a treaty or agreement between Admiral Kolchak on the one hand and the Chief Allied Governments on the other. In this Note,* dated May 26th, 1919, and signed by G. Clémenceau, D. Lloyd George, Woodrow Wilson, V. E. Orlando (Italy) and Saionji (Japan) it is said that the Allied and Associated Powers

* Cmd. 818 of 1919, p. 40.

"Are therefore disposed to assist the Government of Admiral Kolchak and his associates with munitions, supplies and food, to establish themselves as the Government of All Russia, provided they receive from them definite guarantees that their policy has the same object in view as that of the Allied and Associated Powers. With this object they would ask Admiral Kolchak and his associates whether they will agree to the following as the conditions upon which they accept continued assistance from the Allied and Associated Powers. As soon as they reach Moscow. . . .

There followed eight conditions, with most of which history must remain unconcerned, for within a few months, instead of reaching Moscow, "Admiral Kolchak and his associates" were in full retreat.

It is, however, interesting to note that the Allies in these conditions stipulated for the independence of Finland and that Admiral Kolchak, while prepared to recognise the *de facto* Government of Finland, was unwilling immediately to recognise its independence. Second, that they stipulated for at any rate a temporary recognition by Kolchak's "Government of Russia" of the autonomy of Esthonia, Latvia and Lithuania, and that Admiral Kolchak in reply, while agreeing like a good tsarist to the word autonomy, refrained from even a verbal recognition of the *de facto* governments of these nascent States. In reply the Big Five "welcomed the tone" of Admiral Kolchak's reply "which seems to them to be in substantial agreement with the propositions which they had made."

This is a good illustration of the then attitude of Britain to the Soviet Government of Russia, which was then the only government in Russia and was in the main effectively controlling the country; our Government was, in fact, seeking and intending by means of this war to exterminate the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, with which it was not even technically at war.

THE SECOND EXPEDITION

The second Allied expedition can be passed over more briefly, especially as it was itself more brief and even less

successful. It was mainly directed to the support of General Denikin in the South, although British warships were actively employed in the Gulf of Finland, where they covered the advance of the White General Yudenitch.

A basis had already been laid for the operations on the Southern frontiers in the early autumn of 1918, when British armies invaded the Caucasus, which lies between the Black Sea and Caspian Sea, having on the West the oilport of Batum and on the East the oilwells of Baku. While the Turks, then in alliance with the Germans, sought to gain possession of Batum British forces under the command of General Dunsterville and General Thompson pushed up through (neutral) Persian territory and occupied Baku, and General Thompson was installed in Baku as Governor General. (In the course of this occupation, at the end of September, 1918, twenty-six Bolshevik Commissaries of the Baku region were arrested by the British, taken across the Caspian Sea to a desolate place in the Transcaspian desert, and there put to death. It was an atrocity the memory of which has not died out amongst the Soviet population). After the armistice in November, 1918, the Turks were compelled to withdraw from the Batum side of the Caucasus and British forces took their place there also. During the whole period, of course, there was technically no state of war between Great Britain and Russia.

The third Allied expedition was centred around the invasion of Soviet territory by the Polish army, and later, when this invasion had been fought to a standstill, around the advance of Baron Wrangel's White army in the Crimea.

It is probably not important to give any detailed account of these wars against Soviet Russia or of the lesser subsequent hostilities, as sufficient has been stated to show the general attitude of the British government; but it is useful to draw attention to three points. The first is this, that the position of the Border Nationalists (which are dealt with more fully in the next chapter) often conflicted with the aims of the "White Guardist" Generals, who, having spent their lives under a régime which treated all national minorities as colonies, did not subscribe to the independence of small nationalities. The second is the effect on the whole situation of the increasing

prowess of the Red Army, which had been built up "from scratch" in some twenty-five months, and reached a climax with the breaking of the Polish offensive by Budyonny's cavalry in the summer of 1920. When a few months later the armies of Baron Wrangel were bottled up in the Crimea and his activities were brought to a final end by the Red Army's military feat of storming the fortifications of the isthmus in winter weather at the cost of 20,000 killed, the Red Army was clearly a force too formidable to invite a further succession of Allied expeditions. So the "interveners" gave up their unsuccessful aggressions, and the third expedition was also the last, at least so far as the period of and immediately following the war of 1914–18 was concerned. The third point, and not the least important, is that the decision of the British and French Governments in the summer of 1920 to give immediate help to the Poles to enable them to fight Soviet Russia convinced what I imagine was the majority of the people of Britain that they were being plunged once more into a full scale war, and led to an upheaval in which the Labour Party and the various trade union bodies formed Councils of Action to stop the war and to assist the Soviet peoples. This was a most pregnant and hopeful movement in modern history, and one to which most attention should now be given. It made a deep impression on the rulers of Britain, and the reaction was swift. Mr. Lloyd George hastily announced that there had been no thought of war, and so far as Britain was concerned this was the end for an indefinite period of "intervention." Even if the growing strength of the Red Army had not become a factor in the situation, this attitude of the masses of the British people in favour of the Soviet Union, or at any rate against the anti-Soviet war, would have sufficed to prevent any further expeditions. In fact it was then realised very clearly that the peculiar nature of the Soviet Government was likely to arouse very strong sympathies in the masses of the population, and that consequently there could be no question of launching another war against the new State unless and until some such circumstances as a world war combined with war propaganda and other new features might make it seem possible to swing round the masses of the population

against the Soviet; but there is no evidence that the hostility of the British ruling class has ever perceptibly diminished.

NO GENERAL TREATY OF PEACE

Turning to study the further history of relations between Britain and Soviet Russia, one finds of course that three years and more of civil war and intervention had brought a devastation over far wider districts than the affected areas of France. The burden of these years of nearly continuous warfare had brought Russian economy even nearer to the verge of ruin than the pre-revolutionary governments had led it. Peace was made with the Border states, and the cessation of hostilities with the Great Powers led to a stage of uneasy equilibrium between the new Soviet Republics and the surrounding countries. Lenin, the head of the Soviet Government, considered that it was possible, but only for a time, for the two systems, the system of the old world and the new Socialist system, to exist side by side and to engage in peaceful commercial relations, although he always recognised that the time would arrive, probably "overnight," at which the Soviet Union would have to fight for its existence.

These commercial relations began to grow up and with one country after another trading agreements were made. But it is a point of great significance that in all the years that followed from 1921 there was not, except in one special case, any general treaty of peace.

In a sense, there was for many years a condition of suspended hostilities. It might be argued that, as there had never been a formal declaration of war, there was no need to have a formal treaty of peace; but this argument is destroyed by the fact that the trading agreement signed between Britain and Soviet Russia on the 16th March, 1921, assumed the necessity of a general treaty of peace and indeed explicitly referred to such a future treaty. No such treaty, however, was concluded, nor until seven years after the Revolution was there any formal recognition of the Soviet Government by Great Britain. (It will be remembered that the United States delayed recognition

until 1934; and at the moment of writing there are still several European States, notably Holland, Switzerland, Portugal, Spain, and Yugo-Slavia, which do not recognise the Soviet Government. The same is true of most of Latin America. This for any large State is an almost unprecedented situation in modern times and is evidence of an extraordinarily deep-rooted and abiding hostility. There is no parallel to it in our own history for nearly three hundred years.)

Moreover, trade between Britain and the Soviet Union developed very slowly, and in the period since hostilities were suspended there has been continuous or at any rate very frequently recurring diplomatic friction. Little thus happened to dissipate the belief, engendered by the intervention and civil war, that the capitalist world, or the capitalist governments of the world, were fundamentally hostile to the Soviet Union on quite comprehensible "ideological" grounds.

PROPAGANDA

For a time after the end of "intervention," the only outward manifestation of the really undying hostility to the Soviet Union was the almost continuous campaign of anti-Soviet propaganda. In Britain there were three main fountains of this propaganda. The first was to be found in the bondholders of the previous Tsarist loans and the holders of shares in Russian concerns or other properties that had been nationalised by the Soviet Government. This opposition was natural enough, for it is most disconcerting to be suddenly deprived of the opportunity to live on the profits of exploitation. The second source of the propaganda was that of various religious organisations, who from time to time stimulated campaigns against the Soviet Union and in one country after another endeavoured to prevent its recognition.

Any detailed discussion of the religious basis of hostility to the Soviet Union would fall outside the scope of this book, if it were not that in the most recent campaign of abuse Christianity has been somewhat cynically introduced as a motive or pretext for hostile action; but as matters stand we may properly make a few remarks on this question.

The Soviet Union is a non-Christian country, which tolerates all forms of religious worship ; the clause in its Constitution dealing with the matter, Article 124, of The Fundamental Rights and Duties of Citizens, runs : " In order to ensure to citizens freedom of conscience, the church in the U.S.S.R. is separated from the state, and the school from the church. Freedom of religious worship and freedom of anti-religious propaganda is recognised for all citizens."

(In this respect, its position is not very different from that of France.)

That the governments of Western Europe, which have persistently violated every rule of Christian conduct, should be seen to encourage propaganda against the U.S.S.R. as an un-Christian country, is the summit of hypocrisy ; but it is as well to study the nature of anti-religious propaganda in the Soviet Union, so that it may not be misunderstood. It consists largely in a strong assertion of the opposition of science and religion on the one hand ; and on the other of very pronounced anti-clerical propaganda.

Nor is it in any view surprising that the Soviet people should be anti-clerical, for the Russian Orthodox Church was in Tsarist days hopelessly corrupt and venal. In 1934, in a review of a history of the Tsarist Church, the Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of London wrote that he could " only come to one conclusion—and it is a conclusion all the true friends of religion will share—nearly all that religion has been, and has meant, in Russia ought to perish for ever from the face of the earth and from the memory of man."

But the third fount of anti-Soviet propaganda was and is the most important, namely the press propaganda, without which the other two sources I have mentioned would have received relatively little publicity. The opposition of the general Press to the Soviet Union is natural enough, for the newspapers are not only very largely owned by very wealthy men, but also depend for their main source of revenue on other wealthy men ; and these two groups (which largely interlock with the ruling group of financial bosses) are of course bitterly hostile to Socialism in any country, feeling as they do that Socialism like happiness is infectious, and will spread to

Britain if it is allowed to make headway anywhere. It is impossible to assess the exact effect of this propaganda, but it would be certainly very hard to over-estimate the cumulative effect on the minds of the general population of this continuous press bombardment, carried on over a period of twenty years. It is probable, of course, that in recent years the Press has over-reached itself, and has largely destroyed the hitherto impregnable credulity of the general public; but for the present the effect remains. (One other effect, it may be mentioned, will endure considerably longer. Translations in the Russian Press of anti-Soviet articles in British newspapers have served to keep alive in the minds of the older Soviet generation and to instil in the minds of the younger the conviction that the ruling classes of capitalist States cherish a fundamental and permanent hatred of Socialist Society in the abstract and of the U.S.S.R. in particular.)

THE CONFERENCE OF GENOA, 1922

This temporary diversion has carried me forward a few years, and I must return to the history of the early " twenties." To go into details of this history in the years that followed the end of intervention and civil war is unnecessary, but a few salient facts and events of those years will enable the reader to see how the relations of the capitalist world and Britain in particular developed with the Soviet Union (which I may now call U.S.S.R., since it was at the end of 1922 that the various Soviet Republics federated together into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics). In considering these facts, I shall of necessity touch on the relations of the capitalist world, or at any rate of the victors of Versailles and in particular of the British Government, with Germany. (It is appropriate that the two sets of relations should be seen together, since a large part of the scheme for turning the war against the U.S.S.R. consists in enlisting the co-operation of Germany in the hostilities, just as past schemes were largely designed to turn the growing strength of Hitler to aggression in the East, against the U.S.S.R.)

The two sets of relations are seen together in the conference

of Genoa, which began in April, 1922. That conference is forgotten now, and to most people who do remember it it seems to be merely one of a long string of European conferences, all ending in complete fiascos, between two great wars. But at the time it was hailed as one of the greatest conferences in history, and one contemporary book goes so far as to find the only analogy for it in the Oecumenical Councils of the early Christian Church.

The setting in which this conference was arranged can be explained shortly. The years that followed Versailles had not produced the new world which so many people had been led to expect would result from an Allied victory, and which, it had been freely prophesied, would come out of the various schemes for a Federation of European States or for a League of Nations.

Europe for three years and more after the armistice remained in a condition of chaos, commercially, economically, and financially. The victors at Versailles had set themselves two objects: the first, to hold down their beaten rival Germany for ever or at any rate for several generations to come, and the second, as we have seen in the treaty with Kolchak, to exterminate the Socialist Republics that were rising on the former territories of the Tsarist Empire. It was not long before they found that they had, in respect of the first as well as of the second of these objects, "bitten off more than they could chew." The fabulous reparations that were to be exacted from Germany were not forthcoming, just as the prospect of the extermination of Bolshevism became more and more distant.

During this period the League of Nations was only coming into being. The actual direction of the affairs of Europe, and to some extent of the world, fell into the hands of the Supreme Allied Council. This body, after the defection of America, consisted of the leading statesmen of Britain, France, Japan and Italy. A series of conferences held under the Supreme Council had not succeeded in solving any of the major problems that were the heritage of Versailles; and in respect to the Far East and China, they had not even touched the fringe of the problems. They had been, in short, unable to do much more than lay down the general direction of the (almost

uniformly unsuccessful) military campaigns against the Soviet Union, and to make various arithmetical calculations of the amount that Germany might reasonably be expected to pay. And meanwhile the Republican Administration of the United States, to which country the economic centre of gravity had shifted, had called the Washington Conference to discuss the problems of the Pacific and the limitation of armaments. This was the agenda: but the inner content of the Washington Conference resolved itself into a stiff struggle between the U.S.A., then at the summit of its powers and influence, and the United Kingdom, then confronted by revolt in India, Egypt and Ireland and by an economic crisis at home. The policy of the American Government was: (1) to break the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, which had lasted for twenty years and had been renewed for a like period; (2) to put an end to British supremacy as a sea-power by insisting on complete equality in tonnage of the British and American navies; (3) to reach a settlement of the war debt by which Britain would make large annual payments to the U.S.A. The British Government had to yield, and the policy of the American Government was successfully carried through before the autumn of 1922. At the beginning of the year, however, the final issues of the Washington Conference were still undecided.

It was at this stage that the British Government, headed by Mr. Lloyd George, proposed on the 6th January, 1922, at the Cannes meeting of the Supreme Allied Council, the summoning of a World Conference to which Germany on the one hand and Russia on the other should be invited. The United States declined to attend and the Conference became purely European, apart from the British Dominions overseas. Actually the main object of the Conference was to reach an arrangement with Soviet Russia. The Allied proposal was that the Soviet Union should annul the greater part of its Socialist legislation, pay the interest on the Tsarist debts, and accept a certain undefined measure of financial control. The proposal no doubt seemed less unreasonable at the time than it does in retrospect, for the Allies had probably misunderstood the "New Economic Policy," put forward by Lenin in 1921, and misinterpreted it as a return to capitalism; and they were also firmly of the

belief that the reconstruction of ruined and ravaged Russia was impossible without their help. At the same time, it must have seemed to them a splendid way to "desocialise" this strange and uncomfortable neighbour; no doubt it reminded many of them of the old method of quieting a rebellious minority of shareholders by giving one of their ringleaders a seat on the board of the company.

They made their terms pretty stiff; and they were dismayed to find that the Soviet representatives did not accept. The Genoa Conference would probably be recorded in history as the greatest failure in the conference line of the twentieth century had it not been for the still more ignominious failure of the World Economic Conference called by Mr. Ramsay MacDonald eleven years later; and its claim to high rank as a failure was enhanced by one significant and unexpected result. The German delegation, finding itself left out in the cold, decided that it had better make terms with the other pariah State, Soviet Russia, and these two parties accordingly travelled a few miles from Genoa to Rapallo and there signed a treaty by which Germany recognised the Soviet Government and waived claims to all private property nationalised by the Bolsheviks. State debts were reciprocally cancelled and Russian claims for reparations from Germany under the Treaty of Versailles were also waived.

No recognition of the Soviet Union followed from the other Powers, who angrily protested against both the manner and the matter of the Rapallo treaty. This attitude of continued hostility was further expressed the same year by the refusal of the British Government to agree to participation of the U.S.S.R. in anything more than a limited section of the Lausanne conferences, at which a treaty of peace with her neighbour Turkey was finally elaborated, and her delegate was assassinated. Hostility to Germany for her part in the matter took the form of increasing pressure from France, culminating in the march of the French army into the Ruhr in December, 1922.

The effect, however, of this last step was startling enough, especially to those who were haunted by the fear of Socialism. German economy was shattered still more and the inflation of the mark increased to the point where a single gold mark was

represented by thousands of millions of paper marks. The social effects were immediately catastrophic. A rapid revolutionary movement developed in Germany. The Allies were confronted with a nightmare, created by their own policy, the vision of a possible Soviet Germany joined to a Soviet Russia. Drastic and immediate steps were taken at the end of 1923. America returned to the councils of the Allies. France, whose own economy had been seriously damaged by the repercussions of the German collapse, agreed to go hand in hand with America and Britain. With the help of British and American bankers a financial plan—the Dawes Plan—was elaborated for the purpose of ending the menacing uncertainties of reparations and fixing the regular payments from a reconstituted German economy.

From this time onwards there was a new attitude towards Germany, especially on the part of Britain. Germany was now to be built up as a prosperous capitalist State. It was to be fed with loans and investments, fattened up, and at the same time regularly milked.

The Soviet Union, for its part, had shown more rapid signs of recovery than could have been believed possible, and had at last been formally recognised by the first British Labour Government in 1924, and thereafter by other Powers. But the proposed Anglo-Soviet Treaty of 1924, which would at once have been a general treaty of peace and an economic and financial agreement accompanied by a loan, was rejected by the Conservative Government which came into power after the late Mr. Ramsay MacDonald had destroyed his own Party's election prospects by his credulous acceptance of the Red Letter forgery. Thus an accommodation had been made by the victors of Versailles with what had been their German colony; but no lasting accommodation of the same kind had been made or was to be made in the future with the Soviet Union.

MEANING OF LOCARNO

On the contrary, in the year 1925, on the basis of the Dawes Plan for Germany on the one hand and the breach of the negotiations for a general treaty of peace with the U.S.S.R.

on the other, the foreign policy of Britain developed rapidly towards the isolation of the U.S.S.R.* By the end of 1925 there had been signed the Locarno treaties which bound together Britain, France, Germany and Italy, together with Belgium, Poland and Czecho-Slovakia, in what appeared to be a system of mutual guarantees against war, but was in fact intended to lay the foundation of a new combination against the U.S.S.R. This was disclosed at the time, perhaps incautiously, in the speech of a Cabinet Minister, Mr. Ormsby-Gore, now Lord Harlech, in which he said:

"The solidarity of Christian civilisation is necessary to stem the most sinister growth that has arisen in European history. . . . The struggle at Locarno, as I see it, was this: is Germany to regard her future as bound up with the fate of the great Western Powers, or is she going to work with Russia for the destruction of Western civilisation? . . . Locarno means that so far as the present Government of Germany is concerned it is detached from Russia and is throwing in its lot with the Western party."

It was well-known at the time that it was agreed as part of "Locarno" that, as an earnest of the new attitude of friendliness between Germany and the Western Powers, Germany would not merely be admitted to the League of Nations, but would receive a permanent seat on the League Council. What was not so well-known, but is pretty clear, is that there was a further understanding as to the attitude which Germany was expected to take up towards the U.S.S.R.

From the view-point of Germany the Locarno treaties meant that she would no longer be treated as a pariah amongst the nations, as she had been before and after the Genoa conference, but that while remaining under strict financial control and still submitting to the occupation by the Allied armies of parts of her territory she was henceforth to be treated on terms of equality in diplomatic intercourse, though remaining the junior partner in reality.

All these plans, however, went awry. The understanding reached at Locarno was not carried out at Geneva. Brazil, acting, it is surmised, on the prompting of the U.S.A., refused to vote in the way the British Foreign Secretary desired, and

as a result Germany did not receive a permanent seat on the League Council. She felt that she had been "bilked," and a month or two later, in March, 1926, she reaffirmed the Rapallo treaty in a Soviet-German treaty of mutual non-aggression. Thus the plans against the U.S.S.R. received a serious setback, and Locarno proved in this respect a fiasco like Genoa.

THE NEXT FOURTEEN YEARS

It was, however, not a complete fiasco. The policy there worked out continued to be brought up in one form or another for the next fourteen years, sometimes taking the form of the Four-Power Pact project and sometimes other forms, but always containing the idea of a triangle of Germany, France and Britain, or a quadrilateral of these three Powers together with Italy, hostile to the U.S.S.R. Round such a grouping it was confidently expected the smaller allies of France and Britain would easily arrange themselves. This scheme did not, however, prosper as it was hoped; a four-power pact was not fully achieved, the triangle was not immediately formed and the emergence of new geometrical figures—rival geometry—has long since begun to perplex the originators. One of the difficulties, of course, was that the U.S.S.R., whilst not opposed to any movement of peace amongst the Western Powers that might be brought about by the Locarno treaties, naturally used its influence to prevent the Locarno grouping developing into a war alliance against herself. Another difficulty arose out of the complications introduced by the desire of the British Foreign Office to use the Four-Power Pact projects for the purpose of counter-balancing the extremely powerful influence of France in Europe. After Versailles, France, by its system of alliances running from Belgium to Czechoslovakia and Poland, and in the later years by its financial power, exercised an overwhelming influence. At the time of the Washington treaties of 1921 and 1922 and thereafter, the British Foreign Office appears to have cherished the illusion that the U.S.A. would assist Britain to diminish the preponderant influence of France in Europe. The basis of this

illusion lay in the fact that some of the effects of French policy bore hardly on the interests of the U.S.A. as well as on those of Britain. But it remained an illusion, since the fundamental conflict of interests between the U.S.A. and the United Kingdom in all matters of world trade, commerce, markets, investments, raw materials, etc. etc., is so profound (and none the less profound for the widely observed convention in Britain to ignore it or to make as little mention of it as possible) that any joint action was impossible. Whatever the U.S.A. at that time might think of French policy, it became clear it would never assist in displacing France from its position of power in Europe in order to enthrone Britain in that same position. If this was so in the years before Locarno, then after Locarno, when Britain had for some time been forced to make regular debt payments to America, it was clear that the U.S.A. would never agree to a West European combination under the leadership of Britain, however much it might be disposed to agree in the general aim of weakening or destroying the U S.S.R.

The attitude of Italy, also, was not altogether helpful. Her antagonism to France tended to range her on the side of Britain, but she was not sufficiently secure in those years to risk rousing up additional enmities; and in point of fact she was careful, while in favour of a Western grouping that would diminish the French hegemony, to maintain friendly relations with the U.S.S.R. The British plans were, therefore, forced to proceed somewhat slowly and received many a setback.

In the year 1926 preoccupation with the General Strike and the struggle of the coal miners on the one hand and the Chinese Revolution on the other, compelled a delay. In 1927 the Arcos raid and the rupture of Anglo-Soviet diplomatic relations, which were to have been the signal for still more definite anti-Soviet measures, did not have a widespread success. It is true that Voikov, the Soviet Ambassador in Warsaw, was assassinated and that China broke off relations. (This was not the first Soviet Ambassador to be assassinated, as this fate had befallen Vorovsky at the time of the Lausanne conference. It is perhaps difficult for British readers to understand what implications of hostility lie in the assassination of a country's ambassadors. To find any considerable parallel in our own

history, we have to go back to the time of the Commonwealth, nearly three hundred years ago, when the British ambassador to the Hague was assassinated in that city; even our Japanese friends do not actually kill our ambassadors.)

The immediate danger passed by. The Soviet Government had been put on its guard. But in 1927 hostility to the U.S.S.R. had developed so far that the present diplomatic correspondent of the *Daily Herald*, Mr. W. N. Ewer, gave the following description in an article entitled "Britain, Italy and the Far East":

> "Equally obvious is it that in the view of Downing Street, the enemy is Russia. If to-day much attention is devoted to Helsingfors and Reval, it is because of their intimate, if geographically distant, strategical relationship to the Caucasus and the Black Sea."

In the spring of 1928 Lord Birkenhead went on a mission to Berlin the purpose of which is sufficiently indicated by the statement in the semi-official *Vossische Zeitung* in April, 1928:

> "English Ministers have in the past months repeatedly taken soundings of German diplomats as to whether the German parliamentary majority would be ready, in return for the funding of the Dawes Payment and final fixing of reparations, formally to break off all relations with Russia, to denounce all treaties without delay, and to carry through an economic boycott against Soviet Russia."

In the end, however, his efforts were fruitless because Gustav Stresemann, then Foreign Minister, was out for a bigger price in the way of rearmament than the British were at that time prepared to pay.

At this time the Soviet Government took part in the preparatory commission of the disarmament conference, provided for in the Treaty of Versailles, and then being rather belatedly prepared. The U.S.S.R. put forward proposals for general, complete and total disarmament. These were rejected by

the other Powers, the British delegate, Lord Cushendun, formerly Mr. Ronald McNeill, M.P., putting as much contumely into his rejection as the conventions of Geneva would allow. Thus in what, on a survey of the post-war years, may be regarded as the relatively peaceful period from 1922–23 to 1928–29, tension never relaxed between the British Government and the U.S.S.R., whilst Britain did slowly develop the mitigation of the original Versailles hostility to Germany.

THE WORLD ECONOMIC CRISIS

The world economic crisis, which began in the autumn of 1929 and proved the longest, widest and deepest in the history of modern society, brought with it "peaceful devastation" that had incalculable consequences. Factories and mills closed down in every country of the world, unemployment reached a figure of over fifty millions, the peasantry in India and other colonial countries were hard hit by the fall in prices of their crops, and world trade shrank by two-thirds.

A frantic race ensued for what trade was still possible, and great and small powers began to jostle one another for markets. An armaments race followed. The London Naval Conference of January, 1930, was unable to curb competition in fleets, and the disarmament conference, when it met a year or so later, did not even manage to abolish the use of bombing aeroplanes.

Meantime in the Socialist sixth of the world there was a startling contrast. After the years of reconstruction from the ravages of the invasions and Civil Wars of 1918–22, there had been launched at the end of 1928 the Five-Year Plan. As described by Molotov, who became in effect the Premier of the U.S.S.R. (to be accurate, Chairman of the Council of People's Commissaries) some ten years ago, the purpose of the Five-Year Plan was to lay the economic basis for the construction of Socialist society by immensely increasing the production and manufacturing resources of the country. In saying this, he was following out the views of Lenin, who, as a scientific Socialist, considered that without modern large-scale production, without the production of machines, without

heavy industry (iron, steel, coal, power, chemicals) it was impossible to construct Socialism. But the experiences of the war of 1914–18 had equally shown that it was impossible to withstand a modern war without a basis in heavy industry and production of modern machines, and accordingly, in the course of the Five-Year Plan, and especially in the last year of it, the defences of the U.S.S.R. were very rapidly strengthened, both because the resources for strengthening them were now available and because the danger of having to meet a hostile combination was growing greater.

From the point of view of these hostile Powers the success of the Five-Year Plan, the absence of crisis, the abolition of unemployment, and the general rapid economic advance of the U.S.S.R. offered a dangerous contrast to the condition of the rest of the world, plunged as it was in the depths of a prolonged crisis; the fear of a spread of Socialism became more acute, hostile sentiment increased, and the propaganda campaigns already mentioned broke out afresh. These mounted up, and took various forms. It was at this time that extensive discussions took place at Geneva and elsewhere on the project of a European Union. This project under the title of Pan-Europe was particularly sponsored by the eloquent Aristide Briand who, after having been more than seven times Premier of the French Republic, was in 1929 its Foreign Minister. By many at the time, untaught by the lessons of Locarno, this plan, ostensibly for assuring perpetual peace by diminishing the sovereignty of the separate states through their inclusion in a federal union, was trustfully received. But the real meaning of it was not very different from the hidden purposes of Locarno, for the Paris correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*, writing in October, 1929, observed:

> "He (M. Briand) has become obsessed with the Communist danger, and the isolation of Russia has become one of the chief aims of his policy. There is reason to believe that the desire to isolate Russia has something to do with his whole propaganda of a European federation."

The first armed attack on the U.S.S.R. was made in 1929 by one of the Chinese war lords, the ex-brigand Marshal Chang

Tso-lin, but the Red Army proved so much more efficient than the troops of the Chinese war lord, despite their British uniforms, French munitions, American medical supplies, and " White Guardist " pilots, that within a month or two peace had been re-established on the Far Eastern border.

The real danger began in 1931, when the Japanese seized Manchuria and their troops thus appeared suddenly on the Soviet Far-Eastern frontier. There seems little doubt that the attitude of Sir John Simon at Geneva, by which the League of Nations was prevented from applying sanctions against Japan, was partly induced by the desire to weaken the U.S.S.R. The calculation seems to have been that Japan, encouraged by Britain, would proceed from Manchuria northwards and westwards, leaving Central and South China to be looked after by Britain. Actually, as everyone knows, the Japanese, having established themselves in Manchuria, seized one after another of the northern provinces of China in 1932–33, and then a few years later launched their full-scale war, not on the U.S.S.R. but on China, with disastrous results to British trade and British interests ; they were obviously deflected from a crusade against the Soviet Union by a well-founded fear of the military strength of that country.

Nevertheless, on the Far Eastern border of the U.S.S.R., for a period of nearly ten years there have been recurring armed clashes which at any moment, at any rate up to the summer of 1939, might have developed into a full-scale war. Especially at the beginning of this period, in the critical year 1932, it seemed very likely indeed that the Japanese militarists, if they could get help from Western Europe, would make their long-expected attack on the U.S.S.R. It was at this time, in May, 1932, that the Pope issued the Encyclical " Caritate Christi " in which he called for a united front of the capitalist states against the U.S.S.R., and even made the suggestion that the non-Christian Japanese might legitimately join in a Christian crusade against the un-Christian Bolsheviks.

Meantime the world economic crisis had had far-reaching effects on the relations between Britain and Germany. The Dawes Plan had enabled Germany to make the reparations payments only on the strength of American and British invest-

ments in German industry and transport. The German workers had in effect to work harder to keep up these payments; but the tremendous unemployment caused by the world economic crisis from 1929 onwards rendered it economically impossible for them, no matter how hard they worked, to produce enough to enable the reparations payments to be made, even under the Young Plan, which had been elaborated in 1929 as an amendment and consolidation of the Dawes Plan of 1924.

THE FALL OF THE POUND STERLING

The crisis from its beginning in the autumn of 1929 in America, spread over the whole world during 1930, and by May, 1931, had precipitated a financial crisis in central Europe, when the Kredit Anstalt of Vienna suspended payment. It was the beginning of a financial earthquake. The German banks were affected. The German Government suspended reparation payments and Germany practically, although informally, declared herself bankrupt. The French Government, the French banks and French financiers had withdrawn earlier what little financial support they had ever extended to Germany, and it was the other lending countries, especially Britain, which were caught by the German bankruptcy. The bankers and financiers of the City of London, who had made large short-term loans to Germany out of foreign balances held in London, both as profitable business and in support of the plan for building up Germany as against France so that Britain might again later become the undoubted head of the Four-Power Pact, were caught between two fires. Creditors all over the world began to call in their London balances, Germany could not repay her loans, and British credit began to totter for the first time in many generations. There was a "flight from the pound." Desperate measures were attempted to keep Britain on the gold standard, on to which it had climbed in 1925 after the general European collapse resulting from the 1914–18 war. These measures included the dismissal of the Labour Government and the institution of a National Government to "save the pound." The Bank of France gave support

temporarily, but the renewal of that support was made subject to onerous conditions which the City of London would not accept. American bankers loaded their support with proposals for reduction in the standard of living of the British working class, by cutting " extravagant " social services. The British authorities had the first taste of that financial pressure which the City of London had so frequently applied to smaller or less fortunate countries. The pound was not saved. Britain went off the gold standard. Wage cuts were instituted not only in private employment, but in Government services, and the Means Test, previously applied only to those seeking " poor relief," was fastened on to the daily lives of most of the two million unemployed.

This was the result for the moment of the close relations of Britain with the new capitalist Germany, the price paid for keeping up the work of " fending off " the U.S.S.R., and in a lesser degree for trying to jockey France out of the lead in the European race.

But more difficulties and anxiety were to come for those who worried over the advance of Socialism. The final effect of the world economic crisis within Germany was a growth of revolutionary sentiment which terrified the chief German industrial magnates and led them along with the East Prussian landlords to throw all their weight on the side of Hitler and his Nazi Party. Democratic forms were suspended during 1931–32 under the Weimar Constitution, and, finally, after a series of rapid changes, into which I need not go into detail, Hitler became Chancellor of the Reich on the 30th January, 1933, and assumed complete power at the beginning of March. The Fascist dictatorship was in control. It was established by heavy industry and the armament rings, by the banks and big landlords. It appealed to public sentiment on the basis of revenge for the humiliation of Versailles; but at the same time it appealed for capitalist support not only in Germany but throughout the world by its propaganda against Socialism, Marxism, Bolshevism, democracy, buttressed, of course, with an obscene array of such things as anti-Semitism and racialism.

Its anti-Socialist and anti-Bolshevist standpoint served to win it the support of the ruling class of every country to

an extent never vouchsafed to the previous German Governments. In particular, the City of London was friendly, and the British Government was ready to put pressure on its French ally which, to begin with, had been rather more reluctant to make friends with the new Fascist government of Berlin.

At first, indeed, the French Government, hostile to Germany and not too well-disposed to Britain, did not fall into line; on the contrary, Barthou, the old colleague of Poincaré, hastened to lay down the policy which fructified after his death in the pact of Mutual Assistance with the U.S.S.R.

The U.S.S.R. agreed in September, 1934, to enter the League of Nations, considering that in spite of its serious defects, and what she regarded as its counter-revolutionary history, it might still, under the new circumstances, play some part in maintaining peace.

How did Great Britain behave in connection with the League of Nations, now that the U.S.S.R. was a member and would derive benefit from any strengthening of the League, and that Nazi Germany, which our Government was anxious to conciliate, was hostile to the League and desired to see it discredited. It certainly did not behave well. Its conduct may have been due to resentment of the diplomatic defeat which it had suffered in 1933 in relation to the so-called "Metro-Vick" trial, briefly mentioned in my "Light on Moscow." Its attempts on that occasion to dragoon the U.S.S.R. into quashing a prosecution pending before her own courts, with the breaking off of economic relations which followed, had borne every appearance of an attempt to humiliate the Soviet Union and show the world that it was of no account. The attempt failed utterly; and "old" states do not readily forgive a defeat by a new and revolutionary one.

But, whatever the cause of its conduct in relation to the League of Nations after the entry of the U.S.S.R., the facts are clear enough, and shameful enough. The Anglo-German Naval Treaty of 1935, the refusal to agree to joint action with France in March, 1936, when Hitler tore up the Locarno Pact and militarised the Rhineland, the non-intervention policy in Spain in the autumn of 1936, the series of refusals to take

the joint action laid down by treaties and covenants, not only prevented any development of the League of Nations in these last five years, but completed its demoralisation.

It became clear that the British and French Governments, the creators of the League of Nations, were not disposed to allow it to grow into a real apparatus for the maintenance of peace. Rather than that, they were prepared to put the League out of commission until such time as circumstances might dictate. And so the vessel on which so many hopes of a better future had been built was laid up in harbour, unseaworthy as a result of persistent sabotage by its senior officers. We have recently seen its British-French owners charter it for another short voyage; the curious incidents of this navigation will be further discussed later in Chapter IX.

THE INCLINED PLANE TO MUNICH

The last six years are different in some ways from the earlier period, owing to the arrival of Hitler in power. During these six years, Germany was given much help by the British Government. The Prince of Wales made a friendly gesture. British foreign secretaries paid friendly visits to Hitler. At the same time, in place of the fruitful collaboration which lovers of peace hoped to see with the U.S.S.R. both in the League of Nations and otherwise, this period, after the Metro-Vick incident just recounted, saw for a time some improvement in relations; but finally matters grew worse until by 1938, as pro-government supporters have admitted, the U.S.S.R. was being sedulously kept at arms' length. And well it might be; for the policy of courting the Fascist governments had behind it the old policy of the Four-Power Pact; this emerged in the meeting of J. Ramsay MacDonald with Nazi representatives in the summer of 1933 and in the Stresa front of 1935, as well as in the treaty arrangements mentioned above. Thereafter, the weaving of the diplomatic web proceeded more and more rapidly until, after Hitler had been paid an extortionate price in the surrender and ruin of Spain and other European States, there came the culmination of

Munich in September, 1938. Chamberlain, Daladier, Hitler and Mussolini met and hatched their agreement, with the U.S.S.R. excluded. Munich seemed to make the Four Power Pact a reality. The web was woven.

Munich was in September, 1938. It was just twenty years since the British forces in occupation of Baku and the Caspian Sea had shot the twenty-six Commissaries, in the circumstances described above, in Chapter III. It must have been a bitter reflection in the minds of the Soviet people that in all these years, even after the invasion had been defeated, they had never ceased to feel the hostility of Britain. They must have felt also that if they had not yet again suffered actual attempts at invasion it was not because of any lack of ill will on the part of the British ruling class, and that only the mutual jealousies of their enemies and their own growing strength had deferred that attack in the first ten years. Again and again the anti-Soviet plans had gone awry, after Genoa in 1922, after Locarno in 1925, after the Arcos Raid in 1927, after the Japanese seizure of Manchuria in 1931–32, and after many another instance of friction or hostility. But the plans for a Western grouping against the U.S.S.R. had perhaps never been nearer fruition than they were at Munich. And in the ten or eleven months which followed Munich Mr. Chamberlain and his immediate entourage must have regarded both the aggressive activities of Hitler and the pressure of his own public opinion, which forced him into the negotiations with the U.S.S.R. that I have described in "Light on Moscow," right up to the signature of the non-aggression pact in August between Germany and the U.S.S.R. as something quite temporary, and must have believed that once these difficulties that had arisen between the Munich Allies were smoothed out there would be the full possibility of armed advance, that is of Hitler's expected advance, into the U.S.S.R.

This would have been an admirable spectacle for Britain and France, a fight between the capitalist friend they feared and the Socialist enemy they hated; but it was a much less pleasant thought for Hitler. In his six years of rule he seemed to have got back at little cost nearly all that had been lost in Europe by the Treaty of Versailles and to have received a

bonus addition of parts of the old Hapsburg Empire; but he was now in the painful situation that he must either face the formidable armed might of the Soviet Union, or somehow "bilk" his Munich friends.

He did not take long to make up his mind which course he would choose. He decided to desert his Western friends even though this meant the weakening of his own relations with his partners of the Berlin-Rome-Tokyo Axis. It is not without significance that, since then, Mr. Neville Chamberlain has repeatedly protested against the perfidy of Hitler, which he never mentioned before. In retrospect, it seems now clearer than ever that Mr. Chamberlain never wished for the success of the negotiations with the Soviet Union in the summer of 1939, and preferred the risk of war.

Every clear-sighted politician must have expected that, somehow or other, in spite of the incalculable elements introduced by the instability of Hitler, war between Britain and Germany would have been averted by the rulers of these two countries, with a view to framing once again a front against the Soviet Union; but when the moment came it was the partners of Munich who quarrelled and in their quarrel fell headlong into war. And it is not surprising that, as I shall show in Chapter VII, this Anglo-German war had hardly begun before there was talk of its stopping and the ominous phrase "switch the war" was being whispered everywhere and finding its way into the Press.

CHAPTER IV

POWER OVER MINOR STATES

It is not possible to understand what is happening in Europe to-day without a clear vision of the true position of the smaller states. In the theory of international law, all sovereign states are equal and independent, and the untrained observer is apt to regard that theory as a reality. In actual fact, as has long been recognised by writers on international law, it has been very rare indeed for a small state to preserve any real independence; and of recent years, with the increasing breakdown of international morals and the growing complexity of industry, commerce and finance, they have become more and more the dependents or "clients" (as the old Latin phrase describes them) of the larger states; they are in truth equal and independent just as little and in just the same way as the individual citizens of the modern state are free and equal before the law, as explained above, in Chapter II; the little state has as much chance of standing alone as the little man. The circumstances that thus enchain the small states are of various kinds. They may be purely strategic; that is, the geographical position of the small state may be such that one of two powerful rival states feels it essential for its own predominance or even safety against its rival that it should control the small states. They may be financial; that is, some larger country may have so complete a financial grip on the small state that the latter is as unable to disobey the former as a half-insolvent trader is to ignore the advice of his bank-manager. They may be merely commercial; that is, the small state may be so situated geographically that it cannot carry on any import or export trade except by passing its goods through the

ports or over the territories of the larger, which thus has a stranglehold over its economic life.

There are, too, infinite varieties and degrees of dependence; some small states are of necessity the "client" of one larger state, some may have the good fortune for a time to play one large state off against another, but none can really stand alone.

When Czecho-Slovakia and Poland were given their "independence" at the end of the 1914–18 war, it was plain that each of them was bound to be dependent on France, Great Britain or both, unless and until it might be both willing and able for some reason to shake off its yoke and to depend on Germany instead; and the same result will follow if their "independence" is restored at the end of the present war, unless by then the majority of states have become links in a chain of Socialist states.

The larger states, the "patrons" of the clients, use them, of course, actively and unscrupulously not merely as markets for their exports, but as weapons in their strategical moves against other larger states, as "buffers," pawns, cat'spaws, "jumping-off grounds" or battering-rams in the unending wars of the great states, carried on sometimes by force of arms and sometimes by "peaceful" methods. Often enough the great states intrigue, or even actively intervene, to change the governments of the "client" states, or to prevent them being changed, in order to render or keep their policy consistent with the interests of the "patron" state; they dictate the size or organisation of their armed forces, and control their foreign policy; they crush or encourage their industries to suit the industry or commerce of the patron; and generally they treat them as part of their own dominions. Sometimes, of course, minor states are actually created by larger states as a concealed form of their own expansion; this disguised conquest or colonisation is especially common at the end of great wars.

"CLIENT STATES" IN THE LAW

The reality of the position is well exposed by the writers on international law. Let me quote from a well-known work, Lawrence's "Principles of International Law."

"In diplomacy," says this learned author, "one great object is to disguise unpalatable facts in pleasant words. This alone, useful as it often is to secure assent to arrangements that would have excited keen resentment if set forth in their naked harshness, disqualifies the language of many international instruments for use when precision of statement is above all things desirable.

"In order to group together under an appropriate heading the part-sovereign states, we want a phrase that expresses dependence. . . . Might we not give the name of *client states* to all those international persons who are obliged to surrender habitually the conduct of their external affairs in any degree, great or small, to some state authority external to themselves. A client state implies a patron; and a *patron state* is, of course, the state who acts on behalf of the client state in a manner defined either by long continued custom or by the terms of some formal agreement or both. . . . Cuba, for instance, was made an independent state by the Treaty of Paris of 1898 and as such made a separate declaration of war on Germany in 1917, and after the war was separately represented at the conference that resulted in the Treaty of Versailles, 1919, to which Cuba was a signatory. But it is, in fact, subject in the last resort to the controlling authority of the United States, whose arms won its so-called independence and whose troops occupied the island not only during the period of re-settlement from 1898 to 1902, but also from 1906 to 1909. . . . We conclude that the relations between the Cuban Republic and the United States differ greatly from those that subsist between two independent states of the ordinary type. Such terms as suzerainty and protectorate have been so carefully avoided in all official documents that the use of them might be regarded as indiscreet. But there can be no reasonable objection to a description of Cuba as a client state."

(This quotation is taken from the seventh edition of the ork published in 1923. But the conception of patron and lient states already appeared in editions published prior to ıe War of 1914–18.)

THE MONROE DOCTRINE

Various diplomatic and political doctrines have been evolved by the great Powers to explain or define their domination over their smaller neighbours. Of these the best known is perhaps the "Monroe Doctrine" of the United States. This began with a simple declaration by President Monroe, warning off the European nations and in particular Spain from attempting to re-establish their colonies in South America. Gradually it was expanded until it was elevated into a sort of Divine Right on the part of the United States to control the entire American continent and to reduce every nation thereon to the status of client state.

To illustrate the development of this Doctrine, let me quote another lawyer, Professor Pearce Higgins, writing in 1924 in the "British Year Book of International Law." Dealing with the Monroe Doctrine he writes:

> "With President Polk came an extensive interpretation. . . . In his Message (to Congress) of . . . December 2nd, 1845 . . . the President proceeded to extend it to the acquisition of any dominion by any European power without the consent of the United States. This, in effect, was a prohibition of the transfer by any means by any European power of any of its colonies (on the American continent and in the West Indies) to any other European power without United States sanction. . . . President (Theodore) Roosevelt added a corollary . . . to the Monroe Doctrine by holding that whenever it was necessary to throw a South American state into the hands of receivers it was necessary for the United States to act as receiver. President Wilson carried this extension yet further in . . . 1913, when he protested against certain concessions which Colombia had made or was proposing to make to a British syndicate. He said that the time had come when South American States must stop making such concessions, because foreign interests might dominate the internal affairs of the states granting them."

Thus by the beginning of the war of 1914–18 the United tates was claiming the right to prohibit any nation on the outh American continent from entering into financial relations ith a European country. When, for example, San Domingo efaulted on its loans, the United States refused to permit ıe European creditors to intervene to collect the debt, but self, though it was not by any means the largest creditor, ıtervened forcibly, seizing the customs and arranging to ecompense the European bond-holders from the proceeds.

The practical effect of the Doctrine is, of course, to make he South American states entirely dependent upon the United ıtates, with the indirect result of excluding European capitalists rom the American Continent and compelling the smaller ımerican powers to seek financial assistance from the ınanciers of the United States; for capitalists do not care ıowadays to make extensive investments in countries where hey cannot call upon their own governments to inter-ene for their protection when their investment is in eopardy.

Professor Pearce Higgins points out that even United States ɔoliticians do not pretend that the Monroe Doctrine is entirely lesigned for the benefit of the client states:

> " This Doctrine is not a Doctrine of American altruism. As Senator Lodge has concisely put it, ' the Monroe Doctrine rests principally on the great law of self-preservation.' British statesmen have enunciated a Doctrine not dissimilar in regard to India, and have brought within its scope countries as near and as far as Afghanistan, the Shan States, Persia and Egypt. . . . The first century of the Monroe Doctrine has witnessed an immense expansion of the territory of the United States. . . . The Monroe Doctrine has been invoked more than once in this expansion and "—here Professor Pearce Higgins invokes and quotes another legal authority, " who has drawn attention to the ' contrast between the principle that foreign nations must not annex American territory and the equally well established principle that the United States may annex what she pleases.' "

The Monroe Doctrine means in short that the United States claims the right to control the external policy of every state on the American continent. To any who think this broad definition an over-statement, let me recall the words of Mr. Olney, when Secretary of State (that is to say Foreign Minister of the United States) in 1895:

> "To-day the United States is practically sovereign on this continent, and its fiat is law upon the subjects to which it confines its interposition."

In case it may be thought that one authority on international law is biased, let me make one reference to another and quote from the sixth edition of Wheaton's International Law, where the author sarcastically contrasts official American declarations of their relations with South America with the real position. Wheaton says:

> "The official opinion of the United States of America . . . is well summed up by a declaration of Mr. Hughes as Secretary of State on November 30th, 1923. 'We recognise the equality of the American Republics, their equal rights under the law of nations. . . . We have not sought by opposing the intervention of non-American Powers to establish a protectorate or overlordship of our own with respect to these Republics.' This is, doubtless, an exact expression of the American view, but it must be admitted that it runs counter to what is decisive in international law, the established facts."

Not unnaturally, the theory of the Monroe Doctrine scarcely fits in with the theory of the equality of nations upon which, for example, the League of Nations is built. For that reason there was inserted a special Article in the League Covenant dealing with this matter. Article 21 runs as follows:

> "Nothing in this Covenant shall be deemed to affect the validity of international engagements, such as treaties

of arbitration or regional understandings like the Monroe Doctrine, for securing the maintenance of peace."

A BRITISH " MONROE DOCTRINE "

But, as Professor Pearce Higgins pointed out, the British Government, though they were far less open about it than the Government of the United States had, too, their Monroe Doctrine, and in the same way as provision had to be made for the United States in the Covenant of the League so in the American (Kellogg) Pact for the outlawing of war accommodation had to be made for British susceptibilities. In 1928, when the United States invited Great Britain to adhere to this Pact, Britain insisted on making a number of reservations.

> " The language of Article I," Sir Austen Chamberlain informed Mr. Kellogg, " as to the renunciation of war as an instrument of national policy renders it desirable that I should remind your Excellency that there are certain regions of the world the welfare and integrity of which constitute a special and vital interest for our peace and safety. H.M. Government have been at pains to make it clear in the past that interference with these regions cannot be suffered. Their protection against attack is to the British Empire a measure of self-defence. It must be clearly understood that H.M. Government in Great Britain accept the new treaty upon the distinct understanding that their doing so does not prejudice their freedom of action in this respect."

There was some criticism of this reservation in the House of Commons, and Sir Austen Chamberlain thus justified the British position: " Why should the Hon. Member talk as if this country . . . was doing something wrong and unreasonable if it suggests that there are certain parts of the world in which we too have a Monroe Doctrine, because the integrity and security of these countries are part of the defences of the British Empire ? "

The States so referred to were, of course, not actual parts of the British Empire but nominally independent nations

like, for example, Iraq and Egypt who are now members of the League.

Once the principle of patron and client States is accepted, it is easy to see how such international bodies as the League of Nations are manipulated. When I come later in this book to consider the recent expulsion of the U.S.S.R., it will be seen that while Britain and France disclaim responsibility for the expulsion of the Soviet Union, alleging that they have been compelled to yield to the expressions of public opinion of the other States,* these other States who thus find themselves leading the great powers turn out to be exactly those nations who are listed by the writers on international law as the client States of the great powers themselves. Democracy at the League, where every State has a vote, is no more necessarily a correct representation of League opinion than democracy in an individual State is a correct mirror of public opinion if every man who has a vote must use it as his employer dictates.

In the light of these considerations, it is not surprising to discover that not a few of the minor States in Europe are of relatively recent origin, and that their frontiers are constantly varying as a result of wars and other activities of the greater powers.

THE "CLIENT STATES" OF EUROPE

Having thus examined the general position of smaller States I must now turn to examine in a little detail the particular small States that lie along or near the frontiers of the Soviet Union, and that must accordingly have figured pretty constantly in the calculations of Britain and other potential enemies of the Soviet Union in the last twenty years, and therefore in the calculations of the Soviet Union itself.

The States of North-Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, neighbours of the Soviet Union, are all of comparatively recent origin. They are the result of the break-up of three former Empires, the Ottoman Empire, the Hapsburg or Austro-Hungarian Empire, and the Russian Empire of the Tsars.

* "Je suis leur chef; il faut que je les suive."

I propose to deal with these three groups of States in the order which I have given. However, as Finland, one of the States which received its independence with the break-up of the Tsarist Empire, has come very prominently into the foreground in the last three months of 1939 I shall deal with it separately in Chapters V and VI. Important as the question of Finland is, it does not constitute the whole of the subject-matter of this book, and the reader will probably get a clearer view if he is enabled to stand back a little from immediate events and consider the question of Finland in its proper setting.

The attitude of the great Powers to Turkey during the nineteenth century is an interesting and revealing example of the principles upon which great States act and of the very low morality which governs their relations the one to the other.

Turkey was throughout the nineteenth century known as "The sick man of Europe." Every statesman knew that the Turkish Sultan's government was grossly oppressive, abominably cruel to subject races, inefficient, decadent and backward, and incidentally anti-Christian. Nevertheless, the main policy throughout the later nineteenth century of the Tory statesmen who realised all this was to keep the sick man alive at all costs, or at any rate to preserve his power in a corner of Europe and in Asia Minor while they helped themselves piecemeal to his possessions in Africa and the Mediterranean. By preserving Turkish rule over the oppressed Christian minorities in South-Eastern Europe Great Britain maintained the sacred principle of the balance of power. If Turkey were to disappear, either Russia or Austria might step into her place, and rather than let this happen they supported almost consistently for nearly a century what was without doubt one of the most evil governments the world has ever known.

Greece and Bulgaria

In 1827 British and French naval action established Greece as the first of the modern client States carved out of Turkish territory. But Britain, who had previously occupied the Ionian Isles, including Corfu, continued to hold them. After thus establishing herself in another part of the Mediterranean

at the expense of the Sultan, Britain then fought the long and exhausting Crimean War to preserve the balance of power by preventing Russia encroaching on the Sultan's dominions. In 1877–78, however, Russia intervened in one of the periodic revolts of the Turkish subject races, and this time, though the British gave a promise of support to the Sultan, it failed at the critical moment to materialise.

Russia defeated Turkey and in the Treaty of San Stefano redrew the map of South-Eastern Europe, creating a large Bulgarian kingdom stretching from the Black Sea to the Ægean and even incorporating part of what was until yesterday Albania. Great Britain immediately mobilised her fleet in the Mediterranean, for Russia had upset the balance of power.

A conference, which resembled Munich in its total disregard for the wishes or interests of the minor States and peoples concerned, assembled at Berlin, and the Balkans were carved up again in accordance with the principle of the balance of power. Bulgaria was reduced to a comparatively small area. Turkey received back large alien populations who had previously been liberated from her oppression, and Austria received Bosnia and Herzegovina (now part of Jugoslavia) as a protectorate. The British Conservative Prime Minister of that day, Disraeli, like his successor Mr. Chamberlain, returned to London bringing " Peace with Honour." He also brought more material advantages, namely, guarantees of the British position in Egypt, and possession of Cyprus, described in the Levant as " baksheesh " for the British.

These newly-founded client States quarrelled continually among themselves, and in the late eighties Serbia and Bulgaria went to war. (This war is the subject of Mr. Bernard Shaw's play, " Arms and the Man," as of " The Chocolate Soldier " based upon it. Mr. Shaw is quite correct, of course, in presenting this fight between the Austrian-officered Serbian army and the Russian-officered Bulgarian army as really a trial of strength between the two big Empires ; it was a typical instance of the use of client States as chopping-blocks in the interest of their patrons.)

The twentieth century history of the Balkans is made even

more complicated by the emergence of a fourth power, Italy, who claimed a right to share in the spoils of the Turkish Empire.

THE SECRET TREATIES

The whole period from the beginning of the century to the end of the War of 1914–18 is one of continual " Secret Treaties," by which the Great Powers gave to each other the remnants of the Turkish dominions and with bribes taken from the Sultan's territory attempted to detach each other from their respective alliances. In fact it was mainly by a timely gift of Turkish territory in Tripoli that Italy was bought out of the Triple Alliance of herself, Germany and Austria.

The Turks had learnt of these secret arrangements to partition their dominions, and not unnaturally became increasingly hostile to Russia who, as a member of the Triple Entente of Britain, France and Tsarist Empire, was one of the donors of Turkish territory to Italy. To protect herself against Turkey, Russia organised the Balkan League, a coalition of Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro and Greece. The full results of the secret treaties, and the spreading effect of war, now became apparent. In 1911 France marched on Fez in Morocco. This was the sign that Italy was entitled to invade Tripoli. As soon as Turkey was engaged in war in Tripoli the Balkan League saw their chance to enlarge their territories and there began in 1912 the Balkan wars of 1912–13 which immediately preceded the War of 1914–18.

After the Balkan League had defeated Turkey, its members quarrelled among themselves, and with the help of Roumania, who had not taken part in the war against Turkey, they despoiled Bulgaria of a good part of her gains.

With the War of 1914–18 secret treaties became more than ever the order of the day. This underhand and unprincipled method of diplomacy is of particular interest at the moment because it shows that the British government of that day, which contained two personalities at least (Mr. Winston Churchill and Sir John Simon) who are members of the present government, did not hesitate to make secret agreements which

were quite irreconcilable with the principles for which it was popularly supposed the war was being fought, the defence of democracy and the integrity and independence of small nations.

In order to induce Italy to enter the war Britain, France and Russia recognised " that Italy is interested in the maintenance of the balance of power in the Mediterranean," and accordingly offered her a " just share " in any partition. This did not prevent Britain, France and Russia making a secret treaty dividing Turkish territory between themselves, and in particular awarding to Russia Constantinople and the territory surrounding the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus. This was naturally kept secret both from the Arabs, to whom Colonel Lawrence was making quite contrary promises of Arab independence, and from Italy, whose " just share " had thus been apportioned between her three allies. Unfortunately the Italian government heard of the existence of the agreement, whereupon a new arrangement had to be made and Italy's " just share " was defined as the whole south-western part of the present Turkey including the very important town of Smyrna, largely inhabited by Greeks. Again, unfortunately for the Allies, this left nothing for Greece, who by this time had been induced to enter the war and had been promised " most important territorial compensations on the coasts of Asia Minor." Thus both Greece and Italy had claims in Smyrna. Greece, with the help of the Allies, " got there first." " Prompt action," wrote Mr. Lloyd George in his Memoirs, " taken by Wilson, Clémenceau and myself enabled Venizelos (the Greek Prime Minister) to get a Greek force into the town whilst the Italians were hesitating."

MODERN TURKEY

Modern Turkey was forged in the war which was fought by the Turkish nationalists led by Kemal Ataturk to reverse the Allied grant of parts of the Asiatic mainland and Thrace to Greece and the internationalisation of the Dardanelles.

It will be observed that Britain passed straight from a policy

of maintaining Turkish rule over alien European races to the converse policy, equally incompatible with the principles of self-determination, of maintaining alien rule over Turkish people.

Kemal Ataturk, the post-war leader of Turkey, set to work to construct a state which appeared to resemble in some degree the fascist dictatorships in Germany and Italy, but which for all its faults, repressions and cruelties did represent real progress, though it was progress from a feudal state to a fairly modern capitalist state rather than a change towards Socialism. (The post-war metamorphosis of Turkey might well be compared to the " westernising " of Japan between the feudal times of the Shogunate and the industrial and commercial state which emerged during the Meiji epoch from 1880 to 1910.)

The Soviet Union recognised in Turkey a nation which was starting along the road to development, and she was the first country to acknowledge the new régime in Turkey. Friendship between the two States was cemented by the return by the Soviet Union to Turkey of the predominantly Turkish territory of Kars which had been seized by the Tsarist Empire in 1878 as " compensation " for the British occupation of Cyprus.

In consequence relations between the Soviet Union and Turkey have always been cordial. There is, nevertheless, a profound difference in the internal organisation of the two States. Turkey remains, despite her successful nationalist revival, a small nascent capitalist country and as such always liable to be sucked into the orbit of the great capitalist powers in exactly the same way as other small capitalist States have been compelled to become clients of the larger powers.

In recent times the position of Turkey has undergone some change, as her strategic situation has enabled her to play off large States against one another in the manner suggested earlier as one of the possibilities of client States. For example, she carried on both commercial and other negotiations with Germany ; and naturally enough British and French financiers got wind of this and also entered the field.

THE TRIPARTITE TREATY

With the increased danger of war the governments themselves began to take a hand, and in the case of the British Government this was hastened by the events of the spring of 1939, which led them to give a guarantee to Rumania and Greece. It was clear that those guarantees were worth very little if Turkey were hostile. Accordingly negotiations began with Turkey, and on the 12th May, 1939, the Prime Minister announced in the House of Commons that a definite long-term agreement had been reached for mutual co-operation and assistance. Later it was decided that this should take the form of a Tripartite Treaty between Britain, France and Turkey. The Turks naturally bargained about the terms. They were "in a good market," and one can easily surmise that they stood out for a really large loan as part of the terms, none the less stiffly after having witnessed the lengthy haggling between Sir John Simon and the Poles over the £8,000,000 promised to that country. They probably raised their terms, too, after they witnessed the actual fate of Poland. At any rate by the end of September the terms had been agreed, and it was currently reported that the figure of the loan was the astonishingly large sum of £60,000,000, with promise of more to come.

The Turks postponed their signature while M. Sarajoglu went to Moscow to negotiate for a parallel treaty between Turkey and the U.S.S.R. Such a treaty would have been limited to regions of the Black Sea and the Straits.

Agreement however proved impossible; M. Sarajoglu returned home and the Turks decided to sign the tripartite pact. On the 19th October, 1939, the Prime Minister, looking really pleased, announced in the House of Commons that the Treaty had been signed in Angora "half an hour ago." It is not necessary for me to deal in full with the Treaty, but it is important to point out that the Treaty means a certain alteration in the balance of power. The destiny of Turkey is now linked up with Britain and France. It was significant that in the references in the British press to the disastrous earthquake which wrecked so many Turkish towns and villages in the last week

of December, 1939, Turkey was referred to as " our Ally " in a manner which suggested more than ordinary friendship. It meant that Turkey had become less than neutral through the Tripartite Treaty, and more nearly approaching the position of a belligerent.

What reactions can this have on Turko-Soviet relations? The Turks, while linking up with France and the United Kingdom " in the event of an act of aggression," added a Protocol to the Treaty as follows:

> " The obligation undertaken by Turkey in virtue of the above-mentioned Treaty cannot compel this country to take action having as its effect, or involving as its consequence, entry into armed conflict with the U.S.S.R."

It is thus possible, although it may be incorrect, to conclude that the Tripartite Treaty does not touch on the direct interests of the U.S.S.R., which consequently loses nothing by it.

On this point it is interesting to notice that in the already famous article in the *Daily Telegraph* of the 2nd January, 1940, quoted a little later in this chapter, it is suggested that the Turks can, " when the emergency might arise," easily disregard this clause and join the Allies in a war against the U.S.S.R.

There is in any case one other treaty whose provisions under the new circumstances could have a dangerous outcome. In the Montreux Convention signed by Britain, France, U.S.S.R. and the Balkan Powers on the 20th July, 1936, by which Turkey resumed control of the Straits, it is stated that " in time of war—Turkey not being belligerent—warships of any belligerent powers shall be accorded passage through the Straits only if acting under obligations deriving from the League Covenant, or in the event of assistance being given to a State which is the victim of aggression in virtue of a mutual assistance pact to which Turkey is a party and concluded within the framework of the League of Nations Covenant."

A NEW FRONT?

Since Britain, France and other Powers might claim, if they should take action against the U.S.S.R., that they were doing so under the Covenant, there is the possibility of a conflict between the terms of the Montreux Treaty and the Protocol of the new Tripartite Treaty. While there is as yet no definite evidence to suggest that this conflict has arisen or that Turkey may be involved in any change of her friendly attitude to the U.S.S.R., it must be remarked that the signatories of the Tripartite Treaty in Angora were General Weygand and General Wavell, the one the commander of the French forces in Syria, the other the commander of the British armed forces in the Near East. These forces together comprise something up to 400,000 men, and with the Turkish army of roughly the same size would constitute a formidable striking force. It has further to be remarked that General Weygand has always been a fanatical anti-Bolshevist and that French militarists play a much more open part in politics than is the case in Britain.

There are of course obvious military considerations which may provide perfectly genuine reasons, relevant only to the war against Germany, for the presence of these large forces in the Near East; but it remains clear that the Turkish position, strategic, military and diplomatic, offers to those forces which are aiming to "switch" the war round against the U.S.S.R. an additional temptation and an additional opportunity in the way of an available theatre of war.

It is clear too that in this war, just as in that of 1914–18, the two major groups of belligerents may at any stage seek to find "alternative fronts" or ways round, in the hope of defeating their enemies less expensively than by fighting them where they are strongest. This policy, which was in 1914–18 responsible for (among other aggressions on both sides) the aggressions on Greece which will be described a few pages further on, may at some stage lead Britain and France, with the aid of Turkey, to attack the U.S.S.R. through the Black Sea. This seems a fantastic notion, especially when it takes

the form of an attack on the U.S.S.R. whilst we are still at war with Germany; but evidence that it is under consideration is already beginning to show itself in the Press. For example, the well-known journalist "Scrutator," in his article in the *Sunday Times* of the 7th January, 1940, which is cited further in Chapter VI, puts the matter thus:

> "It has been sometimes said that it would be a mistake for us to do anything that could add Russia to the list of our active enemies, and that to do so must be to distract our energies from the main task in hand, which is the defeat of Germany. The same argument was used in the Great War to justify the four years' agony of our offensives on the western front, when far better results could have been achieved more easily on other fronts. Surely it is the most elementary rule of strategy that when the same result can be achieved by two courses of action, one more difficult, taken where the enemy is strongest, and an easier course where he is weakest, the easiest course should have the preference."

This is an argument which comes easily enough from the pen of one who has already made up his mind that Britain is going to fight the U.S.S.R. in the near future. That "Scrutator" has probably done this may be seen from his observation in the same article that General Mannerheim "is the first soldier *in the war* so far to have and to take the chance of revealing military ability of a high order." The italics are mine, but the words are his; he looks on all the proceedings in Europe as one war, in which the Finns are on the same side as we are, and the U.S.S.R. on the other.

A similar anticipation of fighting on an "alternative front" is to be found in the *Daily Telegraph* article of the 2nd January, 1940, quoted a few pages further on.

OIL AND THE AFGHANS

Though it is rather outside the scope of this book, one should, perhaps, to complete the picture of the small nations

in the south-east, refer here to two powers which, though outside the Balkans, are linked to Turkey, together with Irak, in the "Pact of Saadabad," Iran (whose former name was Persia), and Afghanistan. Iran was for long a typical client state. In 1907 Britain and Tsarist Russia made a treaty dividing it into zones in which each had "special interests." During the war of 1914–18 British forces occupied the Persian capital, though Persia was officially neutral. The treaty for the partition of Persia was denounced by the Soviet Union in March, 1921. She renounced all concessions previously granted, restored to Persia territory taken from her by the Tsar, handed over the Russian Discount and Loan Bank, and denounced all treaties between Russia and other foreign powers which provided for "spheres of influence," compensation, and the like, in Persia. On the other hand, Britain has managed to maintain a considerable hold over Iran, which is regarded as one of the states coming within the British "Monroe Doctrine." The Anglo-Persian Oil Company (half owned and wholly controlled by the British Government) is the living symbol of British interests and domination in Iran.

Afghanistan is a "buffer state," occupying the mountainous region between India and the U.S.S.R., and it was long acknowledged as being within "the British sphere of influence." Following upon the last of the many Afghan wars, a peace treaty was made between Britain and Afghanistan in 1919, by which Afghanistan was acknowledged to be "free and independent." The Afghan ruler of that period, however, King Ammannullah, attempted to pursue an independent policy. He had the temerity to refuse a British loan and paid a visit to Moscow; he was the only crowned head to do so. His independence of Britain had, however, a result which might have been anticipated. A revolt broke out (or was broken out) and he was driven into exile.

These three small states, Turkey, Iran, and Afghanistan, cover the southern frontier of the U.S.S.R. from Mount Ararat to the High Pamirs. Any attack upon the Soviet Union would have to secure if possible an alliance with them, and therefore an observer watching the workings of any anti-Soviet coalition

should look closely at any moves in British policy towards these Middle Eastern states.

One such pointer has already appeared; in an article on the centre page of the *Daily Telegraph* of the 2nd January, 1940, their special correspondent in the Near East, writing from Beyrut, in French Syria, describes the situation as follows:

> " The question of an ' Eastern ' front is very much to the fore in the corner of the Mediterranean from which I write. All the peoples represented at Beyrut almost without exception are convinced that the coming spring will see a campaign either in the Balkans or in the Caucasus. Both Great Britain and France have allowed for such a possibility in their military plans. . . . I would observe that the protocol in the Turkish agreement with Britain and France dealing with the possibility of war between Russia and the Allies is not a bar to Turkish co-operation as some regard it. It was specially drafted to meet Turkey's difficulties in her relations with Russia and it left Turkey free, when the emergency might arise, to join the Allies against Russia or to remain neutral. . . ."

The writer is, however, apparently somewhat worried lest Iran might make a trade and defence pact with the Soviet Union of a type similar to that made by the Baltic States. He remarks on various feelers put out by Iran to improve economic relations, and then goes on to deal with the Persian oilfields as follows:

> " We cannot risk their falling into what would be enemy hands. Failing an appeal from Iran for assistance, some formula meeting international law conditions would have to be evolved to enable us to take the necessary measures on Iran territory to protect this vital spot from Russian attack."

THE GREEKS HAD A WORD FOR IT

To return to the Balkan States proper. There are, or were until Easter of this year, five of them—Greece, Bulgaria, Roumania, Jugoslavia, and Albania.

Greece has been, since its liberation by British arms in 1827, in the main a British client state. Originally comprising only the Ægean islands and Mediterranean seaboard, it has gradually increased its territory on the mainland.

The Greek navy has always been linked to the British Navy by the presence of naval missions and advisers in Greece. To-day Greece is one of the two foreign countries to which Great Britain has lent naval officers (as will be seen in Chapter V, the other of these two countries is significantly enough Finland).

As a protégé of Britain, Greece used to maintain a "democratic" constitution on the British model, but after the War of 1914–18, in the period when Great Britain was building up Nazi Germany, Greece was permitted to establish a dictatorship under General Metaxas on the Nazi model.

There is a certain significance in British tolerance of Greek dictatorship, introduced under King George II, who had been in exile in London for some eleven years prior to his restoration in 1935; for in 1917 Britain appeared to feel so wronged by the denial of political liberty by George II's father, King Constantine, that she intervened to secure the restoration of parliamentary liberty by compelling the abdication of King Constantine.

The whole incident so admirably illustrates the conduct of belligerent powers to neutrals under the stress of necessity, that it is worth giving in full. It forms an interesting comparison to the standard of conduct which Britain now demands of the Soviet Union in its relation to Finland. The comparison is the more interesting and valid in that British policy towards Greece from 1915–1917 was approved by the House of Commons of that date which included practically all the members of the present Cabinet.

In 1915 Britain found herself in exactly the same difficulty as regards Greece as had confronted Germany in 1914 as

egards Belgium. In the same way as it was strategically ıecessary for the Germans to advance through Belgian terri-ory in order to attack France, so it was necessary for Britain ınd France to utilise Greek territory in order to aid Serbia; ɔut Greece, like Belgium, was neutral. In 1915, the British Government succeeded in securing from the pro-Ally Venizelos, whose Cretan revolt the Allies had assisted in 1900 and who was at that time Prime Minister in Greece, a promise that Allied troops might land at Salonika. All seemed plain sailing; but, unfortunately, Venizelos' government fell and the new government would not recognise the promise. Nevertheless, despite continued protests from Greece, the Allies landed at Salonika, where they established themselves. The se-1uence of events in 1916 is thus described in the *Annual Register*:

> " The beginning of the new year found Greece . . . still maintaining an attitude of neutrality, but with a portion of her land occupied by a Franco-British army. General Sarrail (the Allied Commander) was perpetually taking over more and more of the work of administration in the district occupied by his troops. These encroachments gave intense annoyance to many Greeks, and anger was also caused when the Allies seized the Island of Corfu. . . . The next step was taken in April. The French and British Governments informed M. Skouloudis (the Greek Prime Minister) that they were obliged to create naval bases at various points in the Ionian Isles and in the Ægean Isles."

This was striking enough, but much stronger measures were to come. In June, 1916, though Greece was still a neutral power, and Britain was fighting to preserve the integrity of small nations and the principles of self-determination, necessity drove the Allied Ministers to present an ultimatum in Athens, in which the Greek Government was accused of being unneutral and undemocratic.

" Its attitude," the ultimatum ran, " towards them (the Allies) is not in accordance with its repeated engagements or even with the principles of a loyal neutrality. It has too often

favoured the activities of certain foreigners who have been openly working to mislead the Greek people and who create on Greek territory hostile organisations contrary to the neutrality of the country and tending to compromise the security of the naval and military forces of the Allies. . . . The Greek constitution has been ignored, the free exercise of universal suffrage prevented . . . the whole country subjected to a regime of police oppression and tyranny and led towards ruin without attention being paid to the justifiable observations of the Powers."

One of the signatories to this remarkable plea for a free democracy in Greece was the Tsarist Minister in Athens. The ultimatum went on to demand, first, complete demobilisation of the Greek army; secondly, the resignation of the Greek cabinet; thirdly, the dissolution of the Greek parliament and the holding of new elections; and, fourthly, the dismissal of officials who were considered to be unfriendly to the Allies.

This ultimatum was supported by naval blockade and Greece capitulated. Nevertheless, two months later a second ultimatum was presented, this time demanding control by the Allies of the Greek postal and telegraph system.

At the same time a rival government to that of the pro-German King Constantine in Athens was set up in the area occupied by the Allies. *The Times*, which has so vigorously attacked the setting up of the Finnish Democratic Republican Government at Terijoki, took quite a different view of the formation of the Greek revolutionary committee. "The Committee," it wrote in an editorial, "call upon King Constantine's soldiers to disobey orders from Athens . . . but no part of this action is incompatible with the maintenance of Greek integrity or with adherence to constitutional principles."

Venizelos himself left Athens and became head of the revolutionary government, which was then recognised by the Allies. The British and French Ministers were withdrawn from Athens and an Allied High-Commissioner put in their place. French marines were landed in the Greek capital, and the High-Commissioner demanded the abdication of King Constantine. Unable to stand out against the overwhelming

force of the British and French naval strength, the King left his dominions, and his son was installed in his place under Allied supervision, with Venizelos as his Prime Minister. This whole operation was carried out without Great Britain ever having technically gone to war with Greece, and was justified upon the basis that Great Britain had a duty to preserve a democratic government in Greece. However, in the House of Commons Mr. Balfour, then Foreign Secretary, did give a hint that the Allied action was not entirely disinterested :

> " The policy of the Powers in pressing for the King's resignation must not, however, be judged on purely technical grounds, but on broad considerations of policy."

From the point of view of policy it was certainly successful, for Greece which had hitherto been neutral and, if anything, inclined towards Germany, now entered the war on the Allied side.

Bulgaria and Yugoslavia

As Greece began her " independent " existence as a protégé of Great Britain, so Bulgaria began hers as a client of Tsarist Russia. In the early days of Bulgarian independence, the Officers of the Army and Gendarmerie were Russians or in Russian pay. Gradually, however, Bulgaria asserted her national independence and accordingly lost the protection of Russia, who allowed the other Balkan States to seize from her most of her gains in the Balkan War against Turkey. Like Greece, Bulgaria did not at first enter the War of 1914–18, but ultimately, in October, 1915, she came in on the German side when it seemed clear that she would be able thus to secure territory from the unfortunate Serbia. In the peace treaties that followed the war of 1914–18, Bulgaria lost considerable territory, including the whole of her Ægean coastline. Thus, though fighting almost continuously since her inception as a State in 1878, Bulgaria never attained anything approaching the boundaries secured to her by Russia in the Treaty of San Stefano. In consequence Bulgarian nationalism has never been satisfied, and Bulgaria has claims against all the other

Balkan states who after the War of 1914–18 formed the Balkan Entente, with the primary object of preventing Bulgaria securing any frontier revision.

Serbia was the only one of the Balkan States to be in the War of 1914–18 from the beginning. Indeed that war began in a quarrel between Serbia and the Austria-Hungarian Empire. By 1916 Serbia and the smallest of the Allies, Montenegro—a State now absorbed in Yugoslavia—had been overrun by the armies of the Central Powers, as indeed had a considerable part of Albania, which later became the base for an Allied drive through the Balkans. Albania, however, though it had been acknowledged by the Powers in 1913 as an independent state and had been handed to a German princeling, Wilhelm of Wied, to rule, never even attained the dignity of a belligerent upon either side. The Allies and the Central Powers merely occupied its territory as and when it was convenient.

After the War, Serbia was increased to include a great part of the former Austria-Hungarian Empire (not to mention the whole of Montenegro, which was thus rewarded for being our ally), and became first the kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, and finally Yugoslavia.

The Croats and Slovenes were two races akin in speech to the Serbs, but differing from them in that they were Catholic and not Orthodox in religion, and had been brought up in the traditions of Western Europe, whilst the culture of Serbia was Turkish and Russian in origin. In consequence the Union of these three ill-matched nationalities led in the period after the War to continual agitation for local autonomy and independence.

Roumania, the only one of the Balkan States until 1939 to have a frontier in Europe which touched the Soviet Union, was like Jugoslavia built up after the Great War from fragments torn from the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Before the war of 1914–18 Roumania was a small State with a population of less than nine millions. After the treaties following upon that War its population was well over nineteen millions.

Roumania

This generosity to Roumania is all the more remarkable when the smallness of her contribution to the Allied cause is

considered. Britain and France could not induce her to enter the war before the end of August, 1916, and before the end of that year she had collapsed and was overrun.

As has been mentioned, the official reason given for the outlawing of the Soviet Union, the refusal to allow her to participate in the peace treaties and the "intervention" or invasion of the Allies into her territories, was Russia's breach of the Tsarist undertaking not to make a separate peace. But Roumania, who was rewarded proportionally to her size with more territory than any of the other Allies, also made a separate peace with Germany. Had Roumania been treated in the same way as the Soviet Union was treated, she would not even have been admitted to the Peace Conference at Versailles, still less regarded as eligible for the various gifts of territory which the Allies bestowed on her. In fact, however, she received a great part of what had been the Hungarian half of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and was awarded the Russian province of Bessarabia, which she had previously seized by force in 1918 from the then weak Soviet Republic, embarrassed with a multitude of other interventions, equally unjustified.

Of all the treaties which followed upon the war of 1914–18, that which thus handed over Bessarabia was without doubt the most high-handed; however much Germany, Austria and Hungary may have been coerced by the superior force of the Allies, they were at least allowed to be parties to the treaties which awarded their territory to other powers. The U.S.S.R. was never even invited to the conference which decided to take from her this important province. In the best tradition of the nineteenth century partitions of Turkey, Bessarabia was awarded to Roumania by France, Britain, Canada, Australia, South Africa, New Zealand and India. (Here is another mark of the control of the foreign policy of the Dominions by Britain. Why should New Zealand, a small State of, at that time, about 1,250,000 inhabitants, situated in the Pacific Ocean, enter into a treaty to award to a Balkan State the territory of the U.S.S.R. ?)

Roumania is to-day a nation of discontented minorities which compose a great part of her total population. It should be recalled that in Roumania, for example, are the great majority

of the "unredeemed" Hungarian nationals whose fate so excited Lord Rothermere. The threat to Roumania has come from attempts to alter the Roumanian frontier in favour of Hungary—a cause which had the support not only of Lord Rothermere but of a considerable part of the English Conservative Party. The threat did not come from the Soviet Union, though the Soviet Union has never acknowledged the cession of Bessarabia, and in Soviet maps it always appears under a shading to indicate that it does not belong to Roumania by any right. On the other hand, for twenty years, whilst steadfastly declining to recognise the seizure, the Soviet Government has abstained from any provocative action, weak and unstable as Roumania was.

The Hapsburg Empire

The Hapsburg Empire fell completely to pieces at the end of the war of 1914–18. To the northward the provinces which the Hapsburgs had seized in the partition of Poland were thrown in with German Poland and Russian Poland, to constitute the new and tragic Republic of Poland, whose eastern border, known as the "Curzon Line," ran along what is approximately to-day the western frontier of the U.S.S.R. In subsequent wars waged by the Polish Marshal Pilsudski, Western Byelorussia and the Western Ukraine were taken from the U.S.S.R. and Vilna from the new state of Lithuania. These provinces, which even the Allies in 1919 did not intend to take from Russia, have now been restored to the U.S.S.R. and reunited to the constituent Republics of the Soviet Union, of which by race and language they are clearly parts, the Byelorussian Socialist Soviet Republic and the Ukranian Socialist Soviet Republic.

I have dealt in considerable detail with the question of Poland in my book in the Penguin Series, "Light on Moscow," and I need not deal with the matter further here.

Another important part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the ancient kingdom of Bohemia, whose frontiers went back unchanged almost to the days of "Good King Wenceslas," and which the Austrian Emperor ruled as its King, was joined

to a part of the old Kingdom of Hungary to form the state of Czechoslovakia.

The purely German-speaking core of the Empire, the district surrounding Vienna, Styria, Carinthia, and other territories, were made into the small post-war Republic of Austria, though Italy received as part of her " just share " the purely German-speaking districts of the South Tyrol.

It is interesting to notice that before the advent of Hitler Austria wished to join with Germany. Despite all the talk of the right of small nations to decide their own destiny after the Great War, Britain and France prevented Austria so uniting with Germany and in 1931 Austria was even forbidden to enter into so much as a Customs Union with Germany.

Post-war Hungary is the core of the other half of the old Dual Monarchy. It became a client state first of Italy and then when Italy entered the Axis of the Axis Powers.

As a true client state, Hungary got her reward after Munich in the shape of a southern slice of the already diminished Czechoslovakia. After the destruction of Czechoslovakia in March, 1939, Hungary was allowed to take the most easterly portion of the country, the region known as Ruthenia and often at the time referred to in the British Press as the " Sub-Carpathian Ukraine," a somewhat provocative title suggesting that when Hitler should carry out his dream of conquering the Soviet Union he would annex this territory and use it as a jumping-off ground.

The " White Terror " System

All the surviving states in the remnants of the Ottoman and Hapsburg Empires are what is described as " White Terror " countries. That is to say, while there may be some sort of popular assembly, working-class parties are proscribed or only allowed to exist in the most restricted form, secret police beset all activities of life, there are vast numbers of political prisoners, and change of government occurs only by a change in the disposition of the king or regent, or whatever court figure, male or female, has the ear of the king. While elections are held they are rigged and gerrymandered from top to bottom. In consequence, when royal caprice, foreign pressure or alien

capital, acting through various channels upon the court, causes a change of government, the new government always wins the subsequent elections.

Nevertheless, beneath this façade of constitutional monarchy there have existed strong socialist and radical peasant movements throughout these countries ever since the end of the War of 1914-18.

In Hungary in 1919 there was actually a Communist Government which held power from March to July of that year. In Bulgaria, where free elections were first permitted, there was an overwhelming majority for a radical agrarian party headed by the peasant leader Stambulisky. By far the second largest party in the state were the Communists, who held some fifty seats in a Parliament of 230 members. Among the leaders of this Party was Dimitroff, the hero of the Reichstag Fire Trial and now general secretary of the Communist International. But as in all other Balkan States this political freedom was soon destroyed. In 1923 an army counter-revolutionary coup took place. Stambulisky was murdered, the Agrarian and Communist Parties dissolved and their leaders forced into exile, assassinated, or imprisoned.

It can therefore be understood that the entry of the Red Army into Western Ukraine and Western Byelo-Russia caused an immediate profound stirring in all the small states of South-Eastern Europe. The subject minorities felt that frontiers were fluid once again. The peasantry everywhere began to think that if the landlord regime had disappeared almost over night amongst the subject minorities of the previous Polish State, the day might not be far distant when it would disappear too throughout South-Eastern Europe.

Above all in Bulgaria, where the ruling class had felt cribbed cabined and confined, where all attempts to secure the frontiers originally given to Bulgaria by Russia at San Stefano had been frustrated first by Britain, then by the other Balkan States, and finally again after the War of 1914–18 by the Allies, there was wild enthusiasm at the march of the Red Army.

THE BALTIC STATES

Lastly we come to the Baltic States. They are the smallest nations of Eastern Europe. Lithuania, whose people speak one of the oldest Indo-European or Aryan groupings of language, has a population of approximately 2,400,000. In the Middle Ages it existed as an independent state and at one time stretched far south-eastwards. Latvia has a population of 2,000,000 and is thus just a little larger than the third of the Baltic States, Estonia, with a population of 1,130,000, whose people speak a tongue akin to Finnish.

Their history may be briefly told. Around these eastern and southern shores of the Baltic there were forest dwellers eaching as far down as the valley of the Elbe; indeed until within living memory the Lusatians spoke their Wendish tongue in the valley of the Spree near Berlin. Like the Danes who ravished England in the time of Alfred, they were mainly heathen. Their forcible Christianisation was attempted during the Middle Ages by landhungry Prussian nobles organised as the Order of Teutonic Knights, whose missionary methods may be judged from the fact that in the Estonian language the word for " devil " is " Kurat " which has the same derivation as the English word " curate."

The eastward advance of these Teutonic Knights, whom Karl Marx well described as " Knight Hounds," was checked by the Russians led by Alexander Nevsky in the year 1295; but the knights retained their crusading fortresses along the Baltic coast and this subsequently enabled them to become landlords of the forests and swamps on the fringe of the Baltic. In the early 17th century, during the religious wars in Germany, Sweden, which was for a short while a great power, occupied what is now Estonia and part of Latvia, and in consequence the Estonians to this day are mainly Lutheran in faith.

When finally the western boundary of the Tsarist Empire was fixed at the River Niemen, these provinces passed into the Tsar's dominions, but the German and Swedish landlords and aristocracy remained. They became the Russian landlord and officer class of the area and were known by the name of " Baltic Barons."

Though after the end of the Napoleonic wars the Baltic States were finally allotted to Russia, both Prussia and Sweden still continued to look towards them as possible areas for expansion, Prussia because of the strong German minority led by the Baltic Barons, and Sweden because historically the shores of the Baltic were the scene of her first and only Empire.

The recent evacuation of the German minority marks the end of German claims, but it is not altogether inconceivable that some sections of public opinion in Sweden would welcome an imperialist adventure in this area. Sweden, it is true, is a democracy in which the Socialist Party have a large share in the government, but it should be remembered it has also been the country of international capitalists. It is significant that, according to a report from *The Times* correspondent at Stockholm, a party of Swedish business men had intended to go to Berlin in August, 1939, to present Hitler with a statue of the Swedish King Charles XII, the last of the warrior kings of Sweden. He once defeated Peter the Great in battle and marched on Moscow.

But there grew up from the beginning of this century in the Baltic States, including Finland, a demand, not for union with Germany or Sweden, but for autonomy. In the Baltic provinces the local social-democratic parties which formed, unlike the Finnish Social-democratic party, integral parts of the Russian social-democratic or bolshevik party, played a leading role in the struggle against the Tsar. The workers of Riga and the other Baltic towns took a prominent part in the revolutionary struggle in 1905 and maintained such a strong resistance that what amounted to expeditionary forces had to be sent against them before their resistance could be broken. It was perhaps on this account that the Tsarist generals in the war 1914–1918 were extremely half-hearted in their defence of the Baltic coast, and in 1917 allowed the Germans to take Riga without any real resistance.

They must have felt that the military defeat was offset by the fact that the revolutionaries would now be under the iron heel of the German armies. Thus by the spring of 1918, with the further advance of the Hohenzollern troops, these provinces were mainly in German hands, as were other much

larger tracts of Russia, including the Ukraine, to the south.

At the armistice in November, 1918, German troops under the command of von der Goltz arrived from Finland and reinforced those already in possession. The Allies stipulated that, whereas the German armies everywhere else must withdraw from occupied territory, they must remain in occupation in Latvia until the Allied troops arrived to take over. The object of this, of course, was to prevent either the Red Army or the local inhabitants from taking over and establishing Socialist states.

WHITE GUARDS IN THE BALTIC

The following months were devoted to imprisoning or driving out the Socialists and setting up local administrations under Allied control. These administrations, however, were not composed of local landowners, as were the White Governments in south and north Russia and in Siberia, for the simple reasons that in these three provinces the local landowners, i.e. the Baltic Barons, were of German stock and naturally supported the central empires ; accordingly the local Lithuanian-speaking and Latvian and Esthonian capitalists became the new governments. Whatever attitude they might have wished to adopt, these national governments understood very well that they would only be recognised as *de facto* governments provided they took up an attitude of hostility to the Soviets. It must not be forgotten that the Allies who established these *de facto* governments were interesting themselves at the same time in a restoration of the White Guards, led by Kolchak, Denikin, Yudenitch and a number of other generals as a new government of Russia itself, and these Tsarist generals were bitterly opposed to any establishment of national states carved out of the former Tsarist empire. Consequently, their operations against the Soviet Union were hindered by mutual jealousies which the Allies found it impossible to overcome completely from their Paris and London headquarters. Thus, for example, while the Esthonians were prepared to seize as much territory as they could for the creation of their national state and welcomed the support of the British fleet for this purpose, they gave a much

less effective welcome and support to the armies of General Yudenitch, who, assisted by the British fleet, made his raid from Esthonia upon Leningrad in the autumn of 1919. In short these Baltic States felt themselves (quite correctly) to be pawns in the game of exterminating Bolshevism: and those who play chess will remember that pawns are very frequently sacrificed in order to win the game. These small states saw that it would be wise for them to withdraw, and they were the first to break the ring of hostile states by entering into peace negotiations with the Soviets. The first treaty of peace to be signed was that between Esthonia and Russia on the 2nd February, 1920. Then came the Soviet-Latvian Treaty of peace signed at Dorpat on the 13th June, 1920, and later the Soviet-Lithuanian Peace on the 12th July, 1920.

It is interesting to note that when in December, 1922, these three border states, together with Finland and Poland, met in a Disarmament Conference with the Soviet Union, which offered to reduce her forces by 25 per cent, Lithuania was the only State prepared to agree to cut down armaments. The other states would not agree, though quite apart from the help they might expect from larger Powers the size of their armies in proportion to their population was twice as great as that of the Soviet Union.

Nevertheless, Soviet relations with those border countries continued to be friendly up to 1926. In that year the Pilsudski coup d'état in Poland foreshadowed the setting up in North Eastern Europe of governments definitely hostile to the U.S.S.R., particularly when it was followed by a similar coup d'état in Lithuania. At the beginning of 1927—the year of the Arcos Raid—the possibility of the formation of an anti-Soviet block in the west was increased by the setting-up of semi-fascist regimes in one after another of the Baltic States, which having very little stability in themselves were likely to purchase increased support from the west by assuming a greater hostility to the Soviet Government.

Suspicion naturally arises that the initiative for this semi-fascist development came from the west, and that it was the increasing financial, economic and military influence of the great Powers which led to the growth of reaction in the Baltic;

and fears were certainly both widespread and justified that after a short period of peaceful relations with the U.S.S.R. these States were being turned once more into pawns for the second round of the Anti-Soviet game.

Despite this, however, there were factors on the other side. For one, the attitude of the Soviet Government had provided for the peoples of these Baltic States the most complete contrast with Tsarist policy, which had oppressed the small nations and forbidden them any national or political development.

Secondly, the Baltic States economically depended largely upon Great Britain. When they became independent of the U.S.S.R. their economic basis was shifted until, as the *Economist* remarked in a passage which I shall quote later, their commercial and even their political capital became London. With the breakdown of British trade in the Baltic at the outbreak of the present war, the three Baltic States found themselves largely released from their client relation to Great Britain and also, by the loss of British trade, in economic difficulties.

Thus though in the opening days of the war there were various factors which still bound the three small States to the Western Powers there were a number of factors which drew them towards the U.S.S.R. There was first their geographical position, secondly the record of correct and even friendly relations between themselves and the U.S.S.R., and thirdly their own pressing economic needs caused by the new war situation.

In Chapter VII I shall trace how these factors developed into Pacts for mutual assistance with the Soviet Union. But I must first turn to the special case of Finland.

CHAPTER V

FINLAND'S RECENT HISTORY

SINCE a very early period in European history a Finnish-speaking population have occupied the greater part of the present territory of Finland: but Finnish nationalism as a political force only emerged in the nineteenth century and it is only in the last twenty years that Finland has existed as an " independent " State.

For 600 years Finland was a Swedish Province and in consequence there is to-day a strong Swedish minority and the upper classes are very often of Swedish extraction. In 1808, following upon a war between Russia and Sweden, Finland was ceded to the Russian Tsar as a personal possession which he was to rule as Grand Duke of the Duchy of Finland.

The Finnish people are certainly among the most heroic and cultured nations of Europe. They were repressed and thwarted first by the Swedish minority and then by the Tsarist autocracy, but they were not crushed. Throughout the century which elapsed between the cession of the Grand Duchy to Russia and the granting of the Constitution of 1907, mentioned just below, the Finns fought the tsarist terror. In particular they had to face during the early part of the reign of the last tsar Nicholas II (1894-1917) a concerted and thorough attempt to destroy their national identity. Nicholas II, having at his accession promised to respect Finnish liberty, proceeded to disallow all the Finnish privileges, to prohibit the use of the Finnish language, and to destroy all remnants of Finnish self-government. Nevertheless, despite repeated executions, imprisonments, and banishment to Siberia, Finnish nationalism continued to grow. It was led by the Finnish

Social Democratic Party which represented under this name, as it did at that time everywhere in Europe, the united Socialist movement (it will be remembered that the Bolshevik Party was officially known as the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party until March, 1918). This Party organised passive resistance to the tsarist attempts to exclude Finns and the Finnish language from the State administration in Finland. In addition, to combat tsarist terrorism, it organised a semi-military organisation known as the " Red " Guards.*

As early as 1907 one finds in English newspapers references to conflicts in Finland between the " White " guards, which were bodies of reactionaries drawn usually from Russian immigrants in Finland and from the Swedish minority, and the " Red " guards, the force organised by the Social Democrats around which gathered all the supporters of Finnish independence.

THE 1905 REVOLUTION

The crisis of 1905 in Russia was accompanied by an acute crisis in Finland. There were large-scale strikes and a wholesale boycott of the tsar's machinery of government. So strong was the national feeling against Finns being associated in any way with the tsarist régime that even the Gulf of Finland pilots, who were of Finnish origin, resigned their jobs. Seven British Vice-Consuls out of the eleven Finnish members of the Consular staff in Finland quitted their posts in sympathy with the Finnish movement. The only supporters left to the Tsar were one or two members of the Swedish aristocracy, who, like the German Baltic Barons, looked to the tsarist régime to

* To-day one is inclined to associate the term " Red " with Socialism and primarily with extreme Socialism, but at that time and indeed historically the colour red signified any Party which stood for national independence and against autocracy. Thus, for example, red was the colour of the French Jacobin Party in the French Revolution, and Garibaldi's supporters in Italy adopted red as their colour, his soldiers being known as " red-shirts." In the same way white, the colour of the flag of the autocratic Bourbons, was adopted by autocratic monarchs the world over to distinguish their supporters.

maintain their positions. It is highly significant for the future history of Finland that among these who continued to serve the hated Tsar, Nicolas II, the arch-oppressor of the Finns, and refused to take any part in their efforts to secure the independence of their country, was one figure whom we shall meet again and again in the history of Finland, at that time a young officer in the Tsar's court, Karl Gustav, Baron Mannerheim.

But despite the support which a section of the Swedish nobility in Finland gave to the Tsar, the independence movement was too strong for him. In 1907 he was compelled to grant a "Constitution." The Finns were granted a "Diet" or Parliament of 200 members, elected upon a limited but fairly democratic franchise. In practice this Parliament had little power, since no bill could be introduced without the previous assent of the Tsar, but at least the Finnish people had an opportunity to show their political views by means of their vote. In the first election, held in 1907, the Social Democrats secured eighty seats, or two-fifths of the total Diet.

In 1916, at the last elections held under the tsarist régime, they obtained an absolute majority of 103 seats. Socialism was not, however, to come to Finland by peaceful means. The Tsar's Governor-General refused to allow the Diet to put into practice any socialist measures. Nor did the Tsar's abdication in March, 1917, improve the position, for when the Diet passed a Bill establishing Finnish autonomy in all matters except defence and foreign affairs, the Russian Provisional Government (the Kerensky Government), refused to accept it, forcibly dissolved the Diet, and sent troops to occupy the parliament buildings.

Under pressure from the Russian Provisional Government, new elections were held with the object of securing a more docile Diet. In the country districts the anti-Socialist Parties had already begun to re-organise armed terrorists on the pattern of the White Guards of 1907, whose name they adopted. In consequence, and in part perhaps on account of the deliberate falsification of the returns by the Russian authorities, the Social Democrats, although they polled 70,000 more votes than they had done in the 1916 elections, found themselves eight

votes short of an absolute majority in the Diet, though by far the largest Party. From October, 1917, until late in January, 1918, the greatest confusion prevailed. A coalition government in which the Social Democrats and the anti-Socialist Nationalist Finnish Parties were equally represented was at first formed, but a stable government on such a basis was clearly impossible.

In the summer of 1917, when the Russian provisional (Kerenski) government made a final despairing offensive to assist the Allies in the general war, the Finnish Right Wing Nationalists seized the opportunity to enlist German aid.

In a semi-official history of the Finnish counter-revolution, "Finland's War of Independence" by Lieut.-Col. J. O. Hannula (published in English in England with a preface by General Sir Walter Kirke) the Finnish nationalists action is thus frankly described:

> "With a view to remedying the shortage of officers and equipment among the Civic Guards" (i.e. the White Guards) "negotiations were begun with the Germans in the summer and autumn to supply arms and to send the Jäger officers home; and in October, before the truce was arranged on the Eastern front, about 40 Jägers, a quantity of rifles, machine guns and ammunition, a couple of wireless stations, explosives, etc., had been transported to Finland either by steamer or submarine."

The Jäger officers here referred to were Finns who had gone to Germany to obtain military training where they had received certain front line experience, without being exposed to too great danger, for as Lieut.-Col. Hannula explained:

> "It was not advisable to send a battalion so precious to Finland to a battlefront where it might be exposed to heavy loss."

These Jägers formed the basis of the reorganised White Guard; and later Russian tsarist officers who had fled from Russian territory joined its ranks, and they were assisted by various prominent members of the Swedish nobility in Finland. Of these Swedish noblemen the most prominent was the

above-mentioned Baron Mannerheim, now a lieutenant-general in the tsarist army; we last heard of him in 1905 as preferring the service of the hereditary oppressor of his country to the support of his compatriots' struggle for freedom, and now that it was clear that the anti-Socialists were preparing an armed coup against their Socialist colleagues in the government and the latter's followers, and the time was approaching also for an aristocratic suppression of the popular movement in his country, it was fitting that he should return to Finland to accept, as will be seen, German assistance for this suppression.

FINLAND FREED BY SOVIETS

On the 6th December, 1917, the Diet proclaimed the independence of Finland, and on the 4th January, 1918, the Soviet Government of Russia, on the proposal of Stalin, then People's Commissar of Nationalities, acknowledged the new State's independence. The Right wing Parties then intensified their attack. They demanded the immediate evacuation of all Russian troops, although, since there as yet existed no Finnish army, this meant handing over the country to Germany, still at war with Russia.

On the 11th January, 1918, it became known that the reactionary members of the Government had placed orders with Germany for large quantities of arms. The White Guards began openly to attack trade union and Socialist headquarters. The Finnish people, however, immediately rallied against the pro-German elements, and on the 22nd January, 1918, the Coalition Government was overthrown. The pro-German members fled, some to Germany and others to North-Western Finland, where the White Guards were strongest. The Executive of the Social Democratic Party formed a new Government at Helsingfors.

This Government was not Communist. It was formed from the Social Democratic Party in the Diet and its head was Manner, the leader of the Social Democrats and President of the Diet in 1916. It was in this Government that Kuusinnen, the head of the recently proclaimed Finnish

Democratic Republic, was Minister of Education. Kuusinnen, like Manner, was a member of the Social Democratic Party and a deputy in the Diet.

This Socialist Government concluded an agreement with the Soviet Republic by which the frontier was defined; and in order to give Finland an outlet to the Arctic, the Soviet Republic ceded to Finland the district of Petsamo, which had not formed part of the Grand Duchy.

A programme of social legislation was begun. The peasants were given land, the church was separated from the State, and the medieval laws governing the relations of master and servant were abolished. Within a month, however, the Socialist Government had to face a counter-revolutionary attack. At the town of Vaasa on the Gulf of Bothnia, a rival "White" government was set up by the pro-German elements who had escaped from Helsinki. This "rump government of Vaasa" or "White Guard government"—*The Times* gave it both descriptions—was led by two men who have since that date dominated Finnish politics, Pehr Evind Svinhufud and Baron Mannerheim.

Both are alive to-day. Their careers are worth examining in a little detail as they give some indication of the nature of the movement which they were to lead.

ENTER BARON MANNERHEIM

Baron Mannerheim belonged to a Swedish family which had settled in Finland towards the end of the eighteenth century. Just as the German Baltic Barons attached themselves to the Tsar when the provinces in which they lived passed to Russian control, so, when the Grand Duchy of Finland passed from Sweden to Russia, the Swedish aristocracy transferred their allegiance from the Court at Stockholm to the Court at St. Petersburg.

Though Baron Mannerheim was by reason of his place of birth technically of Finnish nationality, he remained by race a Swede and by education and training a Russian aristocrat. He went to the crack officers' school reserved for the Russian

nobility, entered a first-class Russian regiment, and before he was thirty had an established place in the Court circle in St. Petersburg.

At the age of twenty-nine he had the signal honour of being one of the two officers chosen to escort the Tsar to the altar at the most solemn moment of his coronation and for the first time his photograph appeared in society journals throughout the world.

As already mentioned, Baron Mannerheim, unlike the vast majority of Finnish subjects of the Tsar, made no protest against Nicolas's savage repressions, and at a time when almost all the leaders of the Finnish independent movement were being sent to exile or imprisonment he was serving in the army of the Tsar. He fought in the Russo-Japanese war, and held a command in the punitive expedition which was sent into Persia. By 1915 he had achieved, at the age of forty-eight, many decorations and the rank of Lieutenant-General.

His whole background was thus that not of a Finnish nationalist but of a tsarist officer and a personal supporter of the tsarist monarchy. Subsequently, we shall see that he regarded Finland not as a nation whose independence should be established, but as a territory from which he could organise an attack upon Soviet Russia in an attempt to restore tsardom.

In October, 1919, he gave an interview to *The Times*, in which without the least ambiguity he stated that he believed the historic mission of Finland was to drive Bolshevism from Leningrad. " I strove wittingly and deliberately to create foundations for our relations with Russia for the future by military action, having for its objects the liberation of the capital of former Russia, together with a territory large enough to permit of the establishment of a stable and healthy-minded Russian government. . . . In this policy I perceived a mission, at once humanitarian and patriotic, that destiny had bestowed upon my country."

Such were the antecedents of the man who was now called in to destroy the Socialist Government of Finland; and when he appeals to-day to Britain to provide assistance for Finland to fulfil her " historic destiny," he must make on patriotic Finns much the same impression as an Anglo-Irish

nobleman would have made on the Southern Irish Nationalists if he had suddenly blossomed out as an Irish patriot after serving in the British army through the worst periods of the Coercion Acts.

Svinhufud, who is still alive although an old man, is of rather different character. Unlike Mannerheim, the tsarist officer pure and simple, Svinhufud had long ago come to the conclusion that if Finland was to become an efficient industrial country she must escape from the inefficiency of tsarism. As anti-Socialist as Baron Mannerheim, he saw in tsarist corruption and incompetence an evil which, from its very inefficiency, was incapable of withstanding the rising tide of Finnish Socialism.

He had no more regard for Finnish independence than had Mannerheim, but he looked not to the Tsar but to Prussia and to Prussian methods and autocracy to crush Socialism.

At most times it would have been impossible for the two men, pro-Tsarist and pro-German, to co-operate, but the fall of the Tsar brought them together. Mannerheim, who always declared himself to be pro-Ally, had no objection to calling in his late enemy, the Germans, if this meant an opportunity of restoring the old régime in Petrograd. To Svinhufud Finnish independence was merely the first step towards virtual unity with Germany.

And on this basis they compromised. Svinhufud became head of the " White " State, and Mannerheim commander-in-chief of the White Guard. He chose a general staff composed almost entirely of German-trained officers. Prominent among these were General Wallenius, who appears in December, 1939, as commander-in-chief on the Northern front, and has appeared on various occasions in Finnish history as a kidnapper of politicians opposed to the Mannerheim Party and as the leader of armed fascist revolt. Among others were Hugo Ostermann, until 1917 an officer in the German army and now chief of the Finnish General Staff, and Errko, then a staff officer and later to appear as foreign minister during the Finnish-Soviet negotiations of 1939.

In 1918 M. Holsti, now Finnish delegate at the League, was one of the envoys of the White Guard Government to

the various European capitals, and *The Times* describes the "icy-coolness" with which one of these delegations was received in Norway, when they explained that to establish the neutrality of Scandinavia and the independence of Finland they proposed to call in a German army.

Svinhufud's foreign minister, Saarrio, at once began to negotiate for German intervention against the Government in Helsinki. He was a man, said *The Times*, "whose extreme German sympathies appear to be untempered by any consideration even for the interests of his own country." On the 7th March, 1918, the Vaasa Government signed a peace treaty and a trade pact with Germany which in the words of the Anti-Socialist Finnish historian Schibergson made Finland "politically and economically dependent upon Germany." The British Minister in Stockholm informed the Finnish representative that in the British view the treaties were quite "incompatible with Finnish neutrality."

GERMANY HELPS MANNERHEIM

On the same day as the pacts were signed the first German expeditionary forces landed on the Finnish mainland from the Aaland Islands, which they had occupied a few days before, to attack the Socialist Government.

The first act of General Mannerheim in his long career as Commander-in-Chief in Finland was thus to call in his enemies of the day before to suppress the people of his own country.

The Government at Helsinki was ready to co-operate with the Allies against the Germans and, had the Allies been prepared to render any assistance, the Germans and General Mannerheim could in all probability have been defeated.

"The anti-German forces in Finland," said *The Times* shortly after, on 9th April, 1918, "are in reality very strong. They include naturally, the whole of the 'Red' element." But beyond the formation of a Finnish legion at Murmansk under the British General Maynard nothing was done.

The Soviet Government could do nothing to help. A few days before their invasion of Finland on the 7th March, the Germans had compelled Russia at Brest-Litovsk to agree to

withdraw her entire garrison that that country. As it was put by Lieut.-Col. Hannula in the book just quoted:

> " The removal of the troops was completed within the second week in March. Only the fleet remained, being forced to stay at Helsinki owing to the ice."

Baron Mannerheim's offensive against the Socialist Government forces did not begin until the third week in March, although it is true that prior to this date he had carried out certain police operations in Northern Finland and had disarmed Russian frontier guards on the Swedish frontier. His troops did in the latter part of March win one comparatively large action against the socialist forces; but even this came after German troops had landed in Finland, and all the subsequent military operations of any real importance were carried out not by Mannerheim's forces but by those of the Germans.

The White Guard government meanwhile, according to *The Times*, " avoided risk by sitting firmly at the remote town of Vaasa."

Whilst the Germans were thus fighting the Finnish Socialist Government and the Finnish people since the 7th March, their main force, under General von der Goltz, did not arrive until the first week in April, when it landed at Hango and two weeks later took Helsinki. The German official communique which speaks of the town being " taken by storm after desperate struggles in the streets and in the surrounding forests " makes no mention whatsoever of any " White Guard " forces collaborating with the German troops, though in subsequent communiques there are references to assistance from the Finnish Whites in various minor operations.

It is significant that according to *The Times* correspondent at Stockholm the Finnish Whites had so little to do with the capture of their capital that the representative of the White Government in Stockholm did not learn of the German capture of the city until three days after it had fallen.

On the 9th April, a week before the Germans had taken Helsinki, *The Times* was writing in an editorial " Finland can

no longer claim to be neutral; it has become a German province."

Unassisted by the Allied forces, ill-armed, inexperienced, fighting bravely but desperately, the first Socialist government of Finland thus went down before the weight of the German military machine. By May the last of its army had been dispersed, and the hostilities were over. Baron Mannerheim entered the Finnish capital at the side of General von der Goltz, the German commander, and was decorated with the Iron Cross. "After the occupation," wrote a correspondent in *The Times*, "Helsingfors presented the aspect of a German garrison town."

THE FINNISH "WHITE PAPER"

It is interesting to compare this history, which is well authenticated, with the account given in the "Statement Concerning Finnish-Russian Relations and the Circumstances Leading to the Invasion of Finland by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on November 30th, 1939," published in London on behalf of the Finnish Government on the 30th December, 1939. In this document, commonly and conveniently called "the Finnish White Paper," the overthrow of the Coalition Government on the 22nd January, 1918, and the formation of the new government are not mentioned, and what *The Times* called "the rump government of Vaasa" is called "the Finnish government," as if there were never any question of another. The resistance of the government at Helsinki and of the mass of the Finnish people to the rump government, a resistance which the able and experienced General Mannerheim was unable to overcome even in four months without the aid of a German army, is called "an agitation against the Finnish Government by Russian troops," as if the Russian troops had not had to depart from Finland. The actual attack upon the Helsinki government and the mass of the Finnish people is described with some delicacy in the words:

> "Military operations commenced at the end of January, 1918, and by the middle of May the enemy had been driven out of Finland, and Finland had won her independence.

" In April, 1918, German troops landed in Finland. But it is important to record that when they arrived all decisive battles against Bolshevik troops had already been fought by the Finnish Army under the leadership of General Baron Mannerheim."

No explanation is given in this discreet account as to why German troops should land in Finland at all if " the enemy " had been driven out (or even if it had not); and it is of course untrue to suggest that German troops did not arrive until April, when they actually landed in March; the true position was, as explained above, that the troops of Soviet Russia had been compelled by the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk to withdraw from Finland, and that even after that General Mannerheim and his fellow-Whites could not defeat the Finnish people without German help. The crucial question whether the military operations were really a united Finland driving out a Russian enemy or a civil war with which Russia at any rate had nothing to do, can be best answered in the words of Mr. J. Hampden Jackson, the author of a standard work on Finland and no Socialist: " It was a civil war of Finns against Finns, the old Finland of yeomen and pastors against the new proletariat of the towns helped by the landless peasants."

The truth is equally clearly revealed by Sir Walter Kirke (the present Commander-in-Chief of the Home Forces in Britain) in his preface to Lieut.-Col. Hannula's book which I have quoted above. After describing Baron Mannerheim as " a soldier who combined outstanding organising and strategic ability with political foresight and statesmanship of the highest order," he refers to this civil war, which is now sought to be represented as a war to free Finland from Russia, in the following remarkable words:

" Whilst General Mannerheim might *see in his own countrymen his most dangerous enemy*, he had always to reckon with the *possibility* that the Bolshevik government would not inertly watch the suppression of its pupils and protagonists and *might* come to their assistance." (The italics are mine.)

In other words, it was plainly Sir Walter Kirke's view that whilst the White Guard government of General Mannerheim might one day have to fight the Russians, what it was quite definitely engaged in doing was to fight its own people.

The fact that Baron Mannerheim thought it necessary soon after, as is described below, to imprison thousands of Finns and even to put to death 30,000 of them, thus earning for himself in wide circles in Europe the unofficial title of "Butcher," to accompany his British knighthood, his German Iron Cross, and his many Tsarist decorations, would seem equally to establish the true nature of the operations. If, moreover, the version given in this White Paper were correct, it would be difficult to understand why the representatives of the Vaasa White Government were said by *The Times* to be informing neutral countries that German aid was being called in to establish the independence of Finland, and why the "patriotic" Vaasa government should sign a treaty with Germany which made its country dependent on Germany and was held by the British Government to be "incompatible with Finnish neutrality." It is equally difficult to see how *The Times* could think in April of that year that the anti-German forces were "very strong" and included the whole of the "Red" element, if "all decisive battles against Bolshevik troops had already been fought" and Finland was, as is implied in the statement, a completely united nation. But it becomes not difficult but quite impossible in the circumstances to think of General Mannerheim, the patriotic leader of the Finnish people, if he was coming fresh from these "decisive battles" against the Bolsheviks, and with his country free and independent, welcoming the Germans to Finland. They were the age-long enemy of the Tsar he had served all his life, and they came as conquerors into the territories of his native land, from which he would never be able to drive them unless Britain should defeat Germany in the main war. And yet, after he had according to this White Paper got rid of the Bolsheviks, he greeted the German invaders with the following extravagant welcome:

" The German victorious and mighty army landed in Finland to help against the infamous Bolsheviks and to help the friendship the Finnish people have always had for the noble Kaiser and the mighty German people. Fighting shoulder to shoulder with the great German army, the Finnish army should be imbued with the discipline that has brought that army from victory to victory. I greet the brave German troops and hope that every Finn will realise the great sacrifice of the noble German people, who are helping them in an hour when every man is needed on the Western Front."

It is interesting to quote in contrast the following description of the position from the Soviet point of view, which appears in an article written by Stalin in 1920 :

" The revolt of the Finnish workers and agricultural labourers and the flight of the bourgeois ' Senate ' . . . these are facts of common knowledge which demonstrated the complete isolation of the . . . ' government ' from their ' own ' masses. Utterly defeated, the . . . ' government ' were ' obliged ' to appeal for aid against their ' own ' workers and peasants to the imperialists of Western Europe, the age-long oppressors and exploiters of the small nations of the world."

FINLAND'S GERMAN KINGLET

After this German victory, the Social-Democratic members of the Diet were excluded, and the rump of that body was compelled by the pro-German Svinhufud to proclaim Finland a monarchy ; scarcely more than one third of the total membership voted in favour of the resolution. Prince Friedrich Karl of Hesse, the Kaiser's brother-in-law, was chosen as King. Svinhufud became Regent and Paasikivi, then Svinhufud's principal assistant and later to be the Soviet-Finnish negotiator of 1939, became the first Prime Minister of " the Kingdom of Finland."

If the Finnish White Paper were to be accepted as accurate, we should here be confronted with a most singular spectacle.

Here would be the Finnish people, whom everyone accepts as obstinately determined to be rid of oppression and subjection to foreign rule, free at last both of Russian Tsarism and of Soviet Russia, free to determine its own destiny. And here would be its government suddenly and of its own free will making the country into a monarchial colony of the triumphant and aggressive Hohenzollern tyranny!

Even the deputies of the rump Diet were under no illusion as to the dependence of their country upon Germany. In the course of the debate on the institution of the Monarchy one of them, as reported in *The Times*, said frankly, "Let us not deceive ourselves. We are too weak to defend our liberty alone; we are dependent on Germany. Whether we elect to be a Monarchy or a Republic we shall be commanded from Berlin. It is only a choice whether we shall be governed by a German Prince or by a German Minister resident in Helsingfors."

The effect of this entire dependence upon Germany was soon apparent. Though Finland was technically neutral, she was compelled to allow Germany the use of Petsamo as a submarine base from which to attack British and neutral Scandinavian shipping. It is worth noting that in July, 1918, in the British House of Commons the Government acknowledged that the Finns were doing this and admitted that the Soviet Government, who had ceded the territory originally to the Socialist Government, had protested strongly.

This incident illustrates well the difference between the Soviet and German attitude towards Finnish independence.

Meanwhile the German troops remained in military occupation of the "kingdom of Finland," holding the ring while the White Guards organised the final suppression of their working class opponents.

FINNISH WORKERS MASSACRED

One hundred and forty-five courts martial were set up and in three months had pronounced sentences totalling 300,000 years. Many of the prisoners did not even survive for trial and imprisonment. "Out of about 80,000 prisoners taken

at the end of April or subsequently arrested," wrote *The Times*, "30,000 men and women are dead." Other reports put the figure much higher, but even the figure of 30,000 is horrible enough. At this time the Svinhufud and Paasiviki government controlled only a population of a little more than three millions, so that the slaughter of 30,000 prisoners would be equivalent to the killing in Britain of nearly 450,000 persons.

Not a hint of any of these tragic events is to be found in the Finnish White Paper, unless it be the phrase: "There is no class war in Finland and never can be."

The B.B.C. has called these operations described above "the war of Finnish independence." This is, as I have already shown, a complete misdescription; the fullest independence that a small nation can possess had been conceded by the Soviets months before, and this was simply a civil war in which one side called in foreign aid to exterminate the other, at the price of rendering the country wholly dependent on the foreign helper.

The defeat of Germany by the Allies in the main war at the end of 1918, and the subsequent withdrawal of General von der Goltz and his army, alone saved Finland from remaining a German colony; it also placed the pro-German Svinhufud in considerable difficulty. In December, 1918, he resigned and General Mannerheim became Regent in his place. In 1919, when it became clear that the Allies would not recognise a German Prince as King of Finland, Mannerheim divested himself of the title of Regent and became the first President of the Finnish Republic. His Government was frankly and openly based upon the White Guard. This force, ostensibly formed to fight the Socialist Government, a task in fact performed by the German expeditionary force, was now kept in being to maintain a government which could not possibly survive as a democratic institution.

Even those sections of the British press which were most hostile to the Socialist Government of Russia were appalled at the naked class government of Baron Mannerheim and by the terrorism by which it was supported. The Annual Register for 1919, a yearly account of world history compiled by the editor of the Statesman's Year Book, and, it may be remarked,

in general very hostile to Soviet Russia, thus described the organisation and nature of the Finnish State:

> " The White Guards who numbered over 50,000 men were not demobilised: they were on the contrary very much in evidence and it was in truth this armed force which was the real foundation of the Government's strength. . . . It was a class dictatorship, but with the position of the classes reversed as compared with Russia."

CLASS WAR IN FINLAND

The Times was even more outspoken. Under the heading of " Class War in Finland," in February, 1919, it thus described the methods and effect of Baron Mannerheim's government:

> " There is a clear-cut opposition of classes for which it would be difficult if not impossible to find any parallel in modern history. . . . For this deplorable state of affairs the responsibility must be held to rest chiefly on the political leaders of the Whites, including the present government. . . . The authority of the Finnish Government rests at present entirely on the White Guards, a body of between 50,000–60,000 men, recruited exclusively from the ranks of the bourgeoisie. . . . With its White Guard stiffened by German-trained Jägers the government feels strong enough to face any situation. . . . It has not hesitated to exclude from the present Diet all but one of the Socialist members who number 92 out of 200, and with the bourgeois rump that remains to pass many important laws, including one altering the franchise. . . . The practical question is whether a Government whose authority is based on democratic forms can permanently maintain itself against the will of the working class by means of such an instrument as the White Guard. . . . It is to be feared that Finland's long tale of misfortune is not yet ended. It has the forms without the traditions of democracy and liberty. . . ."

In the face of these descriptions, neither of which comes from any left-wing source, it is interesting to turn once again

to the Finnish White Paper, where we find this sort of government described "as the maintenance of a modern and progressive policy in face of the economic and political unrest which have beset Europe since the end of the Great War of 1914–18," and as "no class war in Finland" ". . . no oppression or capitalist dictatorship, no distress or unrest among workers."

But it was in the conditions described by the Annual Register and *The Times* that the new Constitution for the Finnish Republic was worked out.

The head of the State was a President with considerable powers, elected by indirect vote. The Diet of 200 members was retained, though various restrictions prevented the former supporters of the Socialist Government from voting. The White Guard, recruited openly as a class army, was made official, and subsidised by the State.

This crowded historical period of three years from the General Election of 1916 to the inauguration of the Republican Constitution of 1919 is the key to all the subsequent history of Finland.

In 1916, for the first time in European history, a Socialist Party pledged to carry out a Socialist policy had democratically secured a majority in Parliament. For the first time the possibility of peaceful transition to Socialism was put to the test. The Tsarist Governor-General had thereupon refused to implement the Constitution, and the Russian Provisional Government of Kerensky had forcibly dispersed the Diet. For a short period the Socialist majority of 1916 had succeeded in forming a government, but their enemies, rather than allow them to succeed, called in foreign troops to disperse them. It is not to be wondered at that those who were prepared to call in the Germans against their own people would also be prepared, once they had gained power, to prevent any Party really desiring to establish socialism from ever again securing a majority by democratic means.

After 1919, the history of Finland can best be dealt with by examining in the first place her hostilities against and other relations with the U.S.S.R. over the whole twenty years, and secondly by taking her internal history in two periods. The

first from 1919 to 1930, when Parliament was permitted to exist and even some measure of parliamentary control allowed, and the second from 1930 onward.

In this second period, whilst the Diet continues to exist, the White Guards, the real executive of the Finnish ruling class, and other extra-parliamentary forces take control out of its hands. The choice of the presidents and the ministries are largely directed by outside pressure, and the parliament remains little more than a cypher to register, often unwillingly and grudgingly enough, the decrees of the White Guards.

The history of Finnish relations with the U.S.S.R., thus, begins with the hostilities carried on by Mannerheim in Finland's name against Soviet Russia in the years 1918–1923. Mannerheim, who informed the British Government when he visited London in 1919 that he regarded the overthrow of the Soviet Government "as a patriotic and humanitarian mission that destiny had bestowed on Finland," immediately after the German victory over the Socialist Government, proceeded to an attack upon Soviet Russia, using his White Guard forces whilst Finland herself was virtually a German colony.

MANNERHEIM'S WARS ON SOVIET

After the defeat of Germany, Mannerheim again instituted and conducted a campaign against Soviet Russia, which he proposed to the British should now be carried on in alliance with the Allies. For the next six months, in league with his former Tsarist colleagues, Admiral Kolchak and General Yudenitch, and with the co-operation of the British forces at Archangel, he waged war against the Soviet Union. Of course, neither Admiral Kolchak nor General Yudenitch was in favour of Finnish independence, and Mannerheim thus found himself joining in a war of "liberation" whose object it was to restore a Government which would destroy Finnish independence.

So popular, indeed, was he among "interventionists" that a campaign to secure his appointment as Commander-in-Chief of the various Baltic interventionary forces was mooted. *The Times* wrote a powerful editorial calling upon the British

Government to support Mannerheim—apparently both against the Soviet Union and against the Government of Finland itself—and from London and Paris, Mannerheim carried on a campaign to secure even greater British and French intervention.

Despite his activities, however, in the course of the next year, 1920, Finland concluded peace with Russia; but he and his colleagues were able largely to wreck its effectiveness. Though peace had been formally signed, Mannerheim's White Guard then proceeded to conduct for two years a "private war" against Soviet Karelia, of the nature of border raids and frontier incidents. These irregular hostilities lasted until 1922, when the Soviet Union had become sufficiently strong to prevent such activities.

Hostilities then ceased, and the intervening years between 1922 and 1930 were occupied by the piling up of Finnish armed forces with the collaboration of the British military, naval and air missions. Though there occurred various isolated manifestations of anti-Soviet feeling, as for example, the refusal of Finland to sign the Moscow Protocol on the operation of the Kellogg Pact, it was not until 1930 that Finland again adopted a concertedly anti-Russian policy.

As might be expected, this policy coincided with the appointment of General Mannerheim as head of the Defence Council. As in 1921 and 1922, its principal manifestations took the form of creating frontier incidents; but Socialists and liberals accused of pro-Russian sympathies were taken to the frontier by White Guards and thrown over the barriers into Soviet Russia, and the Finnish Government circulated through its legation abroad various attacks on the Soviet administration.

In 1935 the extreme Right press in Finland revived the demand for the fortification of the Aaland Islands, and more significant still for the mounting of heavy guns on the Finnish Arctic coast. This had been specifically forbidden in the Russo-Finnish peace treaty of 1920, since by the fortification of this region the Finns could close the ice-free channel to Murmansk.

By 1937 the situation had become so bad that Rudolph Holsti, again Finnish Foreign Minister, had to make a public

declaration, having, of course, no foundation in truth, that the stories then appearing throughout the press of almost every country of Finnish-German collaboration against Russia were the mere invention of hostile newspapermen. In February of that year the position was thus summed up in a leading article in *The Times*: "Since Finland established her independence in 1917 her relations with Soviet Russia have at the best been no more than polite and have often been strained to breaking point."

None of these hostilities finds any mention in the Finnish White Paper, in which it is merely stated that "since the conclusion of the Peace Treaty of 1920, Finnish-Russian relations have been correct" and "Finland has made every effort to develop closer relations."

Turning now to the internal history of Finland, we find that the first of the two periods above mentioned, viz. 1919 to 1930, began with the victory of a Moderate candidate, Stahlberg, in the presidential elections of 1919 over Baron Mannerheim, who was discredited by his close association with General Yudenitch and the "White Russian" Committee in Paris, whose leader, Prince Lvov, the former head of the Provisional Government established after the overthrow of the Tsar, had shortly before protested officially against British recognition of Finnish independence, to which the Russian Whites were in general strongly opposed.

Meanwhile the need to obtain labour compelled successive Finnish Governments to release from imprisonment large numbers of those who had taken part in the Civil War, but who had not died or been shot. No sooner were they released than the heroic spirit of the Finnish working class re-asserted itself. They set to work to rebuild their shattered Socialist organisations. In 1920 the Finnish Socialist Working Class Party was formed, but it was naturally subjected to continual repression and in 1921 all its leading members were in prison. Nevertheless, in the election of 1922 it secured twenty-seven seats, equivalent proportionally to a membership of eighty-two in the British Parliament.

The next year the Party was dissolved by the Government. Two hundred leading members were arrested and every one

of its Members of Parliament imprisoned. This suppression was carried out by Kallio, at that time Prime Minister and to-day President of the Finnish Republic.

Nevertheless, the Finnish working class continued their struggle to re-build the party and the Finnish trade union movement, which prior to its destruction by Baron Mannerheim had been one of the best organised and best run movements in Europe.

Again the Finnish Government repressed this revival of Socialism. In 1928 the General Secretary and the leaders of the Trade Union Congress were arrested.

Typically, however, despite these continual arrests and repressions, the trade union movement continued to grow. For a moment it looked as if Finland might have another opportunity to attempt again peacefully to build Socialism. This was particularly so since there did exist a Social Democratic Party. Unfortunately, however, this Party possessed neither the courage nor the ability of the Social Democratic Party of 1916, whose name it had taken over without its programme.

The post-war Social Democrats in Finland were only allowed to exist provided that they accepted the White counter-revolution and the White regime. Nevertheless for a short period in 1927 the Social Democratic Party formed a government, but they were unable to effect any substantial reform. Though they denounced the White Guard (or Security Corps or Civil Guard ; these three names were used indiscriminately) as a "class" army, the Diet rejected a Bill to curtail the State subsidy paid to it, and shortly after the Government resigned.

Tanner, then Prime Minister, and since prominent as one of the Finnish negotiators in Moscow and as Foreign Minister during the hostilities, was compelled in 1927 to attend a parade of the White Guard to celebrate their entry into Helsingfors and their defeat of the Socialist Government in 1918.

Following on the resignation of the Socialist Government, numerous other administrations were formed. Indeed, one of the effects of the extra-parliamentary control of Finnish politics by the White Guard has been the enormous number of governments which have been formed. Between 1918 and

1935 alone there were no less than thirty-five different administrations, the majority of which had no stable parliamentary backing. For example, in 1929 the so-called "Progressive" Party formed a Ministry though they only had seven members in a Diet of two hundred.

FINLAND FROM 1930

The second of the two periods begins in 1930. At home its principal feature is the introduction of fascism by the suppression of Left Wing Parties, by the dissolution of the trade unions and by the suppression of the press. Abroad its policy is one of close alliance both with England and with Germany. Not unnaturally the principal figure who dominates the period, first as Prime Minister and then as President, is Svinhufud. The old partnership of Svinhufud and Mannerheim is restored. Mannerheim returns to power as President of the Defence Council and Commander-in-Chief elect.

Svinhufud reappeared as the nominee of an openly fascist organisation, the Lappo movement, named from the village of Lapua where it fought its first engagement, storming and destroying the local Socialist headquarters. It drew its main support from the General Staff of the army and from the political supporters of Svinhufud. From its earliest days it had close connections with various foreign fascist organisations, as for instance the Stahlhelm in Germany. In 1930 this Party demanded that the Diet should suppress all papers run by working class organisations and should dissolve the trade unions. The Government, at whose head was Kallio who had in 1923 in similar circumstances suppressed the Left Wing parties of the Diet, agreed to comply. But the Lappos insisted that he should hand over the Premiership to Svinhufud.

Meanwhile the Diet was subjected to open terrorism. The Parliament buildings were raided by Lappos and two members who had opposed them were dragged from their seats and carried off. The Vice-President of the Chamber, a Social-Democrat, was kidnapped in the streets of Helsinki and it was only by chance that he was not thrown forcibly over the frontier fortifications into Russia.

The Liberals and the other Moderate Parties tried to mitigate in some degree the openly fascist demands of Svinhufud, and proposed certain amendments to fascist legislation then before the Diet.

" It was evident," wrote *The Times* correspondent in Helsinki on the 14th July, 1930, " that a large majority of the Diet was in favour of the amendments." Nevertheless, under threats from Svinhufud, the Diet passed the Bill unamended. A deputy representative of the Swedish minority remarked: " The Diet has been subjected to non-Parliamentary pressure amounting to terror."

Armed with these powers, Svinhufud suppressed the opposition press, dissolved the trade unions, outlawed the Left Parties and then held a General Election. From the new Diet he demanded even more drastic power to suppress his opponents. Some show of opposition was put up, and it was finally only by one vote that he secured changes in the Constitution outlawing the Left political parties other than the Social Democrats.

With the granting of new powers the terror increased rather than diminished. Stahlberg, who had defeated Mannerheim for the Presidency in 1919, was kidnapped with his wife, and their lives were only saved by the merest chance. This scandal could not be entirely hushed up, and the subsequent enquiry involved General Wallenius, the Chief of the General Staff, and his assistant, Colonel Kuussaari, director of mobilisation. They were arrested, tried and convicted, but released upon reversal of the conviction by the Supreme Court.

It is interesting to note that next to Svinhufud the most important member of this government was Prokope, the Foreign Minister. He is now the Finnish Minister at Washington, and is well-known for his appeals on behalf of " democratic Finland."

In 1931 Svinhufud was elected President as the official candidate of the Lappo movement, of which General Wallenius had now openly become the leader.

In 1932 the Lappos staged an armed revolt, with the ostensible object of forcing the Government to dismiss a Provincial Governor of whom they disapproved. At first Svinhufud took no steps against them, explaining that it was impossible

to call upon the White Guard since they were nearly all members of the Lappo movement themselves. However, the news of the Lappo success caused a pronounced fall in the Finnish exchange and the leadership of the movement took fright. Without a shot being fired the leaders surrendered to the Government and General Wallenius was again put on trial. Again, however, he escaped imprisonment, receiving like the other members of the movement a free pardon from President Svinhufud.

It is often said that this " defeat " of the Lappo movement marked a return to democratic methods; but, if democracy had been restored, the first thing which one would have expected to see in a country which had had a Socialist majority in Parliament in 1916 would be at least a revival of trade unionism and collective bargaining.

SOCIAL CONDITIONS

This has not been the case. In the report of the Department of Overseas Trade on Economic and Commercial Conditions in Finland drawn up in 1938 by the Commercial Secretary at the British Legation in Helsinki it is stated: " It may be said on the whole that trade unionism has not made much headway in Finland. The proportion of organised labour is very much smaller than in the Scandinavian countries and trade union funds are restricted." The restriction of trade union funds here mentioned is a reference no doubt to the anti-working class legislation of 1931, by which even the funds of such innocuous bodies as the Working Class Temperance associations were confiscated on the grounds that the committee members were " Reds."

Sir Ernest Simon, in his book on " The Smaller Democracies " published in 1939, confirms the observations of the official report. " There is," he says, " no strong trade union movement . . . collective bargaining has not been achieved in the most important industries." Sir Ernest Simon, who, as he says in the preface to his work, regards the achievements of the smaller democracies as " extraordinarily heartening," is hardly likely to exaggerate the unsatisfactory conditions of

the Finnish working class. Nevertheless he points out that "money wages to-day in Finland are about half the level of those in Sweden. . . . Strikes have been infrequent in recent years. As a result of efficient management on the one hand and of low wages on the other the output of industry has increased by about 150 per cent. in the last fifteen years."

Fuller statistics of the wages paid by Finnish industry are not available. However, the Commercial Secretary at the British Legation in Helsinki attempted in his Report, previously mentioned, to arrive at some approximation, quoting the very incomplete statistics of the Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs. The four industries covered by the statistics which employ the largest amount of male labour were, pulp and paper mills, saw mills and planing mills, machine shops, and the spinning and weaving industry. The hourly wages paid were respectively 7¾d., 7d., 8½d., and 7½d. The four industries employing the largest quantity of female labour were the spinning and weaving industry, the saw mills and planing mills, the pulp and paper mills and the hosiery factories. The average hourly earnings of women in these industries were respectively 4½d., 3¾d., 4d. and 5¼d. Less than one-tenth of the total number of women employed, for which statistics were available, were paid over 5d. per hour. These statistics, moreover, were drawn from the best-paid industries. Further, the rate paid to male workers is being forced down in competition with female labour.

"It is of interest," remarks the Department of Overseas Trade Report, "to note the development of female labour in Finland, which must contribute to the competitive advantages enjoyed by the Finnish industry. The proportion steadily increased from 27·8 per cent. in 1913 to a record of 39·7 per cent. in 1935."

Of the earnings of the 60 per cent. of the Finnish population who are engaged in agriculture no statistics are available, but some light at any rate is thrown on the wages paid to farm workers by the following remark from the Department of Overseas Trade Report: "There have been temporary shortages of labour, particularly in respect of female farm labour and domestic servants, owing to the attraction exercised by

the factories." The attraction to female labour thus exercised by the factories was an average wage of not more than 4d. per hour.

LABOUR IS CHEAP

No wonder that in explaining Finnish industrial development the Department of Overseas Trade Report says, "One need only refer in this connection to the cheap labour provided by a hard-working population. . . ."

Though plans have been made for the introduction of a system of contributory old-age pensions, at present there are neither old-age nor disability pensions. There is no unemployment insurance; "although," remarks Sir Ernest Simon, "the matter has been discussed, it has as yet received little support." Nothing could better illustrate the powerlessness in practice of the numerically strong parliamentary Social Democratic Party of Finland.

Statistics on the cost of living are difficult to obtain. The Department of Overseas Trade Report estimates that the cost of living has risen 6 per cent. between June 1935 and 1938. On the subject of rent, one of the most important items in calculating the cost of living, Sir Ernest Simon remarks, "there is a certain amount of over-crowding, no subsidies have as yet been given for the housing of large, poor families. On the whole rents are high, as in the Scandinavian countries."

One further quotation from Sir Ernest Simon sums up the position: "The brunt of the depression (of 1929–32) fell on the workers, whose wages were lower than ever and even now . . . the old rates of pay have not been restored. Money wages to-day in Finland are about half the level of those in Sweden."

In short though Finland's cost of living is little below that of the other Scandinavian countries it has the wage level almost of a Balkan State. And that sad picture represents the economic condition to-day of the country which was the first in Europe to achieve a Socialist majority in its Parliament.

So much for the economic emancipation and well-being of the country which two score of successive Finnish governments are popularly credited with having achieved.

It can be imagined what discontent must be produced by such an economic and trade-union history in any but a supine and dispirited people; and everyone is agreed that the Finnish people are obstinate, courageous and of an independent spirit. It is unfortunate that the Finnish White Paper contains not even a passing hint of trouble: there is no mention of the Lappo movement having ever existed, or of any suppression of working class parties or trade unions; everything is painted as ideal. The policy of the Finnish Government has throughout, it is stated, been "modern and progressive"; "parliamentary government has been consolidated"; "there is no class war in Finland and never can be"; "the Finnish worker *more often than not* owns his own flat, cottage, or garden plot. There is no slums problem"; "the economic system built up in recent years has brought about such ideal conditions that there is always work for every man"; "Finland has paid particular attention to raising the standard of life of the population"; "no oppression or capitalistic dictatorship, no distress or unrest among workers, and no hardship in working conditions. In fact, nothing whatever from which Finnish workers might desire to be 'freed.' The workers of Finland ARE free." I trust that any "free" worker would demand freedom from the conditions described in the objective accounts which I have quoted above.

POLITICAL LIBERTY: ANTIKAINEN

Political liberty stands in no better position. Perhaps a good illustration of the conditions in this respect is to be found in the "Antikainen" trial in 1936.

In 1936, there fell into the hands of the Finnish police a Finnish-speaking Soviet subject from Russian Karelia, Antikainen by name, who had taken a prominent part in repelling Finnish attacks in the war of 1921–22 mentioned above. As Finland was not then at war with Russia and as the military operations of the White Guard which Antikainen had taken part in resisting took place entirely on Soviet territory, it was difficult to find any offence with which he could be charged. However, the charge was laid that in the course of

these operations Antikainen had been responsible for the murder of a Finnish White Guard. This was not unlike charging an English soldier with murder if in the course of repelling a piratical raid of foreign Fascist forces on his own territory he killed one of the Fascists. But Antikainen was solemnly tried on this charge, and in his defence claimed the right to have witnesses summoned from the Soviet Union, who were present at the time and place of the alleged attack, to prove that in fact nothing of the sort had taken place. To call witnesses is an elementary right of accused persons, but the Finnish court took the simple and helpful course of refusing to allow any such evidence to be called for the defence. There was a considerable outcry both in the English and the American Press, and finally the Finnish Appeal Court decided that the Trial Court was not entitled to exclude evidence for the defence, ordered a re-trial and directed that the witnesses from the Soviet Union be given facilities to appear.

At the new trial a number of witnesses gave evidence for the defence, but one of them, after giving evidence at the first day's hearing in favour of Antikainen, suddenly withdrew his testimony and on the next day gave evidence against him. The sudden change of front by the witness was accompanied by a number of suspicious circumstances, and since the man was a Soviet subject the Soviet Government insisted that an enquiry should be held to determine whether he had been subjected to any pressure. Thereupon the whole story came out, and it was disclosed that actually within the precincts of the Court itself he had been threatened with death by the Finnish secret police. At first he had resisted but finally he had broken down in face of their threats of torture, and agreed to alter his evidence.

GAOL FOR QUOTING "DAILY HERALD"

Not unnaturally these revelations caused an even greater sensation abroad than had the original trial. The disagreeable impression of Finnish justice was further increased when the Criminal Court, despite the evidence from the Soviet Union

and the revelations about the pressure put on the witnesses, again sentenced Antikainen to life imprisonment. One Finnish newspaper, the *Tulenkantaya*, reprinted comments on the case appearing in the *Manchester Guardian*, the *Daily Herald* and the *New Statesman and Nation* and from the official Swedish Socialist paper, *Socialdemokraten*. The editor, Erkki Wala, was thereupon prosecuted and sentenced to four months' imprisonment. He appealed and the Appeal Court increased the sentence to eight months' imprisonment.

It is perhaps worth adding the comment that the Appeal Court judgment was delivered after the Finnish General Elections of 1936, in which the Finnish Social Democrat Party, officially opposed to repression of this sort, gained well over a third of the seats, and that two of the papers from which Wala had quoted were the official organs of the Labour Party in England and Sweden, with whom the Finnish Social Democrats maintained close relations. It is often said by those defenders of Finland who do at any rate know something of the Finnish government's bad record in the past and of the history of the Lappo movement and the White Guards, that things were better after the general election of 1936; but there seems to be no real ground for this view. Hopes were certainly entertained that Finland might return to democratic government; but, though the anti-fascist parties were in a majority in Parliament, the Fascists, the Lappo Movement and their associates still controlled the security corps or White Guard and occupied all the key positions in the Civil Service and the army. Further they controlled the Law Courts, which promptly declared unconstitutional all laws passed by the Diet for the suppression of the Fascist movement, though the same law courts had found nothing constitutionally wrong with the same laws when they had been applied to the working class parties. In face of this extra-parliamentary opposition the anti-fascist majority was powerless.

One victory indeed the anti-Fascists did secure. They prevented the re-election of Svinhufud as President. At the Presidential election in 1937 there were four candidates, the present Foreign Minister Tanner, representing the Social-Democrats, Stahlberg, the "progressive" who had defeated

Baron Mannerheim in 1919 and subsequently had been kidnapped by General Wallenius, Svinhufud, the retiring President, and the official candidate of the Lappo Movement, and Kallio. Kallio was a right-wing agrarian leader who had already shown his hostility to the working class movement by his suppression in 1923 of the Socialist Working Class Party. At the time of the Lappo anti-parliamentary demonstration he had been Prime Minister and had given way to them and agreed to introduce the legislation they desired. However, he was not so committed to the movement as was Svinhufud. In the election Stahlberg, for whom the Social-Democrats voted in order to keep out Svinhufud, received exactly half the votes and was therefore just one vote short of election. Kallio was at the bottom of the poll and only mustered a few votes. As, however, it was clear that in a straight fight between Svinhufud and Stahlberg Kallio's votes would all without exception go to Svinhufud, the only way to keep Svinhufud out was for Stahlberg to withdraw and thus give Kallio the entire anti-Fascist vote. This was done and Kallio was elected.

But in the same way as the mustering of anti-Fascist votes behind Hindenburg to keep Hitler out led only to Hindenburg bringing Hitler in, so the substitution of Kallio for Svinhufud was no real gain. Kallio continued to maintain Mannerheim at the head of the Defence Council, and Mannerheim brought back to the army General Wallenius, the leader of the Lappo Movement.

There is no real improvement. The repressive legislation is still in force; newspapers are still subject to suppression; the Trade Union movement has still the same difficulties, and the industrial conditions described above show little improvement. The Finnish White Paper is, of course, not in a position to say that things are better since 1936, since it paints them as perfect throughout. It is of course silent about such matters as the Antikainen trial. It has the grace not to mention the judicial system, and it passes lightly over the fate of the editor of the *Tulenkantaya*, and the suppression of other newspapers with the phrase " The Press is entirely free."

PLUS ÇA CHANGE

Perhaps the fairest method of assessing Finnish democracy is to compare conditions at the beginning of 1919 with those of 1939.

In 1919 Baron Mannerheim was Regent of the "Kingdom of Finland." In 1939 he was the President of the Defence Council, and in the words of Mr. Hewins, special correspondent of the *Daily Mail* in Helsinki, "the uncrowned king of Finland" (*Daily Mail*, 17th October, 1939).

In 1919 *The Times* had said in a passage already quoted, "the authority of the Finnish Government rests at present entirely on the White Guards, a body of between 50,000–60,000 men, recruited exclusively from the ranks of the bourgeoisie."

In 1939 the *Yorkshire Post* thus commented upon the Finnish elections which had just concluded (11th July, 1939):

> "What makes all Finnish happenings so problematic is the widespread discrepancy still existing between popular feeling and executive powers. The influence which the I.K.L. (the Lappo Movement) and the Unionist Party (Svinhufud's organisation) wield in all branches of the administration—civil service, army, navy, police and, in particular, among the so-called Protective Guards—is quite incommensurate with the actual strength of these parties in Parliament."

This description by a responsible right-wing British paper is perhaps the best answer to those who, whilst admitting the past bad record of Finland, suggest that the elections of 1936 and 1939 have "democratised" the country. It may be supplemented by a quotation from the *Daily Mail* of the 17th October, 1939:

> "The Conservative and Fascist parties remain outside the Government and support the rabidly anti-Russian army."

In 1919 the White Guards numbered 50,000. In 1939, if one accepts Sir Ernest Simon's figure, they numbered 200,000; (the repressive ability of such a force will be realised if one makes allowance for the difference in population between Finland and Great Britain. A force of 200,000 in Finland would be equivalent to one of nearly two and a quarter millions in Britain).

In 1919 the object of the White Guards was to destroy "Communism," a title under which were included all trade union organisations, and indeed every institution or organisation which had been set up by the Social Democratic majority of 1916.

In 1939 a colonel in the White Guards thus described its functions to Sir Ernest Simon: "We saved the country from Russia in 1917. The Civil Guard is still essential to protect Finland from Russia and from Communism, which are for us the same thing."

In 1917 Russia had granted Finland full independence. The "protection" provided by the White Guards was not against Russia as a nation, but as against Socialism, which had been the year before adopted as the policy of the majority of the Finnish people.

In 1919 there are no statistics for trade unions, but in 1917 trade unionists had numbered 161,000. Almost entirely repressed, they had laboriously again built up their organisations and had by 1930 reached almost 150,000. In 1939 they could not muster 90,000 members all told

A BRITISH CLIENT STATE?

With regard to the question of independence, or rather dependence, which has been discussed above, Finland has of course in recent years become increasingly a "client state" of Britain. During the negotiations between Britain, France and the U.S.S.R. in the summer of 1939, great play seems to have been made with the necessity of preserving the "independence" of Finland; but the absence of any reality in such arguments has already been made clear, and the true position

appears plainly enough in the Press of less tendencious periods. Commenting in 1937 upon the visit which Lord Plymouth, then Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, found time to pay to Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, in spite of his duties as Chairman of the Non-Intervention Committee, the *Economist* of the 29th May, 1937, remarked:

> " The flying visit Lord Plymouth is paying to Helsingfors, Tallin, Riga, and Kaunas is a most welcome . . . gesture of courtesy and recognition on the part of this country to four very friendly—indeed very important—young states. . . . Not only do trade relations between England and both the Scandinavian States and the Baltic States date back to the very beginning of our history; not only is the whole of that region one of the best markets in the world for Britain and an essential source of supply; but from the political and cultural standpoints they are closer to us than almost any other nation. The prosperity achieved by Finland deserves study. The commercial expansion and political consolidation of the three Baltic States is also remarkable. It curiously contradicts the gloomy prognostications that without the vast Russian hinterland these countries would be unable to survive. To-day their trade with Russia is negligible, while England is their commercial —and in many ways their political—metropolis. That position affords this country unique chances and obvious responsibilities."

If England is to be regarded as the political metropolis of Finland, much that might otherwise be obscure becomes clear, and it is worth while examining a little more closely the implications of this remarkably frank statement of the position.

Finland and the Baltic States achieved their industrial and commercial position largely through their geographical position. They were the routes by which Russian products reached Europe, and they were originally manufacturing centres serving continental Russia and drawing their raw materials from it. Economically, as the *Economist* admits, the effect of giving these countries independence was to sever them from their natural economic and commercial bases. No wonder there

were " gloomy prognostications." Instead, however, of serving Russia, they became outposts of the British commercial system, entirely separated from their original base. Thus in effect, though not in name, Great Britain achieved in the Baltic a new colonial area, and the commercial and political capital of a broad belt of territory stretching from the River Niemen to the Arctic Ocean was transferred from Leningrad and Moscow to London (and not to Berlin, as Svinhufud desired and Mannerheim was prepared to accept).

But this British supremacy in Scandinavia and the Baltic could not be exercised without the assistance of Germany. Commenting on the 2nd December, 1939, upon the situation produced in Finland by the new world war, the *Economist* again puts the position extremely frankly. Speaking of the Scandinavian states, it says:

> " To-day, as always, their defence against Russia depends on the leadership of Germany, and that leadership to-day is so notably and explicitly lacking as to nullify almost entirely their opportunities for helping Finland. With German connivance the Swedish Government might have allowed a popular movement in support of Finland to go ahead."

Thus, in short, Britain maintains her Baltic and Scandinavian " colonies " only by leave of the Powers controlling the Baltic. The Baltic states had either to preserve a pro-British policy coupled with a pro-German policy, or else to rely upon a firm alliance with the Soviet Union. This situation is well illustrated by a statement made by Rudolf Holsti, now Finnish delegate to the League of Nations, but at that time (January, 1937) Finnish Foreign Minister. There had been considerable comment in the foreign Press on the extent to which the Finnish Government, and particularly Holsti, had allowed German influence in Finland to grow. Holsti finally issued a statement in which, after stating that Finland has two neighbours, Germany and Great Britain, he continued: " I wish to emphasise that Finland's relations with Germany have rested on cultural contacts and economic interests, which during the last decade have developed very considerably. . . .

Finland has figuratively also become a neighbour of Great Britain, to such an extent is our whole economic life linked up with the British Empire. Great Britain is the principal buyer of Finnish products. Finland, for her part, has bought more from Britain than from any other country. The Finnish currency, moreover, follows the Pound. Alongside these strong economic relations British intellectual and moral influence is rapidly increasing in Finland."

It is a little difficult to identify exactly what was meant by " intellectual or moral influence," but though of course military matters do not receive quite the publicity accorded to economic agreements, there is plenty of evidence to show that throughout the whole period of the post-war years British military influence was paramount in Helsinki, and some of the " intellectual and moral influences " must have been wearing uniform.

Not unnaturally, in the first period of intervention against the Soviet Union, the Finnish capital had been one of the most important British military and naval bases in the Baltic, and in 1918–19 there was established there a British military mission under General Gough, who has recently been demanding intervention against the U.S.S.R.

But British military interests in Finland did not cease with the end of intervention. In 1924–25 the entire Finnish defences were reorganised by a British military, naval and air mission under General Sir Walter Kirke, to-day Commander-in-Chief of the Home Forces and formerly a member of the Army Council. And even when this mission had departed British interest in Finnish defence did not cease. On various occasions high British officers visited Finland, and Finnish officers came to England.

THE BARON DINES IN LONDON

In September, 1936, for example, Baron Mannerheim himself, as head of the Finnish Defence Council, came to London as the guest of the British Government. He was taken to Salisbury Plain to see British tank manœuvres, was conducted over Woolwich Arsenal and went for a tour of the various

Vickers-Armstrong works, finally ending up with a visit to the Bristol Aircraft Company's factory.

He was at the same time officially entertained to dinner by the British Government at Lancaster House. The guests included the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, the permanent Under-Secretary of State for War, the Secretary of the Army Council, the Director-General of the Territorial Army, the Director of Military Operations and Intelligence, the Chief of the Air Staff, the Director of Operations and Intelligence at the Air Ministry, the Permanent Secretary of the Air Ministry, and various other officers. The munitions industry was represented by Sir Charles Craven of Vickers-Armstrong, with colleagues from the Birmingham Small Arms Company and the Bristol Aircraft Company. A third group of guests was composed of Foreign Office officials who included, it is perhaps interesting to know, Mr. Gordon Vereker, Counsellor at the British Embassy in Moscow during the Anglo-Soviet negotiations of 1939. Also present were Mr. Duff Cooper, then Secretary of State for War, and Lord Plymouth, at that time Chairman of the Non-Intervention Committee and now Chairman of an " Aid-Finland " organisation.

There were of course many others ; for example, Sir George MacDonogh, of the Federation of British Industries, who combines the offices of President of the Anglo-Finnish Society and of Vice-President of the Japan Society ; and General Burt, who had retired from the army in 1920 ; in 1918 and 1919 he had been Chief of the British Military Mission acting against the Soviet Union in Latvia and Lithuania.

On this occasion, Baron Mannerheim was made a Knight Grand Cross of the British Empire—this does not involve express recognition of Finland as part of the Empire ; General Denikin had years before been given a similar honour.

SIR WALTER RETURNS THE VISIT

In June, 1939, General Sir Walter Kirke, in order, as *The Times* put it, " to repay the visits to England of prominent Finnish officers during recent years," again visited Helsinki and inspected the Finnish fortifications and armed forces.

A few days before he went he had been promoted to the post of Inspector-General of the Home Forces.

The Navy List for July, 1939 (the last available), gives the names of two officers only as lent to foreign governments. One of these, the junior, is lent to Greece, a country whose independence we have guaranteed and whose close co-operation would be essential in the event of any naval action in the Mediterranean; the other, the senior, Captain N. C. Moore, M.V.O., an officer who had served from 1919–22 in the anti-Soviet intervention in the Black Sea, is lent to Finland.

Much has been written lately of the small size of the Finnish Air Force. Yet Helsinki is one of the fourteen foreign capitals in which Great Britain maintains a whole-time Air Force attaché.

FINLAND'S ECONOMIC DEPENDENCE

It is, however, in trading relations that Finland's dependence on Britain is most marked. One of the effects of the establishment by Mannerheim and Svinhufud of an anti-Soviet regime in 1920 was the complete reorientation upon an unnatural plan of Finnish economic life. Instead of, as previously, serving the Russian hinterland, Finnish trade was diverted to Great Britain and the United States.

The extent of the change can be seen from the table of exports to various countries given in the Report of the Department of Overseas Trade.

By 1937 Finland had practically ceased either to import from or to export to the Soviet Union. In 1937 only ·6 per cent. of her total exports went to Russia and she only drew from the U.S.S.R. 1·8 per cent. of her total imports. As opposed to this, 19 per cent. of her total imports came from Great Britain, 16½ per cent. from Germany, and 9 per cent. from the U.S.A. Thus imports from the United Kingdom were more than tenfold the imports from the U.S.S.R., whereas before the war of 1914–18 the imports from the United Kingdom were only one-half those from Russia.

Even more startling are the export figures. In 1937, 43 per cent. of her exports went to the United Kingdom, 13 per cent. to Germany, and 8 per cent. to the United States. Thus

these three countries, none of them contiguous to Finland, received nearly two-thirds of her total export production, But before the war of 1914, the greatest share in Finnish export fell to Russia. The present figure of less than 1 per cent. is perilously near to a blockade. (This position is recognised in the Finnish White Paper, and the blame for it is laid upon the U.S.S.R.)

Further, for Finland exports are far more important in the national economy than they are for the majority of countries. "Finland," said the present Prime Minister, Ryti, then Governor of the Bank of Finland, "is one of the countries that are most dependent on exports, as our exports amount to about one-third of our total national production."

The present war was therefore bound to have the most serious economic repercussions in Finland, and indeed they were at once apparent. For example, on the 23rd August, 1939, the various Finnish Joint Stock Banks had deposits amounting to over Fmk. 1,181,000,000 at the Bank of Finland, and by the 8th September these deposits had fallen to Fmk. 690,000,000.

After quoting these figures, the *Economist*, in its issue of the 14th October, 1939, said:

> "Finland is dependent upon foreign trade to a very high degree. . . . The population is dependent upon the imports of some kinds of foodstuffs. Industry requires great quantities of raw materials and supplies; coal, coke and liquid fuel have to be imported. These essential goods cannot be obtained unless exports are kept going, and about one-third of the country's production is for export."

Clearly, then, had not the conflict with Russia been precipitated, there would have been the severest economic crisis in Finland. Is it not possible that this may have been a factor in the calculation of the Mannerheim group? The economic crisis caused by the last war had produced first a Socialist majority in the Finnish Diet and then a Finnish Socialist government bent upon the socialisation of the country. The industrialists and landowners who backed Baron Mannerheim

were only able to destroy that Socialist movement by calling in foreign aid. Was it not possible that any treaty with the U.S.S.R. would do just what these industrialists and landowners most feared, i.e. prevent them again bringing in foreign forces to put down their own people, besides resulting in such a volume of Finnish-Soviet trade as would help to build friendly relations and so spoil the game of those who had succeeded in keeping up what was practically a blockade.

A LEFT-WING VIEW

It is not uninteresting to compare a description of the position from a Finnish left-wing point of view. Speaking at the Sixth Congress of the Communist International in 1928, the Finnish delegate, Sirola, who had been Foreign Minister in the Socialist government of 1918, said:

"Comrades, Little Finland is of considerable importance in the war preparations of the imperialists against the Soviet Union. Her frontier runs only 25* miles from Leningrad. Railways of strategic importance go to the Karelian Isthmus and the Eastern Frontier of Finland, the seat of the little Soviet Republic Karelia—a Finnish 'Irredenta'—with the important Murmansk railway. The Finnish ports near Leningrad were used as bases by the British Fleet against Kronstadt.

"The close relationship between Finland and Great Britain is evident. A considerable amount of British capital is invested in Finland. England has taken an active part in the reorganisation of the Finnish army and navy. Only this summer English and Finnish business men had a meeting in Finland. Relations with the Baltic States have improved greatly. Much has been done in order to eliminate suspicion and remove friction between England and Scandinavia and between Finland and the Baltic States (Royal and naval visits).

"The attitude of Finland towards the Soviet Union is in essence hostile, but outwardly the Soviet Union is treated as a friendly nation. The White Russian emigrants found hospitality in Finland in order to be able to send their spies and murderers to the Soviet Union. Finland was the jumping-

* *Sic*; the correct figure is 20 miles.

board for onslaughts on Karelia and Ingermanland (County of Leningrad). The anti-Soviet press campaign continues uninterruptedly. Finland's political attitude came out clearly when she broke off negotiations with the Soviet Union on the Non-Aggression Pact. Taking the initiative in the League of Nations on the question of the financial guarantees was also very characteristic. Finland's Mandate in the Council of the League of Nations, of which she became a member last winter, was also directed against the Soviet Union. . . ."

To sum up, then, we see in Finland a country where internally, under a façade of parliamentary democracy, a reactionary and indeed fascist minority, with a long record of bitter hostility to the U.S.S.R., exercise the whole reality of power over a courageous and intelligent but oppressed minority; and in foreign relations, under a façade of independence, that same ruling minority accepts the position of a "client state," a colony, almost a military outpost, of Great Britain.

I must now turn, in the light of the facts and circumstances stated earlier in this book, and more particularly in this chapter, to examine in detail the significance of the recent negotiations and subsequent hostilities between the U.S.S.R. and Finland.

CHAPTER VI

THE U S.S.R. AND FINLAND

THERE is no doubt that the advance of the Red Army into Finland, which began on the 30th November, 1939, has disturbed a great many people who have neither the time nor the opportunity to make a sufficient study of the matter. All the superficial appearances, especially as reported in the Press, tend against the U.S.S.R., and it is not easy to arrive at a full understanding of a complicated situation. This lays upon those who are in a position to examine the facts, and who seek either to preserve the hope of Socialist development in Europe or to stop an extension of the world war, the duty of doing all they can to make the situation clear to themselves and to others.

This Finnish problem is not the whole subject matter of this book (which was indeed undertaken and planned before the 30th November), and is a problem that should be studied in its proper historical setting, as elaborated in other sections of this book, and in particular in the light of past and present relations between the U.S.S.R. and Britain and between those two countries and Finland. Nevertheless, since the Finnish problem is occupying many minds to such an extent as to obscure the main problem, and as some of the arguments and criticisms that have been put forward upon it are immaterial to the central thesis of this book—the thesis, that is, that there exists a well-defined and already pretty mature scheme to " switch " the war into a combination of all the great capitalist powers to destroy the socialist state of the U.S.S.R.—I think that it will be useful if at this stage I set out all the main arguments and criticisms that have been advanced against the

Soviet Union on this topic, and answer them one by one; I can do this without unduly interrupting the thread of the story.

The arguments and criticisms vary in importance, in point of view, and in interest; but I would like to deal with all of them. They are, I think, seven in number, as follows:

1. That aggression by one state against another is always wrong;

2. That in this case aggression is particularly inexcusable, because Finland could not entertain any idea of attacking the U.S.S.R., she is a peace-loving and democratic country, and she is above all a small country;

3. That Finland only desired to keep her own independence and her own territories, and had a perfect right to do so;

4. That the U.S.S.R. has shown herself by her conduct to be an Imperialist state;

5. That the U.S.S.R. should have continued to negotiate, instead of attacking;

6. That the U.S.S.R. has sacrificed the good will of the progressive elements in all countries, and rendered it easier for the capitalist powers to rally their public opinion to support a general attack upon herself;

7. That the new Finnish Democratic Republic is a puppet government, having no real existence.

Let me deal with these various points in the order in which I have stated them, beginning with the charge of aggression.

On this, one should first examine the attitude of International Law to aggression. I may usefully quote once again from Lawrence's *Principles of International Law*, explaining that that author uses the word "intervention" to describe what is popularly known as "aggression."

He writes:

"We now turn to interventions, which are technical violations of the right of independence. Therefore no strict legality can be claimed for them, yet in certain circumstances international law may excuse or even approve of them."

He thereupon proceeds to describe three grounds on which aggression is not only justified but even approved by international law.

The first is when such a step is taken in self-defence:

> " The right of self-preservation is even more sacred than the duty of respecting the independence of others. If the two clash a state naturally acts upon the former."

If there is any substance in the arguments set out elsewhere in this book to demonstrate the intention of the great powers to attack the U.S.S.R. and to show how eminently suitable the territories and the present government of Finland are for use to that end, the Soviet Union was plainly more than justified under this canon of international law in all that she has done. I shall examine the detailed arguments on this head a little later in this chapter.

BRITISH PRECEDENTS FOR AGGRESSION

It is of interest perhaps to examine one or two occasions when Britain and other states have applied this doctrine. In view of the present circumstances one example is particularly apposite, for it involved an attack by Britain upon a neutral Scandinavian power in order to forestall an anticipated violation of that power's neutrality by the coalition then at war with Britain. It occurred in 1807, during the Napoleonic Wars, when Denmark was strictly neutral. Her southern frontier, however, adjoined territory occupied by our enemy. Upon this ground, and upon certain " secret information," the British Government came to the conclusion that the enemy, at that time Napoleon, might at any time invade Denmark and so cut off Danish supplies to Britain. The obvious way, the British Government considered, to avert a Napoleonic invasion of Denmark was to secure from the Danes an offensive and defensive alliance. At this point the parallel between the Soviet action of 1939 and that of Britain in 1807, so far fairly close, breaks down, for the British did not even institute negotiations. Regarding the matter as urgent,

they immediately despatched an overwhelmingly large squadron to Copenhagen, and presented the Danish Regent with an ultimatum; either he must accept an alliance, or the British fleet would bombard the Danish capital.

The Regent maintained his claim to preserve absolute neutrality. Without further ado the British fleet opened fire on Copenhagen. The town was wrecked and set on fire. Large numbers of civilians perished, and after three days' attacks the Danish fleet surrendered and was carried off to England.

Defending the Government's action in the House of Commons, the Foreign Secretary, Canning, said (3rd February, 1808):

> " Was it contended that in a moment of imminent danger and impending necessity we should have abstained (from taking action) in order to meet and divert these calamities which threatened our security and existence because, if we sank under pressure, we should have the consolation of having Puffendorff (an authority on international law) to plead. But the conduct that has been adopted on this occasion was not without precedent. For example, in the year 1801 the Island of Madeira had been taken possession of by the British Government for fear it should fall into the hands of the French. Yet Portugal was a neutral nation and had always by way of pre-eminence been styled the old and ancient ally of England."

Lord Palmerston, later to become the leader of numerous Liberal ministries in which Mr. Gladstone was to serve as Chancellor of the Exchequer, supported Canning. " The present state of Europe," he said, " and the degradation and vassalage of its sovereigns offered most unfortunately too ready and solid a reason for the adoption of such a measure (the attack upon Copenhagen). The power of France would have been exerted to compel the Regent of Denmark to enter into a confederacy against us, and yet he would not listen to any overture from this country for his security and protection. On this ground, therefore, namely the weakness of Denmark,

and the power of France to force her to become instrumental against Great Britain, I shall give my vote and support to the Ministers on the present question."

I am not, of course, citing wrong conduct on the part of Britain to help two blacks to make a white. I am illustrating the principle of international law which recognises and approves aggression in certain cases. The essence of the arguments quoted above from Canning and Palmerston is this: that in a general war there can be no neutrals,* and when all states are mobilised and fighting by means of blockade (as Napoleon at that time was attempting to do) a state which proclaims absolute neutrality but has not the force to maintain that neutrality is bound sooner or later to fall a victim to one or other of the contesting Powers. Once a war situation has arisen, a belligerent nation is justified in taking steps against a neutral which in time of peace would, as Canning implied, constitute aggression. And Britain has in fact in every war in which she has been engaged maintained the principle that, since small States cannot themselves preserve their neutrality, Britain was justified in occupying strategic points in their territory, if necessary against their will, to anticipate the enemy.

A typical case of this arose during the war of 1914–18, when Britain occupied Salonika as a base for operations designed to assist Serbia against the Germans and Austrians. This case is very fully described in Chapter IV.

AGGRESSION IN IRAN?

A further typical case which may be provided in the near future by the British Government is suggested or foreshadowed in the *Daily Telegraph* article of the 2nd January, 1940, already discussed in Chapter IV.

In that article, the Near East correspondent of the paper,

* This attitude is amusingly if unconsciously illustrated by M. Reynaud, in his budget speech in Paris on the 28th December, 1939. Speaking of the importance of the time element, he said: "Time is a neutral whom we must annex." A neutral, to a statesman, is something to annex, just as to an English country gentleman a pheasant is something to kill.

discussing the oilfields of Iran (Persia), and the danger to those oilfields in the case of hostilities by Britain, France and Turkey against the U.S.S.R., writes :

> " We cannot risk their falling into what would be enemy hands. Failing an appeal from Iran for assistance, some formula meeting international law conditions would have to be evolved to enable us to take the necessary measures on Iran territory to protect this vital spot from Russian attack."

This is tactfully phrased, but what does it mean ? It means that, if and when such hostilities begin (and evidence is growing that Britain and France are meditating them) Britain would not allow herself to be deterred by the fact that these oilfields, like Hangö or Copenhagen or Salonika, are on the territory of a neutral state, but would proceed to occupy them. She would, of course, move in accordance with international law, and would begin by encouraging Iran to ask " voluntarily " for her assistance on Iranian soil. If that should fail, she would not passively accept the rebuff and let her strategic position remain unfavourable, as she declares that the U.S.S.R. ought to do, but would evolve " some formula meeting international law conditions . . . to enable us to take the necessary measures on Iran territory." In other words, she would march in and crush any Iranian resistance ; she would say to her troops " Shoulder arms " and to her Foreign Office lawyers " Quote precedents." That the *Daily Telegraph* should propose such a course is natural enough ; that it should at the same time take a leading part in a campaign of unsurpassed recklessness and vehemence against the U.S.S.R. for doing something much less unreasonable is—well, natural enough, for everyone with the scales off his eyes knows perfectly well that the indignation of the British Government and the British Government Press is not directed against aggression as such, which it stomachs easily enough when the aggression suits its book or it desires to remain friends with the aggressor, but is reserved for countries whom it desires to thwart or weaken, or against whom it seeks to inflame British public opinion with a view

to securing support for hostile action in the future. Many illustrations of the British Government's attitude to aggression are given in Chapter IX and in the "Catalogue of Aggression" at page 251.

The second right of "intervention" which is generally conceded by international law arises, as Lawrence says: "on the grounds of humanity." Under this head, attacks on other states are justified when the object of the attack is, for example, to restore political liberty. This is a point of less certain application, but the reader who will have studied my account of Finnish history of the last twenty years may perhaps think that, contrary to the story put forward in the Press, the Finnish people are entitled to receive assistance in recovering their freedom from a virtually Fascist government.

WHAT JOE CHAMBERLAIN SAID

In order to illustrate the theory of intervention to restore political liberty, I cannot do better than quote from a speech made by Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, father of the present Prime Minister, in the House of Commons, at the time of the Boer War. An Irish member of the House of Commons had attacked British policy in the Boer War, and Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, in replying, cited the example of the Spanish-American War, in which the United States compelled the Spanish Government to renounce their authority over the Island of Cuba. "Was he then indignant," said Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, referring to the Irish Member, "because the United States Government was attacking a Power which was infinitely less able to defend itself than the Transvaal has shown itself to be? . . . The contention of the United States Government—their right of interference—arose from the fact that at some distance from their own territory oppression, not of American citizens, but those of another race and people was going on, and that justified in the minds . . . of most Englishmen and Irishmen the intervention of the United States."

Finally, Lawrence points out that foreign intervention has since the sixteenth century been regarded as justified when it was made in order to preserve "the Balance of Power." So

firmly enshrined in British eighteenth and nineteenth century legal ideas was the moral justification for the balance of power that the preamble to the annual Mutiny Act (the forerunner of the modern Army Act) gave it express mention. I quote from the preamble to the 1818 Act:

> " Whereas the raising or keeping a standing army within the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland in time of peace unless it be with the consent of Parliament is against law; and whereas it is judged necessary by his Majesty and this present parliament that a body of forces should be continued for the safety of the United Kingdom, the defence of the possessions of His Majesty's Crown, and the preservation of the balance of power in Europe. . . ."

This will, I think, appear to most people as far less justifiable than the ground of self-defence, but it is well-established. The doctrine of the balance of power, put crudely, is that it is a legitimate and indeed essential part of policy to manœuvre and intrigue, and if necessary to foment and even to take part in warfare, for the purpose of preventing any one state on the Continent of Europe from becoming substantially stronger than the next strongest. Any such war might well be wholly unconnected with any particular grievance or injustice, and some excuse for going to war would have to be put forward to justify it in the public mind; the real reason would be to prevent some European power growing strong enough to threaten Britain's own position in the world. The reference in the preamble to the Act makes it plain that it was then British policy not merely to serve this principle but to maintain a standing army to fight in disputes fomented for such motives as that.

I do not suppose that the U.S.S.R. would care to rely on the doctrine of the balance of power to justify itself; but there is little doubt that it could make out a good case on those lines if it desired.

IF KENT WERE A FOREIGN POWER

Turning from the statement of the law to an examination of the facts, one is sorely tempted to point out that Britain, Italy, and Franco-Spain, perhaps the most prominent of the countries levelling this particular charge against the U.S.S.R., are more deeply implicated than any other states in recent years in acts of aggression on their own behalf and in condoning aggression on the part of other states; but that point, although important enough in considering whether Britain is scheming to bring about a war against the U.S.S.R., is not strictly material to the question whether the Soviet advance into Finland is justified. If it is not justified on a consideration of its own circumstances, it will not be rendered excusable because the prosecuting counsel ought also to be in the dock. So, let us see what the justification is. I start with the proposition that the U.S.S.R., on its past record and present constitution, is entitled to claim a good character, and not to be lightly condemned as an unjustified aggressor. It has always stood against aggression; it has always genuinely advocated and offered disarmament; it has made more efforts for and contributions to the cause of peace than any other country; it has no motive for war and every motive for peace; there is no one in the U.S.S.R. who can make a profit out of war or war preparations, and no one who is not a little poorer in material wealth (if richer in security) every time human effort in his country is applied to the production of armaments instead of to the improvement of housing or some other peace-time advantage. The circumstances that build up the justification—not merely a compliance with international law but a real justification—seem to me to be these. As I have already shown, frontiers are fluid, not immutable; the necessity for peaceful change of frontiers is well recognised, and attempts were made in the Covenant of the League of Nations to provide for such changes; and it is not the fault of the Soviet Union if the provisions in question never worked well. A change of frontier not being in itself necessarily wrong, we have still to satisfy ourselves that the wish of the U.S.S.R. for the particular change sought in this

case was reasonable, and that there was no other way to achieve it than the one adopted. On the question of reasonability, there cannot be much doubt. If one may translate the principal points into terms of the defence of London, it can be put in this way: conceive of a Socialist England, with one-quarter of its industrial production in Greater London; imagine that the North Sea is mainly dry land, with the Thames flowing down a wide estuary to a landlocked sea in Northern France; carry the Belgian frontier up to the Eastern suburbs of London, within artillery range of Whitehall, and think of Belgium (if the Belgians will forgive me) as a small and weak country, likely to be used as a cat's paw or a jumping-off ground by a hostile Germany, and in any event full herself of enmity towards England and with a long history of quarrels with England; conceive finally of the Thames estuary being commanded by a powerfully fortified point of land belonging to this imaginary Belgium, rendering it impossible for any ship to enter or leave the port of London (England's only port for hundreds of miles) except with Belgium's leave. Surely England would call for the alteration of such a frontier on some reasonable terms the moment there was any fair hope of achieving it.

THE SOVIET OFFER

And the terms offered by the U.S.S.R. were not unreasonable. From the public statements of the Soviet Union and the Finnish government, including the Finnish White Paper, which in spite of what we have seen of its inaccuracy and omissions in connexion with the history of Finland must bear some relation to the truth in respect of the negotiations, it is easy to arrive at a fair approximation of the terms offered by the Soviet Union and of the Finnish acceptance and refusal.

The Soviet Union required the Soviet-Finnish frontier, at present only 20 miles from Leningrad, to be moved back some miles, to get the town out of range of artillery fire. She also desired a lease of the port of Hangö for a naval base, with the right to station a fixed number of troops there; if she holds Hangö she can prevent a hostile fleet approaching

Leningrad, but if any great power, with or without the assent of the Finnish government, land there—as the Germans did in 1918—it can both seal up the port of Leningrad, and proceed overland to attack the frontier north-west of the city. The Soviet also wanted certain small islands near Leningrad and some territory in the Rybachi (or Fishermen's) peninsula which overlooked the port of Petsamo, which might otherwise be used, as has happened in the past, as a hostile submarine base, threatening Murmansk.

In return, the Soviet Union offered territorial compensation in Soviet Karelia, to which Finnish nationalists make some sentimental claim, consisting of an area twice as large as that which she was demanding. She also offered a mutual assistance pact, which would be of immense value to the Finnish government if it were not some other power's " client " state; but this the Finnish government refused out of hand, and the U.S.S.R. did not insist in any way upon this point.

The Soviet Union also offered the great economic advantage of a large increase in trade turnover.

It is difficult to see that any of the territories demanded, except the port of Hangö, were of any appreciable value to Finland, however important to the U.S.S.R.; and even of Hangö it may be said that it was of no great importance to Finland, if no aggressive activities were intended to be carried on by anyone from her territory.

It is extremely significant that the Soviet Union did not ask for the Aaland islands. These islands, of immense strategic importance, enable any great power who can hold and fortify them to dominate the whole Baltic. That the Soviet Union did not even ask for them may provide an acid test of her sincerity; if she wanted to dominate the Baltic, she would ask for them, but if, on the other hand, she only wanted to make the port of Leningrad safe from attack she would ask only for just what she did ask. She was apparently perfectly willing to leave these islands in Finnish hands, although Germany might at any moment suddenly seize them, with or without the assent of Finland. She even agreed to their being fortified, so long as Finland alone fortified them; it was no doubt a risk in these days of power politics to assent to the

fortification, to which she had previously refused to assent, as she had a Treaty right to do, and there was nothing unreasonable in the stipulation that Finland alone should fortify them, since previous suggestions for their fortification had been of German inspiration and origin, and it is beyond doubt that in the event of war between Germany and the U.S.S.R. the former would immediately attempt to seize them.

Now, as I have mentioned, these demands were communicated to the Finnish representatives at Moscow on the 12th October, and—as we are told by the Finnish White Paper—were conveyed to the Finnish cabinet on the same day, and "far-reaching and exacting as they were, received the earnest consideration of the Finnish cabinet." Although it is not mentioned in the Finnish White Paper, it is a fact that Mr. Kajander, the Prime Minister, broadcast to the Finnish people on the 13th October to the effect that the Soviet demands did not affect the integrity of Finland.

Negotiations continued, the Finnish Government refusing to lease the port of Hangö, suggesting—as appears from the Finnish White Paper—that to do so would be inconsistent with Finland's integrity. The negotiations were, it says, of an entirely friendly and amicable nature.

The Finnish delegates left Moscow for the last time on the 13th November; it is stated in the Finnish White Paper that "at that moment a deadlock had been reached, and that they were willing to accede to almost all the Russian proposals,"* but not to allow a naval base at Hangö "which would have meant the complete strategic dominance of Finland, and in turn the loss of Finnish independence." It seems clear that the terms of the request for the base at Hangö were not increased in any way by the Soviet Union between the 13th October, when the Prime Minister of Finland described them as not affecting her integrity, and the 13th November, when they are given this description. Throughout this time the

* Without being ungracious, one may point out that to give up everything that was asked except Hangö was really to give up nothing of any importance to Finland—unless the suggestion in the Finnish White Paper that it includes the Mannerheim line is correct; on the facts as at present known, this does not seem to be the case.

Finnish parliament was not summoned, and it did not in fact meet until the 1st December; and a newspaper which suggested that the terms offered by the U.S.S.R. were reasonable was promptly suppressed. (" The Press," says the White Paper, " is entirely free.")

We may have to wait some time to learn exactly why the Finnish government changed its views; it may have been that some promise of assistance encouraged it to resist; but at any rate it seems clear that the negotiations broke down over the question of Hangö.

It may also be some time before we know why the Soviet Government felt no sufficiently urgent pressure to act in the seventeen days that elapsed between the deadlock of the 13th November and the advance of the 30th. It may be said, at any rate, that to let seventeen days elapse in the late autumn of Northern Europe was certainly inconsistent with an intention to commit aggression. (Corroboration of the view that the U.S.S.R. had no intention of attacking—so that some new event or information must have supervened to lead her to do so at the end of November—is forthcoming in an article in the *Daily Telegraph* of the 1st January, 1940, by its military correspondent in which he says: " Nor does it seem probable that stocks have been increased for a premeditated attack on Finland, and certainly not for an attack which has developed on such an unexpectedly large scale.")

FRONTIER INCIDENTS

It was during those seventeen days, or to be more precise in the last week of November, that serious frontier incidents were said by the U.S.S.R. to have taken place. It is difficult for the outsider to know the truth, when both sides tell their own version and deny that of the other party; and British readers, who have no home land frontiers, are apt to ignore such incidents and to discount their importance. But there are certain considerations in the present case which cannot be ignored. In the first place, the incident asserted by the Soviet Government was similar to a number of such incidents which had been deliberately provoked by Mannerheim and

Wallenius against Soviet territory in 1921–22 and again in 1930, as described above, in Chapter V. In the second, it must be remembered that such incidents are often deliberately created by a government which for one reason or another wants a war and is seeking a means for inflaming its population into support of the war, a thing which may well happen in a country with on the one hand a government and on the other hand a people such as I have already described. And, lastly, it must be remembered that prestige counts for a good deal in some countries, and that if the U.S.S.R. were to ignore or submit to a frontier incident it would make it far more difficult for her to achieve any diplomatic success in negotiations with any other States. If the Finnish army created a frontier incident, and did not immediately disclaim it, it was making it difficult for the U.S.S.R. to avoid war.

Assuming that it was reasonable for the Soviet Union to ask for this frontier change, including the naval base at Hangö, the next question is whether there was any way of securing it without resort to force. Some machinery for appealing to the League of Nations or to some other international authority for consideration of such matters would obviously be the best; it is only too clear that no such machinery is available, and it is certainly not the U.S.S.R. that is to be blamed for its non-existence. Mr. Chamberlain, when broadcasting on the 26th November, 1939, showed his consciousness of the lack of such machinery in the following reference to the "new Europe" which he hopes will somehow come out of a victorious war: "In such a Europe . . . such adjustments of boundaries as would be necessary would be thrashed out between neighbours sitting on equal terms round a table, with the help of disinterested third parties if it were so desired."

There remain, then, in general, only two methods of achieving such a change, negotiation or force. It would obviously be wrong to resort to force without negotiation unless there was some imperative reason why time for negotiation could not be afforded, as was, or was claimed to be, the case with Denmark in 1807; and the U.S.S.R. accordingly negotiated, as above described, with Finland for some weeks, without any apparent haste or pressure, at a time when there was at any rate this

important corroboration of its *bona fides*, that each day that elapses in a northern autumn brings one into a season much less favourable to military activity. The negotiations in the end broke down; whilst we do not know the whole story, the declarations of the Soviet Government and the statements in the Finnish White Paper make it certain that the negotiations were conducted without pressure and in a friendly spirit; and I think that in the light of all the facts set out above the responsibility (once one has realised what is really a commonplace of international law and international relations, although it is strange to many ordinary citizens, namely that such demands for changes of frontier and cession of bases are usual enough and in proper circumstances legitimate enough) can fairly be said to lie upon the Finnish Government—or rather on the larger States that must have been encouraging that government to resist—and not upon the Soviet Government. It is significant here to recall Mr. Cajander's broadcast statement that the proposals did not affect Finland's integrity.

WHO ENCOURAGED THE FINNS?

It is perhaps at this point that one must pause to consider what influences were at work, and from what sources, to encourage the Finnish Government to stand firm. Both sides seem to have been confronted quite clearly with a deadlock. The Soviet Government could see that they would not have Hangö, and so could not have any security for their one Baltic port and for their great industrial centre, unless they were prepared to fight (or unless the Finnish Government gave way at the last moment). The Finnish Government could see clearly that if they gave up Hangö they would have peace and the goodwill of the Soviet Union; and that if they did not they would have to face the horrors of either a long war or a short one.

From what I have already written it is clear that they must have decided to resist on encouragements or promises of help, presumably from the British Government, which by one word of advice could plainly have led them to give way; and a

terrible responsibility rests on those who have thus led the Finns to resist, if that was not the most reasonable thing to do in an imperfect world.

It is easy for those who know the technique of great powers in diplomatic negotiation and intrigue to imagine what would take place. Officially, there would be sympathy, "deep appreciation," admiration and, above all, a complete absence of the warning that would lead the Finns to give way at once. At the same time, less official persons having military or commercial ties with the country would be more indiscreet and more encouraging; and suggestions for the offer of more substantial help might be made to neighbours such as Sweden. A similar line of gentle exhortation would come from France and the U.S.A. The result would be that the reactionary government of Finland would fight.

Great powers cannot avoid a terrible responsibility for leading small states such as Finland to resist in circumstances of this nature, when that is obviously not the most prudent course. It is a serious thing enough for a great power to encourage a small one to resist, or involve it in a war, even when the great power is fully willing and fully able to guarantee victory; but to encourage such resistance when it will pretty certainly lead to defeat, producing merely some indirect advantage to the great power offering the encouragement, would be a little shocking even to a student of politics, if he were not aware that it happens very frequently.

Major states do frequently use minor states as pawns in the game of power politics, at a terrible cost to their populations. What had the major powers to gain by thus encouraging Finland not to follow the example of the three other Baltic republics? Finland could not win in the end, except possibly if the hostilities on her territories grew and grew until they constituted an extension of the main theatre of war, with hundreds of thousands of foreign troops on each side. But, even if she lost, the death of many of her inhabitants might be very useful to the amoral interests of other combatants. The British Government might well calculate that to involve the U.S.S.R. in such a conflict for even a few months would enable British influence to gain ground in Turkey and the

Balkans, or would prevent the U.S.S.R. being able to give supplies to Germany.

The German wireless made the suggestion in December, 1939, that the British Government was acting with the last-mentioned motives, and many listeners must have thought it to be a typical German invention, attributing to the British Government without foundation the intention callously to sacrifice thousands of Finns in the effort to strengthen the position of Britain against Germany; to such actions, we know, war often drives a government, but one always wants believe that one's own government would not stoop to them. But on the 4th January, 1940, there was in the *Daily Sketch* an article by "Candidus"—one of the *noms-de-plume* of an able Right Wing Conservative journalist—in which, arguing the thesis that Germany is much disappointed at the amount of supply she is obtaining from U.S.S.R., he uses these words:

> "The first lesson for us and France is that we must keep the war going in Finland as long as we possibly can, not only in the Finns' interest but also in our own.
>
> "The longer the Finnish war lasts and the more deeply Russia is involved, the less Russia can do for Germany, and the more effectual the British blockade will be."

It may be a little difficult to see how the Finns' interest are served by keeping the war going as long as possible, and then (as the article implies), letting them suffer defeat when they have served their purpose; and I feel that a certain left-wing paper was not unreasonable when it said that the "European sharks would fight to the last Finn."

The same well-known journalist, writing a few days later, on the 7th January, for the slightly more sophisticated public which reads the *Sunday Times*, put the same substance in rather more delicate form:

> "We owe to the wonderful resistance that the Finns are making a debt not only of admiration and of the most benevolent neutrality, but of gratitude for the assistance that they are rendering to our cause at sea. The more

deeply Russia is tied up with the Finnish entanglement, the less energy she will have to assist Germany, the graver the German discontent will become with an agreement that has cost her so much and brought her so little, and the deeper the fall of the Fuehrer's prestige."

(I confess that, if I were a citizen of a small state in the twentieth century, I should pray that my country should never either have her safety guaranteed by a capitalist great power, or be the creditor in respect of a debt of gratitude.)

It becomes easier to understand, in this situation, why the British Government has been willing to allow important armament supplies to go to Finland both in the uneasy peace that preceded this war and during the war itself. That the result may be a terrible disaster for the Finnish people, that the promised help may be insufficient, or too late, would not make our government advise the Finns to draw back if it suited supposed British interests not to do so. Such promises are often but imperfectly kept. It is useful to recall that Sir Francis Lindley, the former British Ambassador to Tokyo, pointed out, in December, 1935, in a letter to *The Times* on the question of giving aid to Abyssinia, that sometimes British offers of assistance fail to materialise when the crisis arises: "Let enthusiasts beware," he wrote, "of continuing to treat the Abyssinians as their fellows treated the Danes, the Armenians, the Greeks and many more in the past. Humanitarian sentiments are laudable and gratifying to self-esteem, but they are not appreciated abroad when they merely encourage others in a course of action which leads them to destruction."

Returning to the position when the deadlock arose, I may suggest that it is at such points as this that the "previous good character" of the U.S.S.R. may come in to help our judgment; but whatever the exact position it is plain that the U.S.S.R. was in the end confronted with the alternative of accepting diplomatic defeat and continuing in an impossible strategic position, or of resorting to force. One can imagine that for innumerable reasons she was reluctant to resort to force; but the other alternative was also most unattractive.

It is suggested by many critics, even would-be friendly critics, that she owed a duty to conscience and morals to accept the position, however unfavourable, rather than turn to force. This has a pleasant sound, but one must see to what it leads; it is equivalent to saying to the U.S.S.R.: "You are in a position where any capitalist country would resort to force without a moment's hesitation; such countries are ruthless and amoral, and in a world where every rule of decency has now disappeared they can derive great advantage from ruthlessness and amorality. But *you* mustn't act in that way; you have a higher moral code to keep. If you tell me that, on the information before you, you are convinced that if you do not move now you may be attacked before you can secure your frontier, and that such an attack will be at once more likely to happen and more difficult to repel unless you do move now, I still insist that you must not move. If you tell me that you think your whole future depends on now reinforcing your safety, and that you regard your future and the future of your civilisation as worth every sacrifice to preserve, I still insist that you must not do what international law says you may, and what every other State in the world would do without hesitation. If you tell me that, the moment it is known that should negotiations break down you will not fight, no one will ever concede anything to you in negotiation again, I remain unmoved."

Now this sort of argument, in the imperfect world of to-day, is not argument—it is just cloud-cuckoo-land; it is equivalent to telling a man setting out through a wood which he believes to be infested with Dacoits that he must fight according to the Queensberry rules. But, unless the argument is correct, the case for condemning the aggression goes. I for one am not prepared to condemn this new State for not imperilling its whole future, its whole chance of ever obeying or establishing a better moral code, rather than adopt for the moment the ordinary rules of international law.

ARMS FOR FINLAND

Accordingly, if the U.S.S.R. had grounds for thinking that it really was essential for her to move at once, lest she be too

late, her conduct in the matter seems to be fully justified; and it is difficult to imagine that she would have launched a campaign over difficult country in the Far North, seventeen days after the breakdown of negotiations and only three weeks before the longest night, at a time when public opinion in the outer world, under censorship conditions, could be swung against her with the greatest of ease, if she had not been quite sure that some serious action against her was pending, or that some other imperative reason was present. We are not likely to learn for some time yet what evidence she had, but it is at any rate perfectly clear that large supplies of aircraft and other military equipment had been ordered by the already heavily armed Finland from Italy, Germany and Britain, and perhaps other countries, some time before hostilities began. Having regard to present-day difficulties of supply and demand of anything connected with sudden death, it is probable that the British " Blenheim " bombers delivered to Finland in November, 1939, had been ordered at least a year before. It is noticeable that, as already mentioned, two years earlier, on the 1st December, 1937, our Government admitted in the House of Commons that the export of such bombers to Finland was in contemplation. This admission is all the more remarkable when it is recalled that at the end of 1937 there was an acute shortage of modern aircraft in the Royal Air Force, and that the normal practice of the British Government is not to allow the sale of war aeroplanes to foreign powers until the design has been in use for two years in England and is no longer secret (a condition which the " Blenheim " bomber did not of course fulfil in 1937). Supplies to Finland on the scale and of the nature recently disclosed are not consistent with anything but an intention to prepare for the use of Finnish territory by some larger power as a jumping-off ground.

It has to be remembered, also, that if the U.S.S.R. had passively accepted the position, it would have been ten times as easy for Italy or Germany to rally most of the Balkan countries into an anti-Soviet group, and thus to render her position more difficult in the south-west as well as in the north-west. Prestige still has importance, especially with smaller States, and an announcement that the refusal of Finland to make the

concessions demanded was being simply accepted without reaction would have been equivalent to a declaration of bankruptcy in prestige. The occurrence of serious "frontier incidents," a point discussed elsewhere in this book, is also of far more "prestige" importance than the ordinary English reader realises.

The second point is a composite one, but it can be answered more shortly. That Finland could not entertain any idea of attacking the U.S.S.R. of her own motion is no doubt true, in spite of her history of such attacks in the past; but her whole history, her dependence on larger States, and the general European situation, as explained in other chapters of this book, leave no doubt that the employment in the not remote future of her territory as a base for attack on the Soviet Union is likely, is in accordance with precedent and practice, and would be actually welcome to her governing class. That she is a peace-loving and democratic country is unhappily, as already explained, only true in the sense that her people are largely peace-loving and democratic; their government is nothing of the sort, and the real power in the state rests in the hands of the immense "Civil Guard" of 200,000 men, already mentioned.

It is of course highly significant that Finland should be put forward in the present propaganda campaign with such insistence as a thoroughly democratic State. I have already shown that as at present constituted she can lay no claim to such a description, and I can imagine that Baron Mannerheim, at any rate in private, would reject such an idea with horror. The story is plainly put forward to appeal to the sympathy of the British public, in order more effectively to build up a war mentality.

That Finland is a small country is no doubt true, and makes a strong appeal to sentiment, although she has obviously been very strongly armed, and the exuberance of the British Press in December, 1939, gave the rough impression that she was more powerful than the U.S.S.R.; but that small powers have no protection in international law is not to be blamed on the U.S.S.R., which has tried hard through the years to secure that force alone shall not rule; and the smallness of Finland

cannot, after all, make any difference to the conduct of the U.S.S.R., which was either right or wrong; I have not heard it suggested that, if the countries had been more equal in size, the same conduct on the part of the U.S.S.R. would have been praiseworthy, but that as things are it is wrong.

FINLAND'S INDEPENDENCE

The third point can also be shortly answered. Finland in one sense naturally and properly desires to keep her independence, but as I have explained earlier the small States are not in any true sense independent. No one would suppose for one moment that the retention of Hangö would enable Finland for one moment to remain independent if the U.S.S.R. was ill-disposed and was unwilling that she should so remain. Moreover, whatever degree of independence Finland had was, if we may believe Mr. Kajander, not in any case menaced. It seems obvious on a little thought that, if anything could imperil what independence Finland had, it must have been her own refusal of concessions to the U.S.S.R., with the knowledge that hostilities were bound to ensue. The Finnish government that took this course must either have relied very strongly on outside aid from Britain or some other great power, or have acted very unwisely. It is noticeable that, as early as the 17th October, 1939, the special correspondent of the *Daily Mail*, writing on the subject of the then forthcoming "three kings' conference" at Stockholm, stated: "If President Kallio . . . can obtain a definite assurance of military as well as moral and financial aid Finland may stand firm." If we are entitled to hope that one day the really secret documents concerning these incidents will be published, one may look forward to some very interesting reading of the reasons why he did adopt this attitude.

That Finland desired to keep her own territories intact is, again, natural enough; but, if one considers the special nature and position of those territories as described in my answer to the first point, one can see that if ever there was a case for departure from the old attitude of the English landlord: "Not an inch of my land will I ever give up," it was this case.

The fourth point is that the U.S.S.R. is said to have shown herself to be an Imperialist State. An Imperialist State, I suppose, is one that seeks to subject another and inferior people to its rule, and then to exploit that people for its own profit. Without enquiring into the Imperialist pedigrees of the accusers, I can answer that there is at present no evidence whatever that the U.S.S.R. has the remotest intention of doing either of these things, let alone both. She has respected the territories of the small Republics that lie around her on the Baltic during a period when one can feel pretty certain that no capitalist country similarly situated would have been likely to do so; as *The Times* said in a leading article on the 5th July, 1939, referring to the Baltic States, " The smaller countries must admit that during the last twenty years Russia if she had so minded might with considerable hope of success have attempted to overrun them, but has made no attempt whatever to do so."

Further, her record up to now for freeing the former colonial victims of Tsarist Inperialism and putting them on an equality with the other races of her vast territories is unsurpassed; and she has published her treaty, made with the Finnish Democratic Republic, which is set out below, indicating her intention to ask no more from Finland than she has already demanded, and indeed to give additional territory. She would, indeed, be running against the dictates of common sense, as well as against all Socialist principles, if she sought to incorporate any country in the Union unless and until that country desires to become a Soviet Socialist State. She wishes, of course, to see the Finnish Democratic Republic firmly established, and the provisional government of this Republic, which has declared that it does not seek to establish a Soviet state, could not hope to succeed for one moment in gaining the support of the Finnish people if the U.S.S.R. were to take any measures that compromised the independence of Finland. Even the most sceptical of us should be willing to accept the view that this government believes that under the reorganised government which it contemplates Finland will be as independent as any small state can be. It has declared that immediately on its arrival in Helsinki " it will

be reorganised and its composition enlarged by the inclusion of representatives of the Government parties and groups participating in the People's Front of the workers. The final composition of the People's Government, its powers and actions, are to be sanctioned by a Diet, elected on a basis of universal, equal, direct suffrage, with a secret ballot."

The treaty made between the Soviet Union and this provisional government is in terms which must, I think, be held reasonable. It runs as follows:—

"SOVIET PACT WITH FINNISH PEOPLE'S GOVERNMENT

"(1) Meeting the national aspirations of the Finnish people for the reunion of the Karelian people with the Finnish people in a single and independent State of Finland, the Soviet Union agrees to transfer to the democratic Republic of Finland those districts of Soviet Karelia which have a predominating Karelian population—amounting to 27,027 square miles—which will be included in the State territory of the democratic Republic of Finland.

"In token of the friendship and profound confidence of Finland in the U.S.S.R., meeting the desires of the Soviet Union concerning the consolidation of the security of the U.S.S.R. and especially the city of Leningrad, Finland consents to move the frontier on the Isthmus of Karelia northward from Leningrad and to transfer to the Soviet Union territory amounting to 1,533 square miles, while the U.S.S.R. considers itself obliged to compensate Finland for the cost of the railway lines on the part of the Karelian Isthmus which is transferred to the U.S.S.R., to the amount of 120,000,000 Finnish marks.

"(2) In the mutual interests of the consolidation of the security of the U.S.S.R. and Finland, the democratic Republic of Finland consents:

"First, to lease to the Soviet Union for thirty years the Hangö Peninsula and the surrounding waters in a radius of five miles southward and eastward and three miles westward and northward, also a number of neighbouring islands, south and east, in accordance with the map appended, for the

purpose of the creation there for Finnish and Soviet security of a naval base capable of protecting against aggression any entry to the Gulf of Finland. The Soviet Union is granted the rights to maintain there at its own expense armed land and air forces of strictly limited strength whose maximum numbers will be determined by special agreement.

" Second, to sell to the Soviet Union the islands of Suursaari (Hogland), Seiskaari, Lavansaari, Tutersaari (small and big) and Kojivisto (Bierke) in the Gulf of Finland, and also parts of the Rybachii and Srednii Peninsulas, belonging to Finland on the coast of the Arctic Ocean, for the agreed sum of 300,000,000 marks.

" (3) The Soviet Union and Finland undertake to render each other every assistance, including military aid, in the event of an attack on Finland or the threat of an attack on the Soviet Union across the territory of Finland by any European Power.

" (4) The contracting parties undertake not to conclude any alliances and not to participate in any coalitions directed against one of the contracting parties.

" (5) The contracting parties agree to conclude a trade treaty within the shortest possible space of time and to raise the annual turnover between the two countries considerably higher than it was in 1927 when it reached the maximum figure of 800,000,000 Finnish marks.

" (6) The Soviet Union undertakes to render the People's Army of Finland assistance in armaments and other war materials on favourable terms."

The fifth objection is that the U.S.S.R. should have continued to negotiate, instead of attacking. That, I suppose, could always be said. If one month produces no result, negotiate for two; if two are fruitless, try four. At some stage it must become clear that no agreement is possible and further discussion fruitless; and it is at any rate clear from the Finnish White Paper that a deadlock had been reached seventeen days before the 30th November. Meanwhile there is nothing in the record of the U.S.S.R. to make it probable that she wanted to act too soon; and the actual conduct of

the negotiations, as already stated, were free of reproach. There was nothing resembling the Berchtesgaden technique by which first an Austrian and later a British Prime Minister were presented in threatening tones with conditions that must be accepted at once, on pain of immediate military action. Nevertheless, it cannot be overlooked that, when a general war is already raging, every strategic need becomes far more urgent, and every month's delay in securing defensive positions is a delay which may perhaps never be made good.

GOOD WILL

The sixth objection falls into two sections, the first of which is that the U.S.S.R. has sacrificed the good will of the progressive elements in all countries. There is no doubt that many people now think worse of her than they did. As I pointed out in "Light on Moscow," difficulties of mutual understanding and the extremely imperfect reporting of Soviet activities in the British Press constantly produce the phenomenon that thousands of people hold up their hands in horror at something the Soviet Union is reported to have done, only to realise in a few weeks or months that she could not well have done anything else; and in due course I have no doubt that the same thing will happen in this case, too. But the U.S.S.R. might in any event retort that, whilst giving weight to the good will of progressive people in other states, she must judge of her own interests in the light of her own knowledge. She has seen the good will of progressive people fail to be of much help to Manchuria, Abyssinia, Austria, Spain, Czecho-Slovakia, and other states; and she cannot be blamed if she prefers fortified bases to fair words.

The second part of this objection, that the U.S.S.R. by her alienation of progressive opinion had actually rendered it easier for the capitalist powers to induce their public opinion to support an attack upon her, in a sense provides its own answer. For, if we attribute a little intelligence to the Soviet Government we shall guess that it knew that the capitalist powers were scheming against it, and that this opportunity for a storm of violent propaganda would be exploited to the

full, with a view to preparing public opinion for " switching " the war against the Soviet Union; and that it nevertheless judged (rightly or wrongly) that on the balance of advantage and disadvantage, knowing the facts better than we do, it was bound to act as it did.

The seventh objection is that the Finnish Democratic Republic established by Kuusinnen is a puppet government. It is, of course, very similar in the circumstances of its creation to that of Czecho-Slovakia, set up towards the end of the War of 1914–18 when the whole of its territories were still held by the Central Empires; but again one need not enquire into the record of the accusers in the matter of establishing puppet governments; the important thing is to deal with the charge. The British Press has in the main just mentioned this government once, sneered at it, and then left it alone; and the impression may well have been created in the minds of those who do not know the history of Finland that the government has no real existence. But, if one has read the history set out in the earlier part of this book, one has no difficulty in realising that a very large part of the population is of left-wing sympathies, and would much prefer to be governed by this new government than by the present Helsinki government, tactfully described in the British press as a " government of bankers and business men," and ruling by extra-parliamentary methods on the basis of an enormous para-military force of Fascist " Civil Guards." This view is confirmed by many indications filtering through in the news, such as the descriptions of large-scale arrests of civilians, and of the Finnish army in retreat burning all the Finnish villages and taking the inhabitants along with them, as if they feared the results of the slightest contact between the population and either the Soviet army or the army of the new Finnish Republic. It is very dangerous to prophesy, but it is easy to imagine that in a few months' time this government will be effectively the only government in Finland, that it will have arranged with the Soviet Union to hand over exactly what she demanded, that is, what is set out in her treaty with the new government, and that any suggestion that this government is a puppet will have disappeared, as will the suggestion that the U.S.S.R. is conquering or colonising Finland.

MUST THE WAR SPREAD?

SANITY AND WISDOM OF MR. SHAW

All our sympathies are unreservedly due to the mass of the Finnish people, who have to bear the brunt of another war. Whether the real blame for this is to lie at the door of the Soviet Union, or of the Finnish government which apparently preferred war to a concession which it had declared did not affect the integrity of the country, or of the government of some other and larger state which may have urged it to " stand firm " with promises of help which may materialise too late or not at all, instead of encouraging it to compromise, it is too early to judge ; and we can only hope that the Finnish people will be rewarded in the near future by getting a government that really is of their own choice. I may quote Mr. Bernard Shaw in the *Daily Mail* of the 2nd December, 1939 :

" I think the explanation is perfectly simple.

" Finland has been misled by a very foolish Government. She should have accepted Russia's offer for a readjustment of territory. She should have been a sensible neighbour.

" Finland would probably not have refused the Russian offer had she been acting on her own or in her own interests, but Russia believes that Finland thinks she has the backing of America and the Western Powers.

" No Power can tolerate a frontier from which a town such as Leningrad could be shelled when she knows that the Power on the other side of that frontier, however small or weak it may be, is being made by a foolish Government to act in the interests of other and greater Powers menacing her security.

" Is America supporting Finland ?

" Well, Finland obviously believes so or she would not have behaved as she has against a country so much stronger than herself. America has shown a great interest in Finland's case recently.

" Poland's case was utterly different. She was led into a war by promises and agreements which could not be implemented. That is not so with Finland.

"It is not at all a question of Russia, a great Power, attempting to subject Finland, which is a small Power. It is a question of Russia seeing to her own security, and it was very foolish of Finland not to accept Russia's offer for an exchange of territories. . . .

"In Russia's view, Finland can have no defensible objection to carrying out the exchange of territories which Russia has asked of her unless she is allowing herself to be used by America or the Western Powers.

"There can be no possibility of Finland planning any attack on Russia by herself, nor would any of the territories which Russia asked her to transfer enable her alone to defend herself effectively against Russia.

"Russia, therefore, concludes that this foolish refusal to act in a neighbourly manner must be based on Finland's belief that she has the support of the Western Powers. Russia's position is difficult, and, quite naturally, she is determined to secure herself."

At this stage, I ought to write a few words about the military position. I am not, of course, in any sense a military expert, but I can read a newspaper and form some notion as to whether its reports are trustworthy, and how much care has been devoted to sifting the reports before printing them. It seems clear to me, in the case of the present hostilities, that it is in fact extremely difficult to get accurate and reliable reports; and it is equally clear that nine-tenths of the Press is taking no trouble to give any consideration to the reliability of reports before printing them. No rumour is too wild for it to reproduce, no atrocity or hero story too many centuries old to be confidently rebrushed and put in the window. A substantial number of our newspapers do not in truth like prostituting themselves as far as they have done lately, and I am sure that they would not do it if it were not thought necessary to work up feeling by any and every means.

As to what is the actual degree of success or failure attending the Red Army, it is probably impossible for most military experts, and is certainly impossible for me, to form any reliable view. When more facts are known, we shall be able to tell

whether the campaign has demonstrated the incompetence of the Red Army, or on the other hand its high efficiency in carrying on hostilities in a very difficult Northern theatre of war in December and January, a feat which has apparently hitherto been regarded as impossible.

It is worth noticing, too, that the Soviet military experts do not subscribe to the theory of Blitzkrieg. I may quote the following passages from leading Soviet experts, culled from " The Military Strength of the Powers," by Max Werner :

" Modern warfare is not like a boxing match in which the better man knocks out his opponent suddenly with one blow. In war an uninterrupted flow of strength and energy is necessary in order to beat the enemy to his knees."

" Resistance has a tendency to increase, and it reaches its culminating point at the strategic zenith when the attacker is nearing his object and is compelled to stake everything on his offensive. . . . The weakening of an offensive is usually due more to the increasing strength of the defence than to the exhaustion of the attacker. The greatest expenditure of energy and the approach of the crisis must be expected towards the end. The genius and the firmness of operative leadership demonstrates itself by foreseeing this decisive moment and seizing on it with a new wave of operative efforts and in full possession of all the forces and material required to complete the operation successfully."

" Withdrawing to his own strategic base the enemy has more time to rally and concentrate his forces, and in the upshot he may prove stronger than the first wave of the attacking forces unless the latter have drawn on their reserves."

CHAPTER VII

THE CRY FOR WAR WITH THE U.S.S.R.

Up to this point I have given some description of the real structure of the modern world and some recent history, both too little known. This account of the nature of great powers, their relations with small states, and their relation to the Soviet Union, would, it seems, lead to only one conclusion, at any rate so far as concerns Britain, namely, that any impartial observer would have *expected* the government of this country to be actually or potentially the enemy and not the friend of the U.S.S.R., the friend and not the enemy of Hitler, and at the same time the enemy of Socialism and the friend of capitalism—which in the present stage of capitalist history involves also saying " the friend of reaction and Fascism."

The rulers of every state in such a war as this must be looking forward with great anxiety to the shape that things will take after the war. They not *only* look for victory, for territorial gains, losses, and adjustments, and in general for " favourable peace terms." They have, nowadays above all, to look further and to consider the problem of the future constitutional and economic structures both of their own and of the belligerent countries—for no one to-day can expect with much confidence that these structures can remain as they were, and when they change or disappear it is a matter of the greatest anxiety and uncertainty as to what will take their place.

The rulers of Britain and France must above all be considering now—and, indeed, must have been considering long before, and particularly at Munich—how they can best retain

in existence the economic and political power to which they feel they have been born. This involves also considering what sort of economic and political structure Germany shall have, for what happens in each of these three countries is bound to have a great effect on the fate of the others. It involves, too, what of course has already begun, active intrigue as to the kind of Germany or Germanies there shall be. This is no time for passively awaiting the storm of post-war change; they must seek to deflect it.

As they look forward, they must indeed be perplexed. They cannot afford simply "to win the war." They must, by "pulling their punches" or otherwise, scheme and contrive on the one hand, indeed, to win the war if they cannot compromise before it is too late, but on the other hand not to win it in such a complete fashion as to bring Germany to collapse, and thus to "lose the peace" in a much more terrible fashion than that which was the topic of controversy "last time." They must try to win, to defeat Germany, to impose terms on her which will postpone or avert the next European war, but at the same time they must—it is perhaps *even more important* than merely winning or losing—preserve as much as possible of the present capitalist structure, and above all of the control of governments by finance and industry, and of colonies by the same hands; and they must do this in Germany as well as in Britain and France—for they fear that Socialism will spread like the light of the rising sun.

The whole of this problem has to be faced in the knowledge of the fact that U.S.S.R. is present, active, and powerful; they fear that she may be not only an example but also an active help to—say—a Germany turned Communist or Socialist.

THE INFERENCE

The irresistible conclusion is that the British Government must not only regard U.S.S.R. as the enemy—which as I have shown they have really always done—but that they must inevitably seek to foment war on her, and even themselves to take part in it, to "switch" the war round on to her, so that,

by providing a rallying cry against a foreign enemy for populations which might otherwise turn on their rulers, and by smashing this one socialist state, they may prevent the Capitalist states from bleeding themselves to death and give Capitalism a new lease of life.

Evidence

This reading of the situation, that there is a definite aim to switch the war against the Soviet Union, or to put it in another way, that the policy has been adopted that a war against the Soviet Union is the main future objective, beside which even this present war is seen as an episode, a " curtain-raiser," a reading which at first sight seems unlikely, will appear almost inevitable to readers who have followed my narrative up to this point. Indeed, if my standpoint is correct, the next war, the war against the U.S.S.R., may begin even before the end of this war; and if circumstances should so combine as to yield a valuable opportunity for making at any rate the first steps, the capitalist governments will certainly not refrain from taking them. They may already have made up their minds that the Finnish trouble constitutes that opportunity.

The main purpose of this chapter is to quote a representative selection of statements from the Press of various countries, in order to illustrate the way in which this campaign has been steadily developing, both before and after the 30th November.

But before doing so I must emphasise the importance of realising that this scheme, and the campaign to realise it, both existed before there was any question of hostilities between the U.S.S.R. and Finland, and are causally quite independent of any such hostilities. They would have been formulated and carried on if no shot had ever been fired, and the hostilities merely provide a magnificent pretext and encouragement for the campaign, a means of rallying public opinion, coming so opportunely that one suspects that those who encouraged the Finns to resist must have had this advantage present to their minds.

THE FIRST STAGE

When this war broke out, the personnel of the British government was, and remained almost undiluted, that of Munich, of "appeasement," of surrender to aggression; and it was too lightly assumed in some quarters that, because they were at last standing up to one aggression, and because the war naturally made a great change in the whole world situation, therefore their policy had altered; but in truth there was no essential change, and the whole tendency and direction of the last twenty years is still in reality the tendency and direction of to-day. From this standpoint the war itself between England and Germany has to be regarded in spite of its magnitude as the *first stage* in the preparation of war on the U.S.S.R.

This may seem paradoxical: but the paradox is already expressed in the numerous comments to the effect that this was a "mistaken war," that it was the "wrong war," that the "sides were wrongly picked," that, as one diplomat is said to have put it, we are only just "cutting for partners," and that there must be no neglect of the preparations even during this war for the next war, the "real war."

It is significant that Munich, the policy of "appeasement" and "the free hand in the East"—the free hand for Hitler to attack the U.S.S.R.—was never wholly dropped even in the latest stages of those last fateful months before September. It even creeps into the expressions of such experts as were commissioned last year to write the Oxford Pamphlets on World Affairs. For example, Mr. C. A Macartney, in his pamphlet on *The Danubian Basin*, published as late as August, 1939, says of Russia: "She is still far from having regained her old position. *If Ukrainian nationalism is successfully exploited, it is possible she may never do so.*" This shows quite plainly that an expert writer with a knowledge of his subject had to take serious account of the many British and German (and perhaps Anglo-German) intrigues to detach the Ukraine from the Soviet Union and, presumably, hand it to Germany.

Right up to the last week before the declaration of war,

there were discussions going on of the possibility of an Anglo-German Alliance*; and even after the German troops had entered Poland there was an attempt being made to settle the question by a conference of Poland with the four Munich powers, isolating the U.S.S.R. This was revealed to the House of Commons some thirty-eight hours after Germany and Poland had been at war and before the British and French governments issued their war ultimatum.

If then the policy of Munich persisted in one or another manifestation right up to the last; and if Munich was the outcome of twenty years of cold hostility on the part of Britain and other powers to the U.S.S.R., it is understandable that (unless there were a complete reversal of that movement of twenty years) the present war appears against that historical background as a first stage in the new development towards a world war, a war in which the struggle of capitalism against socialism takes the form of war against the U.S.S.R.

THE SECOND STAGE

With the entry of the Red Army into Poland, the reasons for which I have given in *Light on Moscow*, the second stage developed. It created a new situation, for to the anxious minds of our government its importance lay not only in its military effect of barring an Eastern and Balkan advance by Germany, but also, and more, in the advance which it heralded of Socialism in Europe. The Red Army was received by the

* See the passage in the British Government Blue Book (Penguin Special, S.45) from Sir Neville Henderson, quoted in my "Light on Moscow," in which he thus describes a conversation with Hitler's Foreign Minister as late as the 28th August, 1939:—". . . Herr von Ribbentrop asked me whether I could guarantee that the Prime Minister could carry the country with him in a policy of friendship with Germany. I said there was no possible doubt whatever that he could and would, provided Germany co-operated with him. Herr Hitler asked whether England would be willing to accept an alliance with Germany. I said, speaking personally, I did not exclude such a possibility provided the development of events justified it."

inhabitants as an army of liberation, the regime of the landlords and industrial bosses in Eastern Poland was swept away, and the U.S.S.R. was immediately thought of not as a great neutral that had to be reckoned with, but as a potential stronghold of world revolution. In both aspects, there were immediate reactions. On the one hand, from the point of view of dealing with a great neutral, both sides seem to have sought to enlist her aid. M. Sarajoglu, Foreign Secretary of Turkey, was sent post-haste to Moscow to negotiate on behalf of the Allies, while Foreign Minister Ribbentrop on behalf of the Nazis made a similar sudden journey to Moscow. The object on either side appears to have been to involve the U.S.S.R. in the present stage of the War. Neither side was successful in this. The U.S.S.R, whilst making arrangements necessitated by the proximity of belligerent Germany to her frontiers and to the approaches to these frontiers, remained definitely neutral and proclaimed that she would so remain.

On the other hand, the renewed and accentuated fear of world revolution led to a great intensification of the " switch the war " type of propaganda. This took two forms; and in either form was found in the British press and, as we shall see later, in the neutral press as well.

The first form was that in which " the danger of Bolshevism " was impressed upon the public, and the necessity was urged of Britain and France and Germany combining; or of Britain, France, Germany, Italy and the U.S.A. combining; or, finally, of " all civilised countries " combining, in order to ward off " the menace to civilisation," often in the name of " Christianity," which is apparently put forward as identical with capitalism and civilisation, thus qualifying the Japanese to join in on equal terms.

The other form of " switch the war " propaganda left out any question of stopping the present war, and concentrated on demonstrating what it considered to be the equivalence of Nazism and Bolshevism. In fact, just following on the first weeks of September, when Government propagandists were drawing a careful distinction between " Hitlerism " and " Fascism " in order to combine the wooing of Mussolini with the exploitation of the anti-Fascist sentiments of the masses of

the British people, there was an attempt to show that "Hitlerism" or "Nazism" was practically the same as Communism. This again was in two versions.

In the first, propaganda of the Rauschning type sought to show that the Nazis were becoming Communists, so that big business throughout the world should cease to give the Nazis support. In the second, it was said that the Communists were becoming like the Nazis, so that anti-Fascists should cease to support the Soviet Union.

Two points here are worth notice. The first is that the campaign is in many instances so reckless that its protagonists seem indifferent as to whether the holocaust they seek to prepare will be fought with Germany on our side or with Gemany against us; and the second is that those who prefer to have Germany on our side, and are prepared to "buy her over" for the sake of civilisation, are apparently willing to embrace the "civilisation" and "Christianity" of the concentration-camp, the pogrom, and the persecution of religion, although they cold-shouldered the cultured Germany of pre-Hitler days. Surely even the hatred of Socialism should not carry them so far; but, since it does, one can easily understand the fury which they must feel at seeing three major capitalist powers destroying their strength in an imperialist war whilst the U.S.S.R. remains neutral and conserves her strength for constructive industrial development.

I shall now give some quotations from this "switch the war" propaganda, as it was to be found in the newspapers before any of the later developments with regard to Finland, but after the Red Army's march and the subsequent pacts with the Baltic States.

THE CAMPAIGN IN THE PRESS

The first attempt to raise an outcry appears in the British newspapers before the end of September, especially when the press telegrams and the Moscow wireless made it clear that the march of the Red Army was not simply for occupation of territory but was for the liberation of the populations of Byelorussia and West Ukraine. *The Times* at once, on the 26th September, raised the alarm:

"Hitler, by his deliberate action, carries Bolshevism beyond the borders of Russia, and even beyond the western ethnic frontiers of White Russia and the Ukraine; he carries it into the very heart of East-Central Europe, with consequences which no one can as yet gauge."

It will be observed that the language implies that some natural barrier against Bolshevism had been burst. This was no doubt the famous *cordon sanitaire* by which the Socialist Soviet Republics were regarded as a highly contagious disease, to be subjected to quarantine. After the defeat of the first Allied invasion of 1918 and 1919, this idea of a *cordon sanitaire* was held to be the minimum measure necessary to prevent the pernicious ideas of socialism from spreading. And Hitler's crime, according to *The Times*, was that "by his deliberate action" he had broken the *cordon sanitaire*, and exposed us all to infection. (And not all of us have been inoculated.)

But the consequences, "which no one yet could gauge" in the editorial columns, were freely drawn by its letter-writers. In accordance with the classic strategy of *The Times*, a letter that same day, 26th September, appeared on its editorial page. The hitherto not very well-known gentleman who was given this elevated position not only joined in the outcry but drew conclusions:

"May I presume," wrote Mr. P. Gardner Smith, "to suggest that British propaganda should be concentrated on the effort to bring home to the people of Germany the extreme danger of their position as a result of Herr Hitler's Russian adventure? . . . If the people of Germany realised the situation they would sweep the whole Nazi gang into oblivion, reconstitute Western Poland as a buffer State and seek an agreement with Britain, France, Italy and Spain for the defence of European civilisation."

The importance of this, of course, lies not merely in the fact that this is the view of Mr. P. Gardner Smith, but much more in the fact that *The Times* elected to give it the prominent position more usually occupied by bishops and elder statesmen.

On the same day another light skirmisher, this time in the *Daily Telegraph*, drew conclusions for the readers to ponder. These light skirmishers are of course extremely useful when there is as yet little on which the special correspondents, who cannot afford to be wrong too often, can hang a story, and when the editorial thunder has to be kept in reserve for the moment. In the *Daily Telegraph*, Mr. W. R. Titterton wrote:

> "I conceive the possibility of a wide and fluid federation of the little Christian Powers of Central Europe, from Poland to Austria in the west and to Greece in the south, to guard our civilisation against its other ancient enemy—the barbarian of the eastern steppes."

Here we may remark that the obverse of the picture is given a month later (31st October, 1939) in the *Daily Telegraph*, where the well-known American commentator, Dorothy Thompson, is quoted to show that the Allies, against their own military interests, had in the negotiations of last summer maintained the *cordon sanitaire* which Hitler had broken:

> "Every military consideration favoured acceptance of the Russian terms by the Allies. But more than military considerations are at stake. For the object of this war is not to destroy Germany—which, with the aid of Russia, might not have been difficult—but to save Germany for Western civilisation, against her own leadership."

This throws a new light on the rejection of Soviet help, on which the negotiations for a peace pact broke down, and which alone could have made the British guarantee to the Poles effective. It was done, according to Miss Thompson, because otherwise Germany would have been destroyed instead of being "saved" for "western civilisation." (It would seem curious to praise the British for refraining from associating with an infectious person, when they spent months talking to him in his isolation hospital; but Miss Thompson is certainly corroborating strongly the view which I expressed in *Light on*

Moscow that it was always intended that the negotiations should break down.)

The reader should notice that already the greatest danger is Bolshevism ; that it is a danger to what is variously described as " European civilisation " or " Western civilisation," and is soon to be termed " Christian civilisation," and that Germany should be expected by most of the writers to behave as part of " Western civilisation," which as I have already mentioned seems to be much the same thing as capitalism. Nor, in the later quotations I have to give, is any other meaning discernible ; and presently it becomes the stock phraseology on both sides of the Atlantic.

If we move forward four days to the 30th September, we find an echo from *The Times* correspondent at Tokyo, who says :

> " The spectacle of Hitler handing over fifteen million Poles to be bolshevised is not lost on the Japanese, who have hitherto considered Poland as one of the bulwarks of anti-Bolshevism."

This makes it clear that the Japanese, at present carrying on a war of aggression upon the Chinese people, are hopefully reckoned as being within the pale of " Christian civilisation," and on the right side of its " anti-Bolshevik bulwarks." In its editorial the same day *The Times* remarked in its rather affected public-school manner, " it remains to be seen whether the Soviet desires to fasten a quarrel upon us," and concludes with the significant sentence :

> "The greater and more sinister *the coalition that we may have to face*, the more determined will be the use of our arms and the more confidently and more doggedly we shall hold on the faith of a true crusade."

The suggestion in this picture of having to fight both the U.S.S.R. and Germany at one and the same time may seem to conflict with the initial propaganda designed to give the picture of the greater world war, in which Germany would

be acting alongside of the other " civilised " powers. But the meaning of this apparent conflict is made clear in another column of *The Times* on that same day, from the Rotterdam correspondent, who says :

> " The bloc between a Soviet Russia and a Nazi Germany, which is likely to represent a very uncertain alliance, seems less to be feared than a bloc between a Soviet Russia and a Soviet Germany, which would follow a Bolshevist Revolution in the latter country. Nazi Germany is in many respects ripe for Bolshevism, and the conditions of the war, coupled with the close association with the Soviet Union, which is now imminent, will make it more so."

In this passage the cat is let out of the bag, or at any rate we can hear its anxious mewing; for, as I pointed out at the beginning of this chapter, one of the preoccupations of our rulers is to preserve, as much as possible, the capitalist structure of Germany, and to avoid an internal revolution in that country ; and the effect of the extension of the socialist system to West Ukraine and Byelorussia was felt as likely to be disastrous in the long run to the capitalist interests of all the belligerent powers. It might mean revolution, a real revolution. Indeed the *Daily Mail* is quite specific on this point. It says (on the same day, the 30th September) that the realisation of what it assumes to be the Bolshevik hope of revolution :

> " would suit the Nazi regime even less than that of any other country. The Soviet forces have already been carrying on a pogrom of landowners, officers and other ' bourgeois ' in the part of Poland that they occupy. If they once got into Germany, *millions* of unsuspected Communists would rise and create a common cause with them against the Nazi despotism."

The *Daily Mail* is prone to exaggerate, and of course it is exaggerating grossly in using the phrase " pogroms." But when it writes of " millions of unsuspected communists," it must not be forgotten that in fact, at the last free elections

in Germany, the Communists received a vote of six millions; and there can be no question that the working class of Germany, whether it felt more or less communist than before, did in December, 1939, force its government to yield big concessions in the way of hours, overtime, night-work, and workshop conditions generally. So, although we may receive little enough information of it in detail, it is clear that the German working class is still militant. This militancy, taking communist form, would be as distasteful to many of our rulers here as it would be to the rulers of Germany. Lord Rothermere, of the *Daily Mail*, cannot be thought to view with any pleasure the rising of " millions of unsuspected communists " against the Nazis. And it is easy to see not only that the ruling class is alarmed at the prospect, but that a certain proportion of the English public can be affected with the same fear, and rendered thereby both anxious to maintain capitalism in Germany and fearful of the U.S.S.R.

THE " METHODIST RECORDER "

The next point in our evidence is the attempt, of which we have already seen traces, to begin a campaign for " Christian civilisation," against the U.S.S.R. Even if western civilisation were correctly described as Christian in its outlook or practice, it is difficult to equate the adjective " Christian," which covers forms of society for over fifteen hundred years, to modern capitalist society, which in most countries has lasted little over a century. But our rulers may not find it easy to ask the mass of the people to rally in defence of " capitalism," and they must find some other way of describing it than by its true name. By October there were already signs of the same sort of " religious campaign " as had so often been stimulated before (see Chapter III) against a country, the U.S.S.R., whose state constitution contains provisions substantially no different from those embodied in the laws of France by the Waldeck-Rousseau cabinet as far back as thirty-five years ago. It might seem that what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander, but France is an ally, and Soviet Russia, to say the least is not; so this

misuse, as it must seem to many religious people, of the religious motive is apparently to be continued. Some might ascribe this mainly to the influence of the Vatican, which has always striven for at any rate that part of the Munich policy which excluded and isolated the U.S.S.R. But it is not limited to the Vatican, and I shall take my main example from a well-known Nonconformist organ, the *Methodist Recorder*.

In its issue of the 5th October, 1939, in passages too long for me to quote in full, the *Methodist Recorder* develops a complete argument for "switching the war." I shall try to give the substance of it. The writer begins by saying that there was "something ominous" about recent developments in Eastern Europe before the war, and then:

> "It was bad enough that, beyond the Nazi frontiers, an organism no less sinister was operating, if not to the same end, by much the same method. Russia was half an oriental power; and the West affected to regard with unconcerned interest the vast vivisectional experiment in the Bolshevik laboratory, which sought to annihilate the spiritual quality of man, to regiment one hundred and fifty million human beings according to an ideology that may once have been communism, but is now a State-Socialism that fascinates and enslaves its votaries and its victims alike."

He goes on to explain that the differences in the theoretical bases of the two regimes "would be likely to interact as a sterilising agent, and to preserve the outside world from infection." Shifting to another metaphor, he pictures the Nazis as "a wasp that fed its larva on poisonous spiders" (namely Bolshevism), and then explains the Munich policy in clear terms:

> "If the Western democracies refrained a year ago from helping Czecho-Slovakia, it was partly because they felt that a vigorous Nazi Germany was an effective antidote to Comintern imperialism."

He thinks, however, that "their schemes miscalculated," and after endeavouring to equate Nazism and Bolshevism,

says of the latter that " it must at least be driven back from its fresh encroachment upon Europe."

How is this to be done? According to the *Methodist Recorder*, Nazism must first be overthrown. But the difficulty is that such an overthrow may take either of two forms, the first " a declaration of military rule in Germany," and the other " a rival attempt to seize power by the Communists within the Reich, who would be supported by the Red Army now mobilised across Germany's eastern frontier."

At this point the inspired writer sees an alliance of Germany and Britain. He says:

> " It is conceivable that, in these perilous circumstances, the military rulers in Berlin would turn to the Allies, patch up a peace, and invite their help in opposing the Russian invasion. Their strategy would be relatively easy, for then the Baltic would be open to the British Navy."

This prospect, if it was foreseen in Eastern Europe, might give very considerable point to the Soviet aim of securing the Baltic; but for the *Methodist Recorder* it opens up a " brighter prospect of a new order in Europe " than could ever issue from the present conflict. This, the present conflict, is apparently " the wrong war," and the war against the U.S.S.R. would be the " right " one.

> " For France and Germany, Britain and perhaps Italy, would have fought side by side in a new and unprecedented comradeship, not for conquest, but in the defence of a Christian civilisation which is their common heritage."

Here then, fairly and squarely, in the organ of a great religious community which has a fine history in the fight for genuine freedom and devotion to peace in this country, the view of switching the war is expressed to great masses of quiet and thoughtful, if credulous, people and the attempt is made to present the appalling holocaust of millions of working people that must come in any new anti-Soviet war as a conflict between barbarism and " Christian civilisation."

"THE NAZIS ARE BOLSHEVIKS"

Hitherto the "switch the war" propaganda had concentrated on "Bolshevism" as the danger, the "nightmare behind the nightmare" as one American commentator puts it; (the ending of the rule of profit-seeking capitalism is of course a nightmare to some people). But now another theme begins to be introduced, that Nazism and Bolshevism are really one and the same thing. It was already seen in the article I have just quoted above from the *Methodist Recorder*, which for this purpose wrote of the common ground of what it terms National-Socialism and State-Socialism as to be found in "their rejection of the principles inherent in Christian civilisation"; and *The Times* had stated in its editorial of the 3rd October, 1939:

> "It is now clear that there is not, and never was, any plausible ideological difference between the Nazi and the Bolshevist regimes, and that any sympathies based upon alleged differences must wither away."

Again, on the 5th October, the *Manchester Guardian* quotes the *Göteborgs Handels-Tidning* (Sweden):

> "In these columns it has always been contended that Hitlerism and Bolshevism were offspring of the same idea."

The theme thus given out continues to be repeated from time to time in the various papers, including for example, the *Daily Telegraph*, which in the last week of October ran a series of articles by a well-known American journalist, Mr. Villard, whose visit to Germany in the early weeks of the present war gave him the unique opportunity to tell the world something of real interest (an opportunity of which he took sadly little advantage; as often happens, his standing was greater than his understanding). Mr. Villard, writing when there was as yet no expectation of the Finnish question leading to hostilities, so that the "Russian Foreign Policy" mentioned can cover nothing concrete but the resumption of Western Ukraine and

Byelo-Russia, and the treaties with the small Baltic republics, says:

> "Now that the Russian foreign policy has become exactly as immoral, as murderous, as anti-social as that of Hitler's Germany, their similarity becomes still more apparent. The very language of the utterances of the new imperialism of Molotov and Stalin is so exactly that of Berlin that one wonders whether the Nazi writers of State papers and speeches have not moved to Moscow, or whether in the Kremlin they are merely the most faithful of copyists."

This common propaganda story, that there is no difference between Fascism and Communism, appeals to so many people who are persuaded by the Press to dislike both without understanding either, that it may be useful that I should explain, as objectively as possible, the reality of the difference between them. Economics lies at the bottom of the matter, as of so many other things in modern life.

Fascism—in Germany National Socialism—is simply the form of government which the ruling class has used at an acute stage in the development of capitalism which is known as monopoly capitalism. It is true that in Germany the State has assumed control over imports and exports, investments, production and consumption; that it has taken over much of the enterprise which in Britain is in the hands of private individuals, and that it has limited dividends. But the means of production are still owned by private capitalists, and the motive of profit still guides production; Nazi Germany is a capitalist state, and the real rulers are the heavy-industry bosses. State control has been instituted in the interest of those bosses in order to preserve Capitalism as far as may be. The remainder of the population—the overwhelming majority, including the working classes and part of the middle classes, live in a more or less equal state of poverty and restriction. The power of the industrial or finance bosses is in fact greater than in the non-Fascist Capitalist countries because it is concentrated in very few hands; whereas in this country one group of industrialists may suffer at the expense of another

group, in Germany everything is subordinated to the interests and to the demands of the iron and steel industry, and the handful of men who control it, and the smaller employers have their field of activity restricted for the benefit of this small ruling group*. This is of course the logical development from competitive capitalism to monopoly capitalism—but it is for nothing like Socialism, its basis lies in profit-making in the interests of the few, with all the accompanying features of profiteering, artificial scarcity, and a low purchasing power for the mass of the people; trade unions are suppressed; women are in a definitely inferior position; a fetish is made of racial purity; anti-Semitism is artificially fomented. The régime, seeking for new markets of investment, is aggressive, colonising, imperialist abroad, and reactionary and intolerant at home, not merely out of lust for power but because its economic problems, insoluble in the long run, are only even temporarily soluble by constant new seizures of territory or property. Such régimes are like an incompetent cyclist; they may manage to remain in the saddle if they keep moving fast, but if they slow down they are sure to fall off.

The Socialist state—I may as well say at once the U.S.S.R.—is economically Socialist. Private ownership of the means of production is abolished, one man may not exploit another for profit, and there are no finance and industrial bosses. Production is determined by the needs of the people, according to plan, and is limited only by the power to produce; everything that is produced can be sold, for the purchasing power of the mass is kept up. Nothing save war, epidemic, or inefficiency can prevent the standard of living from rising. Politically, universal suffrage prevails, and the people choose their own representatives, even for quite minor appointments. There is no dominant economic group, since industry and agriculture are planned in relation to needs. Trade Unions are an important feature of the system; there are more trade unionists in the U.S.S.R. than in the whole of the rest of the world put together, and the unions co-operate with the government to

* The present position of German capitalist economy is brilliantly described by J. Kuczynski in Chapter III of his "Germany's Economic Position" (Germany To-day Special, No. 1).

raise purchasing power as high as is possible. Women have reached a more complete equality with men than in any other country or century; no distinction of race is even dreamt of, and anti-Semitism is a forgotten nightmare. There can be no desire, since there is no motive, for territorial expansion in the quest for markets. The system is based on a constitution which gives to every one the right to education, to work, and to leisure, and if any of these are refused, the right to appeal to a court of law.

Returning to the study of the propaganda scheme of "switching" the war, of preparing for a future war in which Germany would in one form or another be an ally, we find on the 8th October, 1939, in a letter printed in that well-known organ of the provincial press, the *Yorkshire Post*:

> "A sudden realisation, almost a divine inspiration, will suddenly strike the combatants that it is time to cry halt. I see that sanity will compel these same warring Powers to combine, strange as it may seem at the moment, to thwart a dangerous menace and get together to stem the Russian plans of extended Bolshevism. Well may the scheming of the Russian leaders lead to their undoing."

This is also the meaning of the utterance on the next day, the 9th October, 1939, of Lord Kemsley's paper, the *Daily Sketch*, which says in its editorial:

> "How could it in the circumstances have been otherwise? In the light of present-time developments is not Hitler assuming a secondary consequence?
>
> "Behind the menace of Hitler and Hitlerism, who can say what other dangers, still more frightful and imperilling to civilisation, may not be lurking?"

This rhetorical question clearly points to the U.S.S.R. Lord Kemsley has of course already played a rather significant part in the activities that followed the "triumph" of Munich, a part which I mentioned in *Light on Moscow*.

And on the 30th November, at the moment of the actual outbreak of hostilities on the Finnish frontier, Mr. Culverwell in the House of Commons said :

" We originally entered into the war to defend Poland and to defeat aggression. I suggest that the intervention of Russia has radically changed the whole situation strategically, politically and economically. It has certainly increased our difficulties. In a very real sense Hitler has already lost the war. His aims for expansion in Eastern Europe have been thwarted by the intervention of Russia. What is more, he has had forced upon him a war against the Western Powers and I do not believe he ever expected it. The most likely result of our victory will be a strengthening of Russia and the spread of Communism westward. I can even visualise our troops fighting side by side with the Germans to defeat the Bolshevist menace."

It is worth while to pause here for a moment, and to consider the significance of this evidence, evidence of the cry for war against the U.S.S.R. being raised in volume before hostilities in Finland began or could even be expected. It becomes clear on a little consideration, as I have already mentioned, that the campaign against the U.S.S.R. was in full progress before the 30th November, and has merely used the actions of the Soviet Union as propaganda material; and that there is no substance in the suggestion that the major capitalist powers have been led by moral indignation over the hostilities into actions different from those they desired and intended to take in any event. The car in which they are seeking to take their peoples for a ride, in the hope of crushing the U.S.S.R., is both before and after the same car, on the same journey; the only change is that it is for the moment running down hill, with the brake off.

THE PRIME MINISTER SPEAKS

Let me now turn to see what expression Mr. Neville Chamberlain has given to his thoughts on this topic. During the

whole period of three months from the 1st September to the end of November, he was careful to give no direct public utterance to his thoughts and plans about the Soviet Union. It is matter of common knowledge—in my *Light on Moscow* I have given details of it—that through the two years of his Premiership he had been markedly friendly to the Fascist powers, and correspondingly cold towards the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics; and Mr. Chamberlain's less prudent supporters are now boasting of his hostility, and claiming that it was right of him to be hostile and not to let the negotiations in Moscow for a Peace Front succeed. As it is hard, even for the most astute of politicians, wholly to disguise or conceal a basic attitude on matters of the highest importance, and as Mr. Chamberlain occasionally reveals himself unexpectedly, it is interesting to look into his speeches since the outbreak of war for traces of his own standpoint. So far he has been very cautious in personal expression, and the most concrete evidence of his views is that his Government and the Press are doing what they are doing, unchecked by him; but there is perhaps a revelation of his feelings in his declared attitude to the "perfidy of the Fuehrer." In his message on the 4th September, which was broadcast in German, Mr. Chamberlain, after stating a long series of pledges which Hitler had broken, winds up the list with the significant addition:

> "He has sworn to you for years that he was the mortal enemy of Bolshevism: he is now its ally. Can you wonder his word is, for us, not worth the paper it is written on?"

Now each of these broken pledges was on a matter where Hitler had promised to be of good behaviour on one or another crucial question and had subsequently ceased to be of good behaviour; and it is difficult to resist the conclusion that Hitler's oaths that he was "the mortal enemy of Bolshevism" were regarded by the Prime Minister as another example of what, if it had been acted up to, would have been "good behaviour"—and what, when broken, became an example of perfidy, as if Hitler owed to Mr. Chamberlain a duty to remain

an enemy of Bolshevism. And it is significant, too, that Mr. Chamberlain described Hitler as the ally of Bolshevism; he seems to regard it as impossible for a capitalist state to have amicable state relations with the U.S.S.R. without its leaders not only ceasing to be hostile to socialism or to communism, but also becoming "allies of Bolshevism." If this be so, it goes far to explain the consistently uncordial, cool, and distant relations between Britain and the U.S.S.R., especially since Mr. Chamberlain began to assume direction of foreign policy.

Again, in his statement on war aims and peace aims, broadcast on Sunday, the 26th November, Mr. Chamberlain used the following phrase about the future Europe which he envisages as arising after the war is won:

> "In such a Europe each country would have the unfettered right to choose its own form of international government so long as that government did not pursue an external policy injurious to its neighbours."

He goes on to say of the establishment of this Utopian Europe that, "It would be a continuous process, stretching over many years."

To what exactly is Mr. Chamberlain referring? Does he mean that he is quite ready to have fascism in Germany provided its external policy accords with that of Great Britain? Or is he referring to the U.S.S.R., whose Bolshevism he most certainly regards as necessarily injurious to its neighbours? Indeed that has been the main standpoint of British Statesmen ever since the days of the Cordon sanitaire of twenty years ago. It might seem to some that to read this meaning into his words, however carefully such words are always selected, is to be unduly distrustful of Mr. Chamberlain, were it not that he himself two days later made an express reference in the House of Commons to his broadcast (and to that very portion of his broadcast) and to some extent dotted the "i"s and crossed the "t"s. He said:

> "When I spoke on this subject on Sunday, I said that the conditions in which peace aims could be achieved could

not at present be foreseeen. . . . I say now that none of us knows how long this war will last, none of us knows in what directions it will develop, none of us knows, when it is ended, who will be standing by our side and who will be against us and in those circumstances . . . it would be mischievous if we were to attempt to lay down to-day the conditions in which the new world is to be created."

It could not well be put much more plainly—" who will be standing by our side " (Germany perhaps? If so, certainly a capitalist Germany) " and who will be against us "—(did his hearers take any other immediate meaning than the Socialist Soviet Republic which the Press had been dinning into their ears for the previous two months as " the enemy of civilisation? ").

VOICES FROM AMERICA

It might be thought that many of these quotations from the British Press should be excused, as emanating from writers in a belligerent country, where war conditions have bemused them and rendered them excitable and irresponsible, or even that the Press tends in war time to become largely an organ of the Foreign Office, which utilises it to put out feelers, to fly kites, or to send up balloons, none of which need to be taken at all seriously as indications of policy. There may be some truth in the latter explanation, but the former, which in any case is not very flattering, is in my view incorrect. The Press knows very well what it is doing and why it is doing it.

But the most significant thing, and the proof that such explanations as these do not cover the ground, is that propaganda of the same sort is appearing in neutral countries, and particularly in the United States of America, where there can be little question (as there might be in the case of the small European countries) of influence being exercised on the Press by one or other of the belligerents. The policy of the United States, and the voice of the bulk of its Press, are dictated of course by the ruling class of America, and if one makes a selection of quotations from that Press, not the radical press

but the newspapers and journals of conservative tendencies, one will give a fair indication of that policy. I have been careful to take my main quotations from the columns written by Walter Lippmann and Dorothy Thompson, the most influential and realistic of American commentators, representing a very general conservative view.

On the 12th October, 1939, the *New York Herald Tribune* published an article by Walter Lippmann entitled " The Paramount Issue of the War."

In this article Lippmann suggests that the defeat of Hitlerism, which had been earlier represented to be the object of the Allies, is no longer " the real issue of this war." He then continues :

> " The question is not what are to be the boundaries of Germany or of Poland or of Czecho-Slovakia. The question is what shall be the boundary of Europe against the expanding invasion of Russian Imperial Bolshevism ; the supreme issue of the war is whether Germany is to return to the society of western nations as a defender of the west, or whether revolutionary Nazism is to break down all the remaining defences of western Europe."

Notice what this means. It means firstly that the Soviet Union has become the main enemy ; secondly that the crime of Germany is that she has let down the " defence " of Europe against this enemy ; thirdly, that the aims of the war are to compel Germany to return to the society of Western nations (which she had apparently deserted by signing the Germano-Soviet Pact) ; and fourthly that a condition of that return is that Germany shall become once more the " defender " (or gendarme, or " strong-arm man ") of the West against the U.S.S.R.

Here, then, we have a leading American commentator abandoning all the previous war aims to which he himself had subscribed in early September, and concentrating on the " supreme issue."

But he goes further than this. He suggests the terms on which Germany might be induced to re-enter the " society

of Western nations" against Bolshevism. He proposes that Poland and Czechoslovakia should be handed over to Germany as protectorates; as this means that the present protectorate over Czechoslovakia and the military occupation of Poland should be confirmed, he is really proposing precisely what Hitler would propose in this matter, or perhaps even more. He says:

> "The fact is that although Poland and Czecho-Slovakia must be reconstituted in the interest of Germany and of Europe, in the face of the Russian development they cannot now be reconstituted, except under German protection. . . .
>
> "There can be no safety for Germany or for Europe except through a Germany capable of becoming the protector of the European borderland. There is and always has been such a Germany; whether it can emerge and take command before the situation becomes utterly catastrophic is the great question of our time."

On the other hand, he doubts whether Hitler and the Nazis can be trusted to provide this protection, and so he proposes that the Allies should immediately make a deal with the Conservative elements inside Germany. His actual words are that they should

> "do it not merely in the form of rhetorical public statements,* but, in the form of direct private approaches to the German Army and to all that is genuinely conservative inside of Germany. If they convince the Germans that a Western offensive cannot be decisive and that the creation of a strong conservative Germany is their only real war aim, they may yet save the world from great danger and incalculable misery."

* This may be a reference to the type of propaganda uttered by Mr. Duff Cooper in the U.S.A. This Tory ex-Cabinet Minister, shortly after his arrival in America, expressed his desire for the overthrow of Hitler by means of the German generals; and devoutly suggested that a monarchy would be good for Germany. He would apparently like to see us fight two wars in 30 years, one to depose and (nearly) hang the Kaiser, and the other to put him back.

The thing could not be put more bluntly:

(1) The real enemy is the U.S.S.R.;
(2) There is war against Germany because she has failed to fight the U.S.S.R.;
(3) Germany can have peace plus Czecho-Slovakia, plus Poland, on condition that she makes ready to fight the U.S.S.R.;
(4) The guarantee is a strong conservative Government in Germany, that is, not Hitler but the Army generals.
(5) Socialism is such a dreadful thing that a war of half the world against the U.S.S.R., which might last for years, could rightly be regarded as "saving the world from great danger and incalculable misery."

Dorothy Thompson, also writing in the *New York Herald Tribune* of the 13th October, takes a similar line. She discusses why the Allies did not make a pact with Russia when military considerations favoured it, and her answer (as noticed earlier in this chapter, where we saw that this article from her pen was quoted in our *Daily Telegraph*) was that more than military considerations were at stake, and that the object of this war was not to destroy Germany, but "to save Germany for Western civilisation against her own leadership."

She goes on to draw a parallel with the secession of the Southern States which led to the American Civil War of 1862–65, and declares that—

> "This war is a civil war to force Germany back into Western civilisation and then reorganise and strengthen that civilisation by co-operative effort, letting bygones be bygones. Like our own Civil War, it is a war to enforce unity."

This is followed by some chatter as to what Western civilisation is and what it means; but from whatever conclusion she comes to one thing emerges, that Russia, Asia and Africa—that is, the Socialist country and the colonial

continents, are definitely beyond the pale of Western civilisation; and she ends her article somewhat hysterically with the cry to Germany:

"Come back to us, be one of us, work with us for a new Europe. Come back, come back, come home."

These articles, it should be noted, were all written in the first half of October, six weeks before the Finnish hostilities began, and immediately following on the march of the Red Army and the signing of the pacts with the small Baltic Republics. Here, too, the anti-Soviet pack was in full cry long before the 30th November.

Most writers assume, as the British Government in its official speeches assumed, that Hitler and the Nazis had got the worst of the bargain over these events; but that interests them little, for their clearer and more anxious eyes see the "larger issue," and the consequent need of ending the fratricidal strife of capitalist countries in order to combine against the Socialist country, or, as they put it, against "the Asiatics," against "Ghengis Khan."

HEARSTERIA

In the *New York Journal and American* this desire for immediate peace between the present belligerents in order to "switch the war" reaches a higher note, and as is to be expected in a journal of the multi-millionaire, William Randolph Hearst, becomes an hysterical scream.

On the 9th November an editorial is printed in huge type across four columns of this paper, in which the peace proposals of King Leopold and Queen Wilhelmina are strongly supported, as follows:

"Full realisation of the greater disaster of an Asiatic Communist invasion of Western Europe has at last come to the belligerents.

"Even while they war upon and attempt to destroy each other, England and France and Germany know full well

that the ultimate price of continuing their war is the spread of Communism over the whole face of Europe.

"Communist Russia has plainly told them so, in the boasting and gloating words of Premier Molotov, who has said Soviet Russia only awaits this 'slaughter of Western nations' for the final triumph of Soviet power."

Molotov had said nothing of the kind. In view of the long history of their attempts to destroy the Soviet State, he might have been forgiven if he had been tempted to encourage his country's principal capitalist enemies to destroy each other, and thus to make Soviet civilisation safe at home and likely to extend abroad; but in truth, from motives of humanity or from a knowledge of the terrible capacity of war to spread, or from both, he took the opposite course, and issued a statement (earlier in date than the appeals of King Leopold and Queen Wilhelmina) in which he urged strongly the necessity of immediately stopping the war.

The scream continues as follows:

"The time is ripe for Western Europe to stop its senseless war, and to repair the barriers of European civilisation against invasion and destruction by the onrushing Asiatic hordes of Russian Communism. . . .

"That the threatened Communist triumph over Europe should not blot out all human progress and all human rights, should be the united aim and purpose of all the enlightened nations of the world that desire to maintain their Occidental civilisation."

Eleven days later Mr. Hearst's *New York Journal and American* prints another editorial "at the top of its voice," headed "Peace Not 'Lost Cause' Can Still Stop Communism." It is in the same strain and there is no need to quote more than:

"The Communist Russian wolf-packs are already circling, waiting for the kill—ready to move up to the Baltic, down

to the Balkans—prepared to pounce wherever there is safe prey. . . . This is the reason why there has been *no real war in* Western Europe so far."

LINDBERGH DREADS GENGHIS KHAN

Lastly, let me quote Charles A. Lindbergh, who writes in the *Digest* for November, under the title "Aviation, Geography and Race"—and he must know something about one of these topics—an article which was probably written about the beginning of October. Colonel Lindbergh, after his flight over the Atlantic, became the son-in-law of Dwight Morrow, who was both a leading member of the Republican Party (in which capacity he held the ambassadorship to Mexico) and an associate of the firm of J. P. Morgan. More recently, Colonel Lindbergh became well-known for his strong support of the Nazis, being decorated by Hitler shortly after a visit to the U.S.S.R., which enabled him to make some disparaging remarks about the Soviet Air Force, although it appeared that he had never heard of Voroshiloff and did not know who he was.

It can be understood that Colonel Lindbergh would deplore even more fervently than Walter Lippmann a quarrel between the German and British ruling classes, who ought to be linking together against what he had called "inferior blood." And so his article does little more than repeat the views previously cited, with, as his additional tribute to the discussion, a little bit of race theory in the Nazi manner:

"And while we stand poised for battle, Oriental guns are turning westward, Asia presses towards us on the Russian border, all foreign races stir restlessly. It is time to turn from our quarrels and to build our White ramparts again. . . ."

"Our civilisation depends on a united strength among ourselves; on a strength too great for foreign armies to challenge; on a Western Wall of race and arms which back either a Genghis Khan or the infiltration of inferior blood, on an English fleet, a German air force, a French army, an

American nation, standing together as guardians of our common heritage, sharing strength, dividing influence."

I believe that comment on the substance of this is superfluous. But it is noticeable that Mr. Lindbergh mentions Genghis Khan, and Mr. Lippmann also refers not infrequently in his articles to this dead and gone Mongol conqueror of seven hundred years and more ago. Similar references have already appeared more than once elsewhere, and bid fair to take the same place in "switch the war" propaganda as the reference to Attila and his Huns did in the anti-German propaganda of the 1914–18 war. The reason for it seems rather obscure. It is true that there are a number of Asiatic peoples in the U.S.S.R., though in all they amount as yet to a small minority. The largest Empire that is predominantly Asiatic in its population is the British Empire, but neither Mr. Lippmann nor Mr. Lindbergh can surely be referring to that? It seems on the whole more likely that the race-theory propensities of the ruling classes not *only* in Germany led them to regard the word "Asiatic" as having an abusive flavour and therefore to be applied to anyone whom they wish to abuse, in this case the Government of the U.S.S.R. No doubt they will select some different label if friendship is developed between the U.S.A. and Japan, for these writers will know that Japan is an Asiatic country.

THE U.S.A., JAPAN, AND U.S.S.R.

I should like, before concluding this series of American quotations, to take up the question of the Far East, remote as that may seem at first sight from the immediate European conflict. In the *New York Herald Tribune*, on the 21st October, Walter Lippmann dealt with matters in the Far East and especially with Japan. He returned to it on the 26th October and again on the 3rd November.

It is well known that the United States of America has been very hostile to the Japanese invasion of China, which amongst other things has destroyed much of the Chinese

market for American goods, and has become at any rate a potential menace to American possessions in the China seas, the Philippine Islands. So far has this hostility gone that there has been a rather effective boycott of Japanese products, especially silk goods, in the United States for the last two and a half years; and the question of an embargo on trade with Japan has been frequently raised. In this matter America has hitherto stood fairly firmly on the basis of the territorial integrity of China as laid down by the Nine-Power Pact concluded at Washington early in 1922; this has not precluded American firms from supplying munitions to Japan, but as far as the administration is concerned, it has not shown itself hitherto prepared to concede the Japanese claims of "a new order in Asia" and Japanese "special interests" in China.

If we approach Lippmann's articles with this background in our minds we find them somewhat remarkable. In the first article, he assumes the need of an arrangement in the Far East between the United States and Japan, and says that if the Allies and Japan are at peace then, if there is also a Balkan bloc dominated jointly by Turkey and Italy, the neutral world would become "subconsciously organised and aware of its mission." Its mission, he explains, would be to get Germany back into the fold. He adds (in his 26th October article), "Here, too, we may venture to hope, is the way the world can deal with the nightmare beyond the nightmare—the threat of Bolshevist infiltration into devastated Europe."

Now let us, in view of the general background of American policies towards Japan, consider what his proposals are in the Far East. It may be remembered that at the time when the Red Army had entered Poland Japan hastily concluded a truce with the U.S.S.R. on the Manchurian frontiers. This stoppage of the sanguinary border incidents which had been going on throughout the summer of 1939 was followed up by the appointment of a Frontiers Demarcation Commission. Further, there were indications that the Japanese Government was considering the conclusion of a Pact of Non-Aggression with the U.S.S.R. The American writer found it to be a "deplorable thing." In this he is certainly giving expression to the views of ruling circles in America: for everyone must have

noticed that the American ambassador was at pains to call upon the Foreign Office in Tokio and enquire whether such a pact was likely to be concluded, and a Press statement was immediately issued by the Foreign Office spokesman in terms intended to assure the American Government that this was not the case.

Now it may seem strange at first sight that American sentiment, which was soon to deplore the outbreak of hostilities on the Western or North-Western border of the Soviet Union in the case of Finland, should deplore the cessation of hostilities, or an amicable Soviet-Japanese treaty which would ensure the cessation of hostilities, on the East. But so it was.

Lippmann, in his article of the 3rd November, proceeds to argue against the making of peace in this way in the Far East. He says that the result would be that " the conviction would grow stronger than it already is that the United States cannot afford to see the Allies lose the war at sea, while the danger in the Far East would make it more than ever necessary that the United States stay out of the fighting in Europe. It would also make it more than ever necessary to support the Allies by other means. . . . The United States would be concerned because a British fleet is necessary at Singapore to maintain a stable peace in the Pacific."

After these reasons for a neutrality that would be highly benevolent to the Allies, he asks the Japanese to consider an alternative which he says is " much safer and in the end much more attractive." He then proceeds to propose a complete *volte face* of traditional American policy towards Japanese inroads in Asia. He says, " they will find this country very ready to meet them half-way in a general effort to establish a genuine new order in Asia." This phrase, " a new order in Asia," should be noted; it is the classic phraseology of the Japanese Foreign Office. It is consistent enough that Lippmann should use it in respect to the isolation of the U.S.S.R. at its Eastern frontier, for in relation to Europe he puts forward the type of proposals which one might expect from Hitler himself.

He goes on, " though some Americans would object, the majority would support a project of peace in China which,

while restoring Chinese sovereignty in China proper, would recognise the special position of Japan." Again the Japanese Foreign Office's phrase—" the special position of Japan."

Here is (though of course not as yet from any governmental sources) the offer openly given to concede practically all that Japanese aggression demands, rather than see her conclude stable relations of amity with the U.S.S.R.

Finally Mr. Lippmann hints broadly that the Government of the United States would be so complaisant to the Japanese Government that they would be willing " to do a Runciman " on their behalf: the Japanese, as he puts it, " would find, if they explored it, a willingness here to induce the Chinese to negotiate a settlement of this sort."

EUROPEAN NEUTRALS

It would occupy too much space if I were to quote at length from the newspapers of the various European neutral states or to show how the same type of " switch the war " propaganda that I have quoted from British and American papers is re-echoed in the smaller countries; but I may give a few samples. At the beginning of December, for example, *Ny Tid*, of Gothenburg, speaks about the Finnish " defence of European civilisation against Asiatic barbarism." The Conservative *National Tidende* in Denmark proposes to unite " all Christian states in a struggle for the Christian idea against Bolshevism," while *Politiken*, of Denmark, calls upon Paris, London and Berlin " to cease the European Civil War in order that these three governments together can stop the advance of world revolution." It is perhaps worth while singling out the well-known Swedish paper, *Svenska Dagbladet*, whose London correspondent, just before the 30th November, was writing of London:

> " Public opinion is slowly beginning to realise that the spreading of Bolshevist incendiarism against the West comprises a real danger for the whole of Western Europe and its civilisation. Military circles have explained to the *Svenska Dagbladet* correspondent to-day, that it may be

necessary that the Western powers try to prepare to end the Red advance and the same circles speak of the desirability of a German collaboration on this question, if only Germany could change its attitude. In general, a change of government in Germany is presupposed. . . ."

The really interesting part of what "military circles in London" communicated to this Swedish journalist (and it will be appreciated that military circles do not mean the rank and file) is as follows:

". . . but there are also opinions who would consider it not unthinkable to march together with Hitler against the Reds."

It should be emphasised once again, in conclusion, that the whole of this very remarkable body of evidence, which could easily be multiplied by further quotation, particularly from the rabid press of France, is taken from the period before hostilities began in Finland.

CHAPTER VIII

RECENT BALTIC POLICY OF THE U.S.S.R.

WHEN at the end of September and the beginning of October, 1939, the Soviet Union concluded Treaties with the three small Baltic States, amid the variety of comments then made as to the blow this inflicted upon the interests of Nazi Germany it was frequently asserted that they had now become puppet states.

As the negotiations with Finland proceeded this assertion became more and more frequent until by the end of the year these three States were being talked of as though they no longer existed as independent States.

Without pausing to wonder how long these States would have survived at all if the U.S.S.R. had been a capitalist state, it is worth while, since the Baltic policy of the U.S.S.R. is so much in issue, to examine the actual texts of the treaties and agreements made in order to see their exact scope.

In September, 1939, negotiations began at Moscow between the Soviet Government and the Foreign Secretary of Estonia. These were followed by discussions between the Foreign Secretary of Latvia, Mr. Munters, very well known in the League of Nations meetings, and the Soviet Government; and then by discussions between the Government of Lithuania and the Soviet Union.

THE ESTONIAN TREATY

On the 29th September, the following Pact was concluded between the Soviet Union and Estonia:

Article 1

The two contracting parties undertake to render to each other every assistance, including military, in the event of direct aggression, or the menace of aggression, arising on the part of any great European Power against the sea frontiers of the contracting parties in the Baltic Sea, or their land frontiers across the territory of the Latvian Republic, as well as against bases indicated in Article 3.

Article 2

The U.S.S.R. undertakes to render to the Estonian Army assistance in armaments and other military equipment on favourable terms.

Article 3

The Estonian Republic assures the Soviet Union of the right to maintain naval bases and several aerodromes for aviation on lease terms, at reasonable prices, on the Estonian islands of Oesel, Dagoe, and in the town of Paldiski (Baltiski port).

The exact sites for the bases and aerodromes shall be allotted and their boundaries defined by mutual agreement.

For the protection of the naval bases and aerodromes the U.S.S.R. has the right to maintain, at its own expense, on the sites allotted for the bases and aerodromes, Soviet land and air armed forces of a strictly limited strength, their maximum numbers to be determined by special agreements.

Article 4

The two contracting parties undertake not to conclude any alliances or participate in any coalitions directed against one of the contracting parties.

Article 5

The realisation of this pact should not affect in any extent the sovereign rights of the contracting parties, in particular their economic systems and State organisations.

The sites allotted for bases and aerodromes (Article 3) shall remain the territory of the Estonian Republic.

Article 6

This pact comes into force upon the exchange of the instruments of ratification.

The exchange of these instruments shall take place in Tallinn within six days from the date of the signature of this pact.

The term of the validity of this pact is ten years, and if one of the contracting parties does not find it necessary to denounce this pact one year prior to the expiry of its terms the pact shall automatically continue valid for the next five years.

A trade agreement concluded at the same time provided for an increase of four and a half times in the trade turnover between the two countries, fixing the amount of the general turnover at 39,000,000 Estonian crowns. The Soviet Union granted Estonia the right to transit goods along the railways and waterways of the Union to Murmansk, Soroka and Black Sea ports, and provision was also made for a great extension of the transit of Soviet goods through Estonian ports.

THE LATVIAN TREATY

On the 5th October, 1939, a Pact of Mutual Assistance between the Latvian Republic and the Soviet Government was signed. The text of the pact, described as "for the purpose of the development of the friendly relations established by the Peace Treaty of August 11th, 1920, and based on the

recognition of the independent State existence and non-intervention in the internal affairs of the other party . . ." is as follows:

Article 1

The two contracting parties undertake to render each other every assistance, including military, in the event of direct aggression, or the menace of aggression, arising on the part of any great European Power against the sea frontiers of the contracting parties in the Baltic Sea, or their land frontiers across the territories of the Estonian or Lithuanian Republics, as well as against the bases indicated in Article 3.

Article 2

The Soviet Union undertakes to render the Latvian Army assistance in armaments and other military equipment on favourable terms.

Article 3

For the purpose of guaranteeing the security of the U.S.S.R. and consolidating her own independence, the Latvian Republic grants the Soviet Union right to maintain naval bases at the towns of Liepaja (Libau) and Ventspils (Windau) and several aerodromes for aviation on lease terms at reasonable price. The exact sites for the bases and aerodromes shall be allotted and their boundaries defined by mutual agreement. For the protection of the Irben Straits the Soviet Union is granted the right to establish on the same conditions a coastal artillery base on the coast between Ventspils and Pitrags.

For the protection of naval bases, aerodromes and the coastal artillery base, the Soviet Union has the right to maintain at its own expense, Soviet land and air armed forces of strictly limited strength, their maximum numbers to be determined by special agreement.

Article 4

The two contracting parties undertake not to conclude any alliance nor participate in any coalition directed against either of the contracting parties.

Article 5

Realisation of this pact should not affect in any way the sovereign rights of the contracting parties, in particular their State organisation, economic and social systems and military measures. Sites allotted for bases and aerodromes (Article Three) remain the territory of the Latvian Republic.

Article 6

This pact comes into force on the exchange of instruments of ratification. The exchange of these instruments shall take place in Riga within six days from the day of signature of this pact. The term of validity of this pact is ten years, and unless one of the contracting parties finds it necessary to denounce this pact one year prior to the expiration of its term, the pact shall automatically continue valid for the next ten years.

It will be noted in each case that the arrangements made are similar to previous pacts of mutual assistance made between the Soviet Union and other countries, which were generally recognised to be a valuable contribution to the maintenance of peace.* The only additional arrangements are the Articles by which the Soviet Union is given the right to maintain naval and air bases at certain stipulated places on the coasts and coastal islands of those countries. These are strictly limited and have to be paid for on agreed terms. It is clear that the treaties are of advantage to both signatories, and are far removed from the type of territorial Concession which other great Powers have from time to time obtained from smaller countries.

Had they been of this type, one would have expected that in the case of Latvia there would have been some concession on the Gulf of Riga, or Riga itself, but nothing of this kind was suggested. The air and naval bases are strictly what they purport to be, namely, measures for the defence of the Eastern Baltic.

From the standpoint of peace it must be realised that these Pacts render that Eastern Baltic area much less open to the risk of war. So long as these treaties and arrangements did not exist there was the possibility of these smaller States being used as a jumping-off ground for an attack on the Soviet Union.

It is to be feared that a good deal of the comments hostile to these treaties has appeared in countries whose Foreign Offices had a hankering for the use of these smaller States as a theatre of war.

THE LITHUANIAN TREATY

The Lithuanian Treaty contains much the same provisions as the other two but there are two features in which it differs.

After stating in the preamble that the treaty is based on the recognition of independent State existence and non-intervention in the internal affairs of the other party, and that the contracting parties recognise

> " that the Peace Treaty of July 12, 1920, and the Pact of Non-Aggression and the peaceful settlement of conflicts of September 28, 1926, continue to form the firm basis of their mutual relations and undertakings,"

and are

> " convinced that a definition of the exact conditions of ensuring mutual security and a just settlement of the question of the State ownership of the city of Vilna and the Vilna region, unlawfully wrested from Lithuania by Poland, meets the interests of both,"

the treaty itself runs :

Article 1

> For the purpose of the consolidation of the friendly relations between the U.S.S.R. and Lithuania, the city of

Vilna and the Vilna district are transferred by the Soviet Union to the Lithuanian Republic and included in the territory of the Lithuanian State, the boundary between the U.S.S.R. and the Lithuanian Republic being established in accordance with the map appended hereto. This boundary shall be specified in more detail in a supplementary protocol.

Article 2

The Soviet Union and the Lithuanian Republic undertake to render each other every assistance, including military assistance, in the event of aggression or the menace of aggression against Lithuania as well as in the event of aggression or the menace of aggression against the Soviet Union over Lithuanian territory on the part of any European Power.

Article 3

The Soviet Union undertakes to render the Lithuanian Army assistance in armaments and other military equipment on favourable terms.

Article 4

The Soviet Union and the Lithuanian Republic undertake jointly to effect the protection of the State boundaries of Lithuania. For this purpose the Soviet Union is granted the right to maintain at its own expense, at points in the Lithuanian Republic established by mutual agreement, Soviet land and air armed forces of strictly limited strength. The exact locations of these troops and the boundaries within which they may be quartered, their strength at each particular point, and all other questions, economic and administrative, and questions of jurisdiction arising in connexion with the presence of Soviet armed forces on Lithuanian territory under the present treaty, shall be regulated by special agreements. Sites and buildings

necessary for this purpose shall be allotted by the Lithuanian Government on lease terms at a reasonable price.

Article 5

In the event of the menace of aggression against Lithuania or against the U.S.S.R. over Lithuanian territory, the two contracting parties shall immediately discuss the resulting situation and take all measures found necessary by mutual agreement to secure the inviolability of the territories of the contracting parties.

Article 6

The two contracting parties undertake not to conclude any alliances nor to take part in any coalitions directed against either of the contracting parties.

Article 7

The realisation of this treaty should not affect in any way the sovereign rights of the contracting parties, in particular their State organisation, economic and social system, military measures, and generally the principle of non-intervention in internal affairs. The places of location of the Soviet land and air armed forces (Article 3 of this Treaty) in all circumstances remain a component part of the territory of the Lithuanian Republic.

Article 8

The terms of the validity of this treaty in regard to the undertakings for mutual assistance between the U.S.S.R. and the Lithuanian Republic (Articles 2–7) is fifteen years, and, unless one of the contracting parties finds it necessary to denounce the provisions of this treaty for a specified term

of one year before the expiration of that term, these provisions shall automatically continue valid for the next ten years.

Article 9

This treaty comes into force upon the exchange of instruments of ratification. The exchange of these instruments shall take place in Kaunas within six days from the day of signature of this treaty.

The reader will notice that the first Article transfers the city of Vilna and the Vilna district to the Lithuanian Republic. This city and territory were occupied by the Red Army when they entered Western Byelo-Russia in the latter part of September. Lithuania was not an ally of the U.S.S.R. and the purely voluntary cession of this territory by a great Power to a small one must be almost unique.

THE QUESTION OF VILNA

To understand the reasons for and the full importance of this action by the U.S.S.R., one must recall the previous history of the city and district of Vilna. In the post-war settlement of Versailles and immediately after, they were quite properly allotted to Lithuania, but in 1920 the Polish General Zeligowsky captured the territory and city by force of arms, and the Polish Government thereupon annexed it. This aggression, which has never been legalised in any way by the League of Nations, remained a constant source of dispute between Poland and Lithuania, leading to angry scenes between the representatives of the two countries at meetings of the League of Nations. So embittered were their relations that until 1938 there were no diplomatic relations between the two countries and there was no transit across the disputed section of frontier between Poland and Lithuania.

In the Constitution of Lithuania during all those eighteen years, Vilna continued to be described as the capital of

Lithuania and the seat of Government was described as the temporary capital.'

Lithuania, however, was too small and too weak to be able to assert its rights otherwise than at the League of Nations, which was too large and too weak to help her. Menaced by Germany and Poland, this small " independent " country had to remain truncated, with its capital torn away from it.

This long-standing injustice which the League of Nations had recognised but had proved powerless or unwilling to remedy was fully and finally remedied by the Soviet Government by the first Article of the Pact.

The second distinctive feature of this Treaty is that by which the Soviet Union protects the State boundaries of Lithuania. There is no question but that this Treaty gives to the Lithuanian people, for the first time in the history of their state, the possibility of living without being overshadowed by the menace of war, an existence as a sovereign State as independent as any small State can be.

OTHER TREATIES COMPARED

I believe this plain recital of the facts should be sufficient to dispose of the vague allegations that these three countries had completely lost their independence through these Treaties and become puppet states; but since the statements to this effect continue to be made, and emphasis is laid upon it as something improper, it may be worth while to examine the precedents for similar arrangements between other States, and in particular the treaties concluded fairly recently by the Government of Britain with Irak and Egypt.

The Treaty of Alliance between Great Britain and Irak, done at Baghdad in June, 1930, and ratified on the 26th January, 1931, contains in Article 5 the statement that:

> " His Majesty the King of Iraq undertakes to grant to His Britannic Majesty for the duration of the Alliance sites for air bases *to be selected by His Britannic Majesty* at or in the vicinity of Basra and for an air base *to be selected by His Britannic Majesty* to the West of the Euphrates."
>
> (The italics are my own.)

The authorisation was further given to maintain British forces at these places and in the annexure to the Treaty of Alliance it was provided in Clause 6:

> "In view of *the desirability of identity in training and methods between Iraq and British armies*, His Majesty the King of Iraq undertakes that, should he deem it necessary to have recourse to foreign military instructors, these shall be chosen from amongst British subjects. . . .
>
> "He further undertakes that *the armament and* essential equipment of his forces shall not *differ in type* from those of the forces of His Britannic Majesty."

Finally, it is laid down in Article 4 of the Treaty that if either Great Britain or Iraq become engaged in war the other will "immediately come to his aid in the capacity of an ally."

The provisions of the Treaty of Alliance between Great Britain and Egypt, concluded in London on the 26th August, 1936, went far beyond those of the Anglo-Iraq Treaty and there was no more than a pretence in its wording of an equality of status between the two High Contracting Parties; and yet it was an advance in favour of Egypt in comparison to earlier treaties. Yet Egypt is an independent Sovereign State having its own representative at Geneva, who, by the way, was elected to the Council at the December meeting, and was one of the seven "thoroughly disinterested neutrals" who voted for the expulsion of the U.S.S.R.

FINLAND

I have already dealt pretty fully with the main facts and arguments concerning the conduct of the U.S.S.R. in its relation to Finland; but there remain some matters which can be usefully treated in this chapter. In particular, it is worth recalling what from strategic and other reasons Soviet policy in relation to Finland must have been during the abortive negotiations in the Spring and Summer for a peace front between Russia, France and Britain. The U.S.S.R. knew, of course, the history since 1917 of Finland, and of the

personalities controlling Finland, and all that that implied in hostility to herself. She knew, too, that the reactionary rulers of Finland must realise that a defeat of Germany, inevitable if the peace front were formed and war nevertheless broke out, would of necessity entail the collapse of Finnish reaction. They knew that Finland and the Baltic States were the strategical highway along which an attack, and particularly a German attack against Russia must be directed; as *The Times* had put it on the 17th April, 1919: "So far as stamping out the Bolshevists is concerned we might as well send expeditions to Honolulu as to the White Sea. If we look at the map, we shall find that the best approach to Petrograd is from the Baltic, and that the shortest and easiest route is through Finland. . . . Finland is the key to Petrograd and Petrograd is the key to Moscow."

Finally, the U.S.S.R. would know quite clearly that if Russia were involved in a war with Germany one of two things was bound to happen: either the Finnish army under Mannerheim would, as they did in 1918, invite the German forces to enter Finland, or else the German forces, without waiting for the formality of invitation, would occupy Finland as a preliminary to an attack on Russia.

In order to prevent this it was essential, if the U.S.S.R. was to be able to join any mutual assistance pact aimed at Germany, that she should control strategic positions in Finland as well as in the smaller Baltic States to prevent these countries being used by Germany for an attack upon Russia. Unless she controlled these positions it would be impossible for her to play any decisive part in an anti-aggression front against Germany.

It is known, of course, that these were the demands made by the Russian Government on the Finnish Government at the time of the Russian-Finnish negotiations. It may be assumed, although it cannot yet be definitely known, that they were also the demands which the Soviet Government were putting forward in the summer and urging the British to get the Finns to accept. They could not very well ask less, and it is unlikely that they asked more.

In the atmosphere of the negotiations in the summer, it

might be thought that Finland would have been urged by Britain to accept such terms, and certainly that no British official would have spoken in public against them. It is significant, however, that General Sir Walter Kirke, at one time a member of the Army Council and now Commander-in-Chief of the Home forces, who had been closely associated with the organisation of Finnish defence, and was in Finland in June, 1939, gave utterance to different views. Shortly after it had been stated in the Press that Finland and the Baltic States were not agreeing to give Russia the facilities which would enable her to assist in joint action with Britain and France against aggression, and were refusing all offers of guarantees, General Kirke spoke at a dinner given by Errko, then the Finnish Foreign Minister, and in proposing a toast to Finland he remarked on the Finnish refusal of a Russian guarantee, saying: "Everyone in Britain appreciates her attitude." The Right Wing Press in Finland naturally gave this the widest publicity. As *The Times* put it, "The Finnish Press in alluding to Sir Walter Kirke's words that Finland desires to sit alone receives warm tributes for his timely and happily-worded toast."

Now General Kirke, who sat on the Army Council, must have some acquaintance with strategy; and with his special knowledge of Finland he must have been aware that she could not resist, in a military sense, even if her pro-German General Staff were prepared to resist, a German attack. He must have known, therefore, that a refusal of a guarantee by Finland was bound, in the event of Russia entering a war on the side of Britain and France, to lead to an attack on Russia by Germany at one of her most vital positions, the Leningrad area. And yet he said, without one supposes consulting British public opinion, that everyone in Britain appreciated Finland's attitude, which was really no more than a refusal to collaborate in collective security.

As I have shown in "Light on Moscow," it was of course not the attitude of Finland that created the obstacle rendering it impossible for the U.S.S.R. to accept the Franco-British terms; but the strategic problem remained unaltered, and once war had broken out it clearly became all the more urgent

for the Soviet Union to secure for her own defence those strategic positions which previously she had desired to occupy as the representative of a League against aggression; and it was for that reason that she proposed to Finland a Pact in which should be embodied the terms which had previously been set out, with the results which I have discussed in Chapter VI.

CHAPTER IX

THE CRY FOR WAR GROWS SHRILLER

THE outbreak of hostilities on the 30th November, which could so easily be presented to a public not very fully acquainted with international law and morals or with the history of the Finnish people and the Finnish Government as an unjustified act of aggression on a democratic and peace-loving State, was of course a godsend to all the elements desirous of turning public opinion against the U.S.S.R. and of "switching" the war—such a godsend indeed that suspicion arises, as already mentioned, that these elements had encouraged Finland to refuse concessions in the hope that this very situation would be brought about.

Whatever the cause or the motive, the one thing beyond dispute is that the "godsend" was gratefully accepted, and that a sustained and co-ordinated barrage of hostile propaganda against the U.S.S.R., of unprecedented intensity, was launched. Accusations of aggression and Imperialism and various other accusations, which I have discussed in Chapter VI, were made with great freedom and vigour.

The innocent public no doubt responded to this with perfect sincerity, but that it was in no way a genuine or spontaneous renaissance of a moral sense in the British Government or Press was of course clear to everyone with substantial experience of the conduct of modern politics. The less cynical and more charitably-minded person who may read this book can of course easily convince himself by recalling Chapter VII to his memory and comparing it with the Press campaign of December and onwards. In the former, I have given a selection from a great volume of evidence showing the campaign for war being

raised with scarcely any disguise, before any question of hostilities against Finland arose; and the cries which arose after the 30th November are not new cries but just the old ones made shriller. The campaign would have gone on just the same if hostilities had never begun; and the hostilities did no more (from the Government and Press point of view) than provide good new propaganda material.

It was pretty plain at an early stage that the British Government was joining whole-heartedly in the bombardment. This is not shown merely by its undertaking to supply munitions to Finland, as mentioned below; the most cogent proof of its participation lies perhaps in its own behaviour, and in the behaviour of the Press which it can after all influence a good deal, especially in war time, in connexion with the propaganda barrage. It is said that this was a case of aggression. Well, the British Government has met with cases of aggression before; and it has uniformly dealt with them without indignation, its conduct being unaffected by considerations of moral principles, and has been guided simply by what it has thought best suited to its own interests. If it thought the conduct of the U.S.S.R. wrong, that would not have led it to behave as it has done, or to let the Press do likewise, unless it suited its policy to allow public opinion to be inflamed against the U.S.S.R.

The contrast between its reaction to these hostilities and its habitual reaction to Fascist aggression is so glaring as to convict it—not of gross dishonesty and hypocrisy, which no longer matter—but of a deliberate intent to build up among our people a war mentality against the U.S.S.R. at the most inflammable moment in modern history.

And public opinion, the opinion of each one of us, must be on its guard. We must realise that the question whether the U.S.S.R. has been guilty of aggression is by no means the same as the question whether the reaction to such an aggression should take the form of shouting for war against the U.S.S.R. Many who may still hold to the opinion that the Soviet Union has been guilty of unjustified aggression will not desire that for that reason in this case alone war should follow, and hundreds of thousands of innocent people in various countries

should be brought to early and terrible deaths in a war between states whose peoples have no quarrel.

THE ELASTIC CONSCIENCE

Let us turn to examine a few examples of our Government's record in dealing with aggression. I confine myself to the last few years; if one went back twenty years, one would have to write a volume. The instances are indeed so numerous that I have prepared a catalogue of them, together with those of other Great Powers, which is printed at page 251.

Japan committed unprovoked aggression against China, a backward country in which Britain had vast investments; the British Government, on a promise from Japan that its own trade would be respected—a promise which it can hardly have been childish enough to believe—condoned the aggression and held back the League of Nations from operating sanctions. Japan was a military-fascist country, likely to be extremely embarrassing to the U.S.S.R.; it was thereby, it seems, doubly endeared to the British Government, and not to be offended, even at the risk of heavy losses to British trade and property.

Italy committed unprovoked aggression against Abyssinia; the British Government, after for a time forbidding the supply of arms to Abyssinia, went so far, under the influence of an impending general election, as to encourage the application of sanctions—the only moment between 1931 and September, 1939, when it ever reacted in any unfavourable manner to aggression—but it set to work immediately to negotiate a dishonest compromise behind the back of the League of Nations, and when that was spoilt by premature disclosure it sabotaged the sanctions by not extending them to oil supplies, which would have been effective. Italy was a fascist country, naturally dear to the mentality of our government, and greatly admired by Mr. Chamberlain. Mr. Chamberlain visited Rome, was patted on the back, and recognised the conquest.

Italy and Germany committed unprovoked aggression in Spain, and in course of doing so destroyed British ships and murdered British seamen. They are both fascist powers.

The reactions of the British Government to this, a most shameful chapter, are dealt with to some extent later in this chapter.

Germany next committed unprovoked aggression on Austria. Britain did nothing, and the League did nothing.

Germany then demanded Sudetenland from Czecho-Slovakia, and threatened immediate aggression if she did not get it. Mr. Chamberlain had actually been the first person to give expression to the idea that Germany should take this territory, long before Hitler gave any hint of it; and in the end he and Daladier held Czecho-Slovakia by the throat whilst Hitler picked her pocket; Mussolini was invited to the discussions, the U.S.S.R. was excluded, and so was even Czecho-Slovakia. The U.S.S.R. suggested on the 2nd September, and at Geneva on the 11th September, both a joint *démarche* of U.S.S.R., Britain and France, in favour of the Czechs, and the use of Article 11 of the Covenant of the League of Nations; the suggestion was ignored, and *The Times* covered the aggression against both Austria and Sudetenland by calling it (on the 13th March, 1939) " those demands upon her neighbours which, by their own profession, they were unable conscientiously to contest, and yet had failed to satisfy while the way of orderly settlement was still open."

Hitler then committed unprovoked aggression on the whole of the rest of Czecho-Slovakia; Mr. Chamberlain's first reaction was to " deprecate charges of breach of faith "; and public indignation at this condonation of an obviously inexcusable aggression merely drove him to express measured disapproval.

Hitler next committed unprovoked aggression on Memel; that, like the famous baby, was only a little one.

Mussolini then committed unprovoked aggression on Albania; the British Government did nothing, but within a few months had recognised the conquest.* *The Times*, in

* A convenient mnemonic for those who wish to remember the instances of aggression acquiesced in by the British Government in the last ten years is the word MASSACRE. The initial letters of the countries involved can be fitted into that word without much difficulty.

its review of the year 1939, gave the following reasons for acquiescence in this particular aggression:

> "For diplomatic reasons the British Government accepted the argument that the *status quo* in the Mediterranean as guaranteed in the Anglo-Italian Agreements of 1937 and 1938 had not been changed (by the Italian occupation of Albania). The consideration which appealed more to the British public was that in fact political conditions had been far from satisfactory in the small but not compact kingdom, and that a tightening of Italian control might ultimately be to the benefit of the inhabitants themselves."

Mr. Chamberlain himself was so satisfied with his own part in these tragedies that, when he broadcast to the nation at the outbreak of war, on the morning of the 3rd December, 1939, he said: "I cannot believe that there is anything different that I could have done and that would have been more successful."

(It is tragic to think of this man, with this record, being so supremely self-satisfied as to think, and express the thought, that no step which he had taken could have been done better.)

Then the U.S.S.R., in the circumstances described elsewhere in this book, invaded Finnish territory; the British Government and Press, especially those sections of the Press which had most vigorously condoned all the previous aggressions, surpassed all limits of pharisaical self-righteousness, and the League of Nations came to life and took the action described in Chapter IX.

When one compares the anxious way in which our government throughout all previous aggressions, although we were "at peace," abased itself to every aggressor to avoid—as it said—the risk of being drawn into war, with the mixture of shamelessness and recklessness in which it resuscitates and gerrymanders the League of Nations, and risks increasing both the area of hostilities and the number of its enemies in the early stages of what may well be its life and death struggle with its principal capitalist rival, one can only assume that—unless it has taken leave of its senses—it must actually want war with the U.S.S.R. The only other possible explanation,

that it is risking these grave disadvantages in the service of high moral principles, is utterly untenable in the face of its record. (Even its claim to be defending Poland against aggression led a comic writer in an American paper to say that it reminded him of the man " who went gunning for his daughter's beau because he had seduced her twice.")

There is one other significant feature. The British Government must of course prepare public opinion if it contemplates embarking on further large-scale hostilities. To do that, it must not only work up public indignation ; it must also hearten people for the struggle by persuading them that victory would be not merely possible but easy. So we find that that too is being vigorously undertaken. As I have already explained, it is extremely difficult to form any real estimate as to the competence of the Red Army from what has so far taken place ; and yet the public is being quite recklessly fed with stories of its complete incompetence. If by this means a war mentality is created which ultimately leads to a loss of several million lives, someone will carry a tremendous responsibility.

I need not in this chapter quote from the general Press to illustrate the campaign after the 30th November ; to do so one almost would have to reprint the news pages of most of the newspapers on most days. It must suffice to state generally that the Press of December was just an intensified version of that of November and before, which I have quoted in Chapter VII, and to give a few " samples " from Britain, from France, and from the U.S.A.

A British example of the general trend is taken from *The Times* of the 2nd January, 1940, which gives a " Diary of the War " ; the heading is as follows :

" DIARY OF THE WAR "
" SUCCESSES AT SEA "
" THE RESISTANCE OF FINLAND "

I pause to remind the Editor of *The Times* that when Britain is at war, as it often is, " The War " generally means the war in which Britain is engaged, and that at the moment neither Finland nor the U.S.S.R. is engaged in war with Britain. I

then analyse the thirty-one entries in this Diary for the month of December, and find that on nine occasions the only happenings in "the war" that were recorded related to Finland, and on seven occasions Finland and the belligerent nations in the war in which we are engaged share the day's entry.

The French example is a striking revelation of the government adopting the attitude of regarding the U.S.S.R. as one of the enemies of Britain and France in this war. The French Minister of Finance, in his budget speech on the 28th December, 1939, as reported in *The Times* of the following day, "explained that the proportion of participation in war expenses of three for Great Britain and two for France, stipulated in the agreement, did not apply to the general war expenses, which would be neither possible nor desirable, but to certain important items such as the Polish Army demanding 3½ milliards of francs this first year, *and now the help being extended to Finland.*"

An interesting parallel to this is to be found in the American example which I take from the same issue of *The Times* as gave the Diary quoted above. The Washington correspondent of the paper quotes Mr. Walter Lippmann as saying that what is implicit in President Roosevelt's letter of the 23rd December, and the Pope's address to the College of Cardinals, is:

> "that war will continue, since Hitler and Stalin are as yet unprepared to meet the indispensable condition of peace—reparation of the wrongs done to Poland, Finland and Czecho-Slovakia."

An Anglo-American example is supplied by Lord Lothian, the British Ambassador to the U.S.A., speaking in Chicago on the 4th January, 1940 (as reported in *The Times* of the following day). He said that:

> "... he left to historians the question of the war's origin. On one side Germany and Russia, and on the other Britain and the Dominions, allied with France, were now contending not for territory, but for sea power, 'for that is the real key to victory.'"

Here one has the position as it appears to an intelligent diplomat, who has skilled information available to tell him who are the belligerents in this war; he treats it as axiomatic that there is one war and that Russia is already one of the belligerents against Britain in that war.

THE "RESURRECTION MEN"

It was perhaps a master-stroke of hypocrisy, obviously designed for the consumption of uninformed public opinion, and a further striking proof of the fact that Britain was prepared to stop at nothing to work up a war feeling against the U.S.S.R., that the League of Nations, which had been made by its real controllers, Britain and France, an accomplice in so many aggressions before, should now be put forward actually to pass judgment upon the U.S.S.R.; and the gerrymandering that had to be operated to get such a judgment delivered with some show of regularity only made the matter worse.

True, the League of Nations was nominally the correct body to take such action—it had indeed been founded to adjudicate in such matters—but its machinery had been largely sabotaged and dismantled and its authority and prestige had been almost entirely destroyed in the last few years. The British and French Governments had pushed it into the background; its authority had not been invoked in the case of Czecho-Slovakia (whose "case" had indeed been settled at Munich); and when it had been invoked, as in the case of Manchuria and Spain, it had proved but a broken reed.

But now suddenly the League was resuscitated, clothed with all its covenanted might, and handed back its full authority by the very governments of Britain and France which had enfeebled it and done their best to bury it quietly away. It is oddly reminiscent of the "resurrection men" at the beginning of the last century; or, to go back a few hundred years earlier, of the time when the Papacy was dominated by mediæval monarchs, at whose bidding excommunications were launched.

In these circumstances, those to whom the building of the League of Nations as a true authority had been the dearest

wish of their hearts, were either revolted by this sudden new conversion of Mr. Chamberlain, or in other cases cheered dutifully but somewhat ruefully.

But the actual methods by which the League was brought into play so plainly exhibited the dishonesty of the whole business that so far from this being the revival of the League it will probably prove its death-blow. Nominally a League of Nations, it was turned into a League of Capitalist Nations against the U.S.S.R.

The proceedings began with a request from Mannerheim's government in Finland to the Secretary-General of the League, asking him to call an immediate meeting of the Council and of the Assembly of the League to deal with the Finnish-Soviet conflict.

To this request the Secretary-General promptly responded by summoning an immediate meeting of the League. The outbreak of the main war on the 3rd September had not even produced a meeting, and so swift a response was in itself something unusual, as the unfortunate Albanians learnt when their first application to the Secretary-General was overruled on the grounds that it came from the chargé d'affaires in Paris and not from the Government at Tirana.

THE DEAD VOTE

The invitation was taken up with the greatest enthusiasm, particularly in those countries which had previously had least to do with the League. Indeed, there occurred a phenomenon more usually experienced in Irish elections—the dead rose from their grave to vote. Venezuela, which had as far back as July, 1938, announced her irrevocable intention of retiring from the League, and had shaken the dust of Geneva from her feet, informed the Secretary-General that in these new circumstances she would return and " unite with the common aim of considering means of giving effect to the guarantee of security and peace solemnly inscribed in the preamble of the Covenant."

While, however, the South American States vied with each other in threats of resignation if the U.S.S.R. were not immediately expelled, Britain and France for a moment adopted

or pretended to adopt, a more cautious attitude. In *The Times* of the 9th December, 1939, the position was explained thus :—" It is felt that the move (for the expulsion of U.S.S.R.) had best be made by thoroughly disinterested neutrals. The moral judgment involved would be all the more effective if the belligerents confined themselves to supporting disinterested parties." The character of the so-called " disinterested neutrals " will appear later, but it is interesting to notice that the British and French Governments were still paying sufficient lip-service to morals to wish to create the illusion of their being swept along in a world tide of moral indignation.

Meanwhile, Britain and France, as the two permanent members of the Council, had to deal with one or two ticklish points of preliminary procedure. The ordinary League meeting in September had been abandoned—it had contained a number of embarrassing items, including the appeal by China against Japanese aggression and the appeal by Albania against Italian aggression. It was desirable now, however, to elect a new Council—a thing which should have been done at the abandoned September meeting.

SWEET ARE THE USES OF THE ALPHABET

" A strong argument," it was said in *The Times* of the 9th December, " in favour of giving the Russo-Finnish dispute to the new Council is that alphabetic rotation will give the new presidency to Belgium instead of to the U.S.S.R." The Soviet Union had, in fact, already announced its intention of not taking part in the League discussions on Finland, but a new Council was desirable for another reason ; as explained in the *Manchester Guardian* of the 11th December, " a unanimous vote would be required to exclude Russia from the League. It is not thought in League quarters that this would be possible with the present membership of the Council."

There was, however, a further difficulty to be overcome before the matter could be got out of the hands of the old Council into those of the new one. The Council (which is the executive committee of the League) was due to meet before the Assembly (the Parliament of the League, in which

every nation is represented). Some recommendation had to be made to the Assembly by the Council, i.e. by the Old Council. This final difficulty was avoided by the Council handing over the consideration of the dispute to a special committee—called the "Committee of Fourteen"—created for that particular purpose.

The membership of this Committee is highly significant. It might be thought a fundamental principle of justice that if a jury is chosen to try any dispute, whether between individuals or nations, it should not consist of sworn enemies of one of the parties to the dispute. Yet out of the fourteen nations represented on the Committee of Fourteen, only four were in normal diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. The refusal to maintain diplomatic relations is, short of war, the strongest expression of hostility which one state can show to another, especially when it is maintained towards a stable and permanent government over long periods of years.

There were other significant features in the membership of the Committee, which was as follows:—Britain, India, Canada, Eire, Egypt, France, Poland, Portugal, Siam, Uruguay, Venezuela, Norway and Sweden.

Thus Great Britain and France, who had expressed their intention of following the lead of the smaller states, found themselves on a Committee, upon which by some curious chance the smaller states were practically all "client" states of their own.

India stands out as the most obvious and flagrant example. Hardly a month before her appointment as an "independent state" to judge the Soviet-Finnish dispute, the British Government had explained in the House of Commons how impossible it was to allow the Indians any real say in the control of Indian foreign relations.

Egypt has been and remains a typical British client state, and is instanced as such, for example, by Wheaton, the writer on international law, whom I have previously quoted. Eire, which is neutral in the war, is, perhaps, more independent in foreign policy than Egypt, but she is strongly anti-Soviet in policy. She had already shown her views on aggression in 1937, by refusing to agree to the mention of Germany and

Italy as aggressors in a resolution dealing with the Spanish situation; but, as will be seen, her conscientious principles against naming the aggressor did not extend to this occasion when she had an opportunity of attacking the Soviet Union.

The delegate who attended in the name of Poland represented an emigré government, having no control over Polish territory and resident in France. This government, which is completely in the hands of Britain and France, had been appointed in a very informal and irregular fashion after the internment in Roumania of the Polish President and the regular Polish government in September, 1939. It is worth recalling that Britain and France had given as their reason for withdrawing their recognition of the Spanish Republican Government the resignation of the Spanish President and the fact that the usual constitutional forms could not be observed in choosing his successor. No such scruples prevented the League accepting a government as representing Poland which had not been formed on Polish soil, possessed no constitutional continuity with the previous régime in Poland, and had been created and established abroad.

"THOROUGHLY DISINTERESTED NEUTRALS"

The Committee which according to *The Times* was to consist of "thoroughly disinterested neutrals" included no less than six of the belligerents in the present war—Britain, France, Poland, India, Egypt and Canada—and for the rest consisted of client states of three great powers, Britain, France and the U.S.A., including a large number of states with a history of strong hostility to the Soviet Union, and of tolerance of Fascist aggression. It was no coincidence that Portugal, the "old and ancient" ally of Britain, should have been chosen as chairman; it was Portugal who in 1937 succeeded in wrecking a resolution by the Assembly to condemn aggression in Spain.

Norway and Sweden belong to a group of states closely linked to Britain. "London" as *The Economist* remarked in a passage previously quoted, "is their commercial—and in many ways their political—metropolis."

Uruguay and Venezuela (the latter of whom had, in any case, given notice of resignation from the League and only attended through dislike of the Soviet Union), are " client " states of the United States. Further, they represent the worst type of South American republic, belonging to a group whose history was characterised by *The Times* of the 18th June, 1939, as being distinguished " by the strange phenomenon of militarism without military efficiency, by military dictatorships, pronunciamentos, military juntas, and by successive military *coups d'état*." Their governments are Right Wing though, a *The Times* points out in the same article, " no Right Wing government in South America to-day could stand the test of a really fair and free election." Such is the background of the " thoroughly disinterested neutrals " called in from the New World to maintain the democracy of the old.

It is worth noting that the two South American states which have democratic governments of the left, Mexico and Chile, both abstained in the subsequent voting in the Assembly to expel the Soviet Union.

It might be thought that among all these client states one independent nation at least might be found, thrown in for decency's sake, like an honest man on the Board of a fraudulent company. Siam might be thought to qualify for the part; but Siam is to Japan what Uruguay and Venezuela are to the United States. In the same way as the unhappy Albania, until its destruction by its " patron," represented Italy in the League in which Italy officially took no part, so Siam has looked after Japanese interests. But recently Siam, not content with being a " client " of Japan, has tended to become also a " client " of Great Britain and France—an event which aroused the indignation of the Italian Press. " What ! " exclaims *La Stampa* (as quoted in *The Times* of the 26th June, 1939), " we always thought that Siam was a jealous guardian of the Yellow races. Can it be true that she is lining up with the imperialist democracies ? "

At least some support is given to *La Stampa's* fear. Bangkok, like Helsinki, is one of the capitals to which Great Britain has sent an air attaché, although the Air Force is as yet not of a size that would normally justify such representation.

Finally, it is not without interest to note that with the xception of Norway, Sweden and Venezuela, all the states epresented on the Committee of Fourteen were belligerents n the side of Great Britain and France in the war of 1914–18, id were parties to the Treaty of Versailles, subscribing to all s anti-Soviet implications.

EMBARRASSING ITEMS

Meanwhile another "immediate task" confronted Great itain and France, to use the phrase of *The Times*. It was o strip the agenda of the Assembly and Council of all but entials." ("Essentials" are, of course, charges of aggres-n against the U.S.S.R.; non-essentials are similar charges gainst Fascist countries.) The embarrassing items thus indicated were an appeal by Albania against Italian aggression nd an appeal by China against Japanese aggression. The ppeal by Albania was particularly embarrassing in that Great Britain, who on the Committee of Fourteen was taking up the position that aggression must be condemned, whenever and herever it occurs, had in fact not only done nothing to help lbania, but had shortly before, by appointing a Consul-eneral in Tirana, in effect acknowledged the Italian annexation of the country.

Further embarrassment was caused by the thought that some nation might be tactless enough to raise at Geneva the question of German aggression against Czecho-Slovakia and Poland. Germany had expressed the view that any such discussion by the League of Nations at Geneva, which is in Switzerland, would constitute a violation of Swiss neutrality, and the Swiss Government apparently accepted this view, no doubt much to the relief of the British. It was not explained why it was not a violation of Swiss neutrality to discuss a similar charge against the U.S.S.R. The so-called "Oslo" roup of powers (Belgium, Luxemburg, Holland, Norway, Sweden and Denmark) were even more helpful to those embarrassed by "non-essentials," for they sent a written declara-

tion to the President of the League, declaring that the Assembly should abstain from discussing any political issue except that of Finland. "This" remarked the *Daily Telegraph*, "is believed to be intended as a safeguard against the introduction of any reference to Poland and German aggression generally." It also prevented any too open division in the anti-Soviet front and conveniently allowed the League's entire machinery to be employed on behalf of Mannerheim's government instead of being diverted into having to deal with China, Albania, and Czecho-Slovakia as well.

The stage having thus been cleared, the "Committee of Fourteen" made their report to the Assembly. Russia, who had been given twenty-four hours in which to reply to their demand for the immediate cessation of hostilities, had answered that the dispute could not properly be dealt with by the League—a reply which, in view of the composition of the "Committee of Fourteen," was not surprising.

"It was a chastened League Assembly," reported *The Daily Telegraph* (12th December, 1939), "grimly conscious of the European war" (but, of course, not allowed to discuss it). . . . "Extraordinary police precautions had been taken and guards were stationed at many points. There were twenty-five rows of empty benches. . . ." The Argentine, which had been one of the first states to demand the expulsion of the U.S.S.R., now announced that they were "determined to oppose the decay of moral values," and added the threat that "they would not consider themselves a member of the League so long as the U.S.S.R. was able to claim that title."

The Argentine's previous record as a League enthusiast may be partly gauged by the fact that she was in arrears with her subscription to the extent of over half a million gold francs. But there was hope, for the *New York Times* reported: "It is expected that if Russia is expelled the Argentine Republic will remain a member and pay her arrears which amount to 512,000 gold francs."

A number of other delegates wished to speak, but the President of the Assembly, as *The Times* put it, "proposed a postponement of the discussion and the transmission of the Argentine delegate's speech to the special committee." The

Cuban delegate expressed a wish to be heard, but his protests were overruled. . . ."

But, as the *Manchester Guardian* had pointed out, there was a grave doubt whether the Council as constituted would pass the resolution expelling the Soviet Union, and it seems, indeed, that it was considered impossible to elect any Council which would perform this task. A novel expedient was therefore hit upon. It was decided to fill only three of the five Council places falling vacant; the result, as explained in *The Times*, was that: "By the retirement of China and Latvia from the Council to-day, and the postponement of the election of new members until after the decisions of the Council in the Russo-Finnish affair, all risk is avoided of China or Latvia being called upon to register a definite attitude towards the conflict." Later, however, presumably on further backstairs intrigue, it was discovered that Egypt could be substituted for Latvia in the re-elections and that China was prepared to abstain from voting in the Council. Accordingly, it was unnecessary to "unpack" the Council, and at another special session of the Assembly, China and Egypt were elected. The Council, thus unexpectedly able to have a full quota of members, now consisted of the three permanent members, France, Britain, and the U.S.S.R., and eleven elected non-permanent members, Belgium, Greece, Yugoslavia, Finland, Peru, Iran (Persia), Bolivia, San Domingo (an obscure republic on an island in the Carribbean Sea, whose completely helpless "client" status is illustrated in Chapter IV), South Africa, China and Egypt.

UNANIMITY (50 PER CENT.)

The U.S.S.R. was absent and Finland as a party to the dispute did not vote. Peru and Iran (Persia) were absent, and Yugoslavia, Greece and China deliberately abstained from voting. Thus the expulsion of the U.S.S.R. was voted by seven nations, or just one half of the Council. Of these seven, South Africa was an ally and dominion of Great Britain,

and Egypt an ally and a " client " state. Belgium is pretty well a " client " of France and Britain, as recent trade agreements remind us.

Bolivia and San Domingo are both " client " states of the United States of America, and, indeed, San Domingo is so much of a client that it is usually cited as a typical example of this species of nation by writers upon public international law.

Thus was carried out the " move " which, as *The Times* said, " had best be made by thoroughly disinterested neutrals."

One final act in the expulsion had yet to be performed. The Assembly had to accept the vote of the Council.

Mr. Vernon Bartlett, M.P., described this final act in the *News Chronicle* of the 15th December, 1939:

> " The League members are not unanimously happy about the expulsion of Russia. The first delegate who addressed the Assembly this morning, the delegate of Portugal, emphasised the sinister possibility of this step. . . . He was so obviously more pleased that a blow had been struck at Communism than that a step had been taken to help a small nation attacked by a great one. Millions of workers all the world over will resent the way in which this Portuguese delegate, speaking as Chairman of the special Assembly Committee, recalled the Russian intervention in Spain, but forgot to mention the reactionary rebellion supported by German Nazis and Italian Fascists, which caused that intervention."

A different attitude was adopted by the delegate from Mexico, one of the few states on the American Continent which has consistently refused to follow the lead of the United States; he pointed out that the League existed to settle disputes. and " not to provide a screen behind which political interests could take shelter."

As the session proceeded, it appeared, as the *Daily Telegraph* remarked, that " enthusiasm for punitive measures varies with the distance from the field of conflict—which is human if not heroic." The majority of the smaller European states refused

to vote at all; Holland, Switzerland, and the Scandinavian and Baltic states abstained; Hungary and the Balkan States were either absent or did not vote, nor did Afghanistan and Iran. The U.S.S.R. was expelled by the votes of Great Britain, France, their Allies and "client states," and by the client states of the U.S.A.

GENEVA TIGHT-ROPE

It is clear from the report of the proceedings in the *New York Times* that a good deal of careful management was required to bring off the expulsion at all, especially as no serious League decision had ever previously been carried through without a unanimous vote, that is, without even an abstention. The *New York Times*' Geneva correspondent reports the matter thus:

"During the morning meeting of the Assembly, *seventeen* speakers went to the tribune to state the attitude of their governments. While *six* were forthright in their demand that the letter of the law should be applied, *eleven* made reservations of one kind or another. The six were, in the order of their speaking, Portugal, India, Ecuador, France, Britain and Poland. The eleven were Mexico, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Belgium, Sweden, Norway, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, China and Bulgaria.

"With this division of opinion, the business of getting a unanimous vote or anything like it looked extremely precarious. But that astute and forceful presiding officer, Carl J. Hambro, the president of the Norwegian Storting, managed it majestically. No country had defended Russia, and no one had declared out and out that it did not approve of the draft report with its condemnation and recommendations to the Council.

"How they voted, however, depended on how the alternative was presented. Dr. Hambro did not give them time. As soon as the last of the speakers sat down, he announced:

"'The Assembly will have taken note of all the declarations

that have been made. I do not think, therefore, that it is necessary to take a vote by roll-call. If there are no observations to the contrary, the Assembly will vote according to the ordinary method.'

" He barely paused for breath, and added :

" ' There being no observations to the contrary, I will ask all delegates who are in favour of the report to remain seated.'

" It would have taken a brave man to have risen to his feet at that moment and so proclaim himself in favour of Russia. No one moved."

So ended this momentous meeting of the League of Nations. Having systematically been held back from action when inaction was shameful and inexcusable, it was finally led to swift action in circumstances and in a manner which demonstrated even to the most charitable that nothing but political objection to the accused was moving the judges. The League had ignored aggression against Czecho-Slovakia, against Albania, and against China. It had, out of respect for Swiss neutrality, refused to discuss the aggressions of Germany ; finally, it had, by gerrymandering the Council elections and appointing a special Committee of states known to be hostile to the Soviet Union, secured the expulsion of that country. " In the difficult circumstances," wrote *The Times*, with matchless hypocrisy in a leading article of the 16th December, 1939, " the League of Nations has acted with firmness, dignity and despatch, and has once more played the part of the political conscience of mankind." If the manœuvres in the Assembly and on the Council are any indication, mankind had a particularly uneasy political conscience.

Before dispersing, the Council authorised the Secretariat to take one action which cleared the way for the organisation of intervention on behalf of Baron Mannerheim upon a world scale, namely, to consult with non-members of the League on the matter. The way was thus cleared for collaboration with the United States, with Italy, with Japan, and even with Germany.

COMPARE SPAIN

For comparison's sake, in order to see how the action, both of the League of Nations and of Britain, in respect of Finland differed from their action in relation to a genuinely democratic power, it is of value to contrast the treatment of Spain with that accorded to Finland.

Most people are familiar with the history of the recent Spanish civil war and of the policy of "Non-Intervention," inaugurated by the British and French governments; but for convenience' sake, I will restate the salient facts very briefly.

Civil war broke out in Spain in July, 1936. Under international law no government is entitled to supply arms or give any assistance whatsoever to rebels against an existing recognised government. Germany and Italy at that time, like the rest of the world, recognised the Spanish government; and, indeed, for the first three months of the war they maintained embassies in Spanish government territory. Nevertheless, from the very first days of the outbreak, and even before, they supplied arms and munitions to the rebels. Of this there is now no shadow of doubt, since both Hitler and Mussolini have publicly admitted it. Thus, for example, in a speech on the 6th June, 1939, to the returned German troops from Spain, Hitler said:

> "In July, 1936, I decided to accede to the request for help which General Franco addressed to me."

Two days later, at a banquet given in Rome to Franco's Minister of the Interior, Mussolini said:

> "We did not hesitate to give our full aid openly from the first days right up to the final victory."

Such help amounts, in international law and in common sense, to aggression.

THE NON-INTERVENTION SWINDLE

Instead, however, of referring the matter to an emergency meeting of the League, as was done with the Finnish conflict,

the British and French governments set up the Non-Intervention Committee. "Non-Intervention" was ostensibly designed to prevent the granting of "full aid openly" to the rebels, of which Mussolini has since boasted. It was based on a complete denial of international law. In effect, the British and the French governments said to Germany and Italy: "It is quite true that under international law the Spanish government is fully entitled to buy all the arms it wishes from us. It is quite true that it is a serious breach of international law for you to permit arms to be supplied from your countries to the rebels. If you will kindly agree not to break international law by committing this offence, we will agree in return to deprive the Spanish government of its legal rights to buy arms." Not unnaturally Germany and Italy agreed to this advantageous compromise. In return for a promise not to support Franco, which they had no more intention of keeping than they had of observing their previous obligations under international law, Germany and Italy secured from the democratic powers a guarantee in effect to blockade Spain—a guarantee which was pretty steadily fulfilled.

Throughout the civil war the Spanish Republican government never asked more from the League of Nations than that it should reverse this Non-Intervention Agreement and, since the rebels were obtaining all they desired from Italy and Germany, allow the Spanish government the ordinary rights to purchase arms abroad which it possessed under international law and could, but for the Non-Intervention Agreement, have freely exercised.

At no period did Germany or Italy cease from, as Mussolini put it, giving "full aid openly." In June 1939, the Italian military journal, *Forze Armate*, published a summary of Italian assistance to Franco, in the course of which it stated that during the four months from the 15th December, 1936, to the 15th April, 1937, not less than 100,000 men, 4,370 motor vehicles, 40,000 tons of war materials, and 750 guns were transported to Spain.

The organisation for detecting and suppressing such breeches of the agreement was the Non-Intervention Committee. Looking back on the failure of this body to establish any one

instance of a breach of the Non-Intervention Agreement and upon the failure of the British government ever on its own account to detect any activity by Germany or Italy inconsistent with their promises, one is forced to the view that British statesmen knew of the aggression which was taking place and deliberately misled the public. Since Mr. Eden ultimately resigned over the issue of Italian intervention, it is possible that his only fault was that of a complete inability to appreciate for a long time what was taking place, and not a deliberate attempt to deceive, e.g., when he replied to a question in the House of Commons on the 22nd March, 1937, as to whether the British Government had any information about the presence of Italian troops in Spain. Mr. Eden's answer was: "If by Italian troops the Honourable Member means units of the Italian Army, I have no evidence which establishes the landing of such units in Spain."

It will be remembered that this answer was given towards the end of that four months' period in which the *Forze Armate* assures us that not less than 100,000 men had been transported by Italian naval units. But while Mr. Eden may have been deceived not every member of the government could have been so blind.

Indeed, it gradually came to be admitted that Non-Intervention was a failure from the point of view of preventing supplies reaching Franco, and it was then alleged that its principal virtue lay in keeping Great Britain out of war. It was said time and time again, almost in so many words, that if Great Britain and France dropped the pretence of Non-Intervention, Germany and Italy would provoke a European war.

This inglorious excuse was to this effect: "The aggressors may be breaking the agreement; but, if we renounce the agreement because they are utterly repudiating it, they may aggress against us too. So we will go on keeping it, and depriving the legitimate government of the right to buy arms to resist the aggression, whilst the aggressors go on breaking it and supplying troops, aeroplanes and ammunition to the rebels." But it grew worse; for the alleged fear that the war would spread if Britain did anything, however small and

however honest, likely to assist the lawful government of Spain or its citizens, was soon made the cover for refusing to perform or even permit the most universally recognised acts of humanitarian relief.

To take one example. In October, 1937, German aircraft were mercilessly bombing the last strongholds of the Asturian miners in Northern Spain. Women and children were crowded into the little seaport of Gijon waiting for an opportunity to escape to sea. Outside territorial waters lay a ring of British ships which the Admiralty would not allow to approach the shore to pick up survivors in the water. The master of a British ship thus described the scene:

> "It was the most terrible sight I have ever seen. The city (Gijon) was a mass of flames . . . flames were roaring hundreds of feet into the air and silhouetted against the blaze I could see thousands of people running to the harbour. Women and children jumped into the water. They seemed to have no idea of what they were doing except trying to escape the flames."

WATCHING THEM DROWN

Mr. Duff Cooper, to whom one can at any rate pay the compliment that speech was not given to him to conceal his thoughts, in a debate in the House of Commons in which this statement had been read out, defended the policy of Non-Intervention as follows:

> "We have been told of people drowning near the shore in territorial waters and we are asked whether we can complacently think of His Majesty's ships within reach of these people not going into territorial waters and rescuing them. It is not pleasing for neutrals to watch the sufferings of those taking part in war and refuse to intervene, but it is a sound policy that they should not intervene . . . we have been told that when people have plunged into the water near the shore they would not be able to swim very far and ships could not go into those shallow waters. They could

of course send their barges or dinghies into the shallow water . . . what would be the position then? A strong man perhaps has swum as far as the launch or dinghy and he says, 'There are my wife and children on the shore. Are you going to take me and leave them?' . . . where are you going to draw the line, however? On the beach? The man might say, 'My sick mother is only three miles inland. Can you take her?' Before you knew where you were the whole policy of Non-Intervention would be broken down."

In short, those same British Ministers who in the main make up the Cabinet to-day and are prepared to give up aeroplanes in the middle of a great war and run the risk of adding Russia to Germany as our enemy, ostensibly for the sake of Finland, were not prepared for the sake of Spain to perform even those humanitarian acts which every day in this present war neutrals like Denmark and Holland are prepared to perform for British seamen.

Let me quote again from Mr. Duff Cooper when First Lord of the Admiralty.

In a discussion in Parliament on a demand by the Opposition that the Government should at least protect British ships from attack and capture by rebel vessels (which in international law had the status of pirates) when they were engaged in evacuating non-combatant refugees from Santander, one member was naive enough to intervene with a reference to "common humanity" as something which might lead the Government to give such protection, rather than let British warships stand idly by as spectators of the proceedings. Immediately he heard these two words, Mr. Duff Cooper retorted with some heat:

"That is the most useless suggestion I have ever heard. Common humanity in this case would mean firing on a Spanish ship, entering into the war, and risking the lives of British sailors for a cause which not one man in this country off those (the Opposition) benches thinks worth fighting for.

'Saving women and children,' blurts the Right Honourable member, the same demand might have been put up by some enthusiastic pro-German in the United States in the War, insisting on the United States carrying supplies to Germany, when we were blockading that country, and saving women and children."

In considering the case of Finland readers may well ponder over this frank admission first that, in view of the British Government which Mr. Duff Cooper was then representing, the cause of democracy for which the Spanish government was then fighting was not worth a single British life. The same government, in order to assist the anti-democratic Finnish government, is prepared to risk thousands of British lives by involving Britain in a war more devastating than could conceivably be imagined.

So much for the policy of Non-Intervention and the ruling ideas of those who manipulated it. Now, with this background, let us see how the League of Nations treated Spain's appeal.

A DEMOCRATIC STATE APPEALS

In September, 1937, the Foreign Minister of the Spanish Republic, Señor del Vayo, appealed to the League to raise the embargo on the purchase of arms by the Republic and restore to her her rights under international law, taken away by the Non-Intervention Agreement. Señor del Vayo, reported *The Times* correspondent from Geneva, "asked the League to recognise Spain as the victim of German and Italian aggression. It was a bitter speech, though few delegates here would say it was unjustifiably bitter from the Valencia point of view. Señor del Vayo produced chapter and verse for all the examples of aggression which he quoted . . . told of the bombing and shelling of Spanish towns by the foreign troops, and read speeches and telegrams from Signor Mussolini and Herr Hitler in praise and open support of General Franco."

At this time Italy was still a member of the League, for though she had given notice of resignation this notice did not

become effective until December, 1939. Italy had now for a year, in Mussolini's own words, given "full aid openly." She had thus broken international law, violated the League Covenant, and broken the Non-Intervention Agreement. She was clearly, by all the rules of international law, an aggressor both against Spain and against all the other nations who were parties to the Non-Intervention Agreement, and a violator of solemn international undertakings. There was no talk, however, of determination "to oppose the decay of moral values," to borrow Argentine's phrase in proposing the expulsion of the Soviet Union. Nobody suggested the expulsion of Italy, least of all Britain, whose Prime Minister a few months later was to visit Rome and lift his glass in toast to "His Majesty the King of Italy and Emperor of Ethiopia." The most that was proposed to do was to pass a "strong" resolution, and a drafting committee was set up to prepare it. The Spanish delegate suggested they should include the phrase "aggression by Germany and Italy"; this was, however, immediately quashed, it being said that the actual naming of countries was provocative, and the words "by Germany and Italy" were accordingly omitted. Even so, it failed to meet with the approval of the drafting committee. Eire, who as a member of the Committee of Fourteen joined in the drafting of the strong resolution against the U.S.S.R., on this occasion considered that the resolution was still too positive. The resolution implied, said Mr. de Valera, that in the event of aggression against the Spanish Republic still continuing Non-Intervention should be abandoned; and under no circumstances was Eire prepared to abandon Non-Intervention. To meet this point of view the resolution was further emasculated and finally submitted to the Assembly.

It will be recalled that in voting the expulsion of the Soviet Union it was not regarded as necessary to secure a unanimous vote of the Assembly, but the opposite rule prevailed in dealing with a resolution which might tend to restore to the Spanish Republic its undoubted rights under international law. A single vote against the resolution was enough; and it came from Portugal, who was destined in 1939 for the chairmanship of the Committee of Fourteen which organised the expulsion

of the U.S.S.R. Albania, Italy's ever faithful if unfortunate client state, also voted against it.

Lord Cranborne, then Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, thus explained to the House of Commons why the League could not act on behalf of Spain:

> "The League is completely divided on the question of Spain. The members are not united, and I think the reason is a very simple one. It is that the war in Spain is not an ordinary civil war where there is merely fighting between two completely national factions but has a certain ideological factor; and it is on that ideological factor that the League is divided. . . . I would point out to the House that His Majesty's Government did their very utmost to find a declaration of policy which would harmonise all views and enable the League to present a united front to the world. In spite of days and days of long and arduous negotiations they were unable to find a form of words that would do that and actually various nations voted against the resolution . . . there were fourteen nations—among them two members of the British Commonwealth of Nations—which abstained and . . . at Geneva an abstention means that the nation giving it does not agree with the resolution . . . therefore it is clear that whatever honourable members may have hoped in the past, the League cannot and will not at the present time take action in the Spanish dispute."

Among the fourteen nations which abstained were many of the South American countries who took a prominent part in expelling the Soviet Union. The two members of the British Commonwealth of Nations referred to were Eire and South Africa, of which the former was a prominent member of the Committee of Fourteen dealing with the Soviet-Finnish dispute, whilst the latter was elected to the Council and was one of the seven nations which voted for the expulsion of the Soviet Union.

NO ARMS FOR SPAIN

In one more particular there occurs a remarkable dissimilarity between the treatment of Finland and that of Spain.

Though Britain to-day is engaged in a major war, which according to the statements made by most leading members of the government necessitates the employment to the full of all her resources, she has nevertheless been able to contribute war material to Finland.

It was quite otherwise with Spain. Britain was not then engaged in war at all, but time and time again the government assured the House of Commons that, even if Non-Intervention were abolished, Britain could not possibly supply any arms at all to Spain as they were all needed for home defence; and this argument played no small part in persuading public opinion to acquiesce in the maintenance of the policy of non-intervention.

As early as October, 1936, Mr. Eden, then Foreign Secretary, explained to the House of Commons:

> "On the insurgent side were the majority of the army, and the insurgents possessed the greater part of the Spanish arsenals; in consequence they began better armed, better equipped and better disciplined. That certainly was the position."

One might imagine that these arguments were all excellent reasons why Britain should allow the Spanish government the undoubted right which belonged to it under international law to purchase arms abroad. But no, to Mr. Eden all these points appeared as arguments in favour of non-intervention because, as he explained, this disparity would be even further increased, if there was no non-intervention, by further supplies from Germany and Italy! This argument, needless to say, ignored the point that, even without the non-intervention agreement, it was quite illegal for Germany and Italy to send supplies to the rebels, and therefore the League would be quite justified and indeed bound to concert action to prevent it.

Moreover, even with the Non-Intervention Agreement, Italy and Germany continued to pour in material, so that the disparity did in fact increase all the time. But he came back to his great point, that there were no arms in Britain which could be possibly spared for Spain.

> "Does anyone in this House," he said, "imagine that there is waiting in this country a large surplus of arms ready for immediate exportation. . . . There is not in this country an immediate surplus of arms ready for export and whatever our policies might have been had there been no non-intervention, a supply from this country could not have had an important bearing on the result."

Two years later Mr. Chamberlain repeated the same argument:

> "So far as this country is concerned," he said, "the effect of allowing the government of Spain to purchase arms would be very little because we ourselves obviously want all the armaments that are in our possession for our own protection."

In time of peace, at a time when, it should be noted according to the Prime Minister's own statements he did not anticipate any war, it was thus said to be impossible for the greatest armament-exporting country in the world to provide arms for the defence of Spanish democracy. Scarcely ten months later, when Britain herself was involved in a desperate struggle, the British government found that they could easily spare munitions of war and aircraft to assist the anti-democratic Finnish régime.

Speaking in the House of Commons on the 14th December, 1939, Mr. Chamberlain said:

> "At the outset of the attack on Finland and before the question had been raised at Geneva, His Majesty's Government decided to permit the release and immediate delivery to Finland by the manufacturers concerned of a number of

fighter aircraft of which the Finnish government stood in urgent need, and they intend similarly to release other material that will be of assistance to the Finnish government."

Thus it will be seen that in deciding to aid Finland the British government anticipated the decision of the League. It is interesting to recall that in exactly the same way the British government anticipated the formation of the Non-Intervention Committee and banned the export of war material to Spain before either Germany or Italy had consented to the Non-Intervention Agreement.

One last observation on this point. It is significant that in December, 1937, i.e., approximately half-way between Mr. Eden's statement in October, 1936, and Mr. Chamberlain's in December, 1938, as to the impossibility of sparing arms for Spain, the Government as already mentioned admitted that there were licensing the supply of " Blenheim " bombers—to Finland.

It is useful at the same time to examine the attitude in this matter of the American government; we have already had a glimpse of their Press.

ROOSEVELT WRITES A LETTER

The United States of America is not a member of the League of Nations and never has been. No American politician would dare to suggest her joining the League of Nations to which, as a British-controlled organisation, there is a traditional aversion. Nevertheless, successive administrations have found it convenient for the U.S.A. to make its voice heard at Geneva, usually through the medium of one of the Latin American " client " states. Less often an American observer has been sent.

When the League dealt with the Finnish question most of the Latin American states took up a standpoint which was probably in accord with the known attitude of Washington. For the United States Government had very early made its attitude clear.

Long before the 30th November, in spite of the strength of public opinion in the U.S.A. against any meddling with Europe, particularly in war-time, the U.S. Government took a diplomatic step of somewhat unusual character. On the 12th October, a few hours before the first meeting of the negotiators in Moscow, when there was no sign or expectation of anything but very amicable discussions between the U.S.S.R. and Finland, the U.S. Ambassador in Moscow presented a message to the Chairman of the Supreme Soviet, Michael Kalinin, expressing the "earnest hope" that nothing should occur which might "injuriously effect the peaceful relations between Soviet Russia and Finland."

This was an unprecedented step to take, at any rate in recent years, with any but a client state. According to *The Times* of the 13th October, it was explained in Washington that the principal reason for sending this message was that:

> ". . . the fact that Finland is the only debtor of the United States on the war account which consistently fulfilled her obligations gives that country a special position in the American esteem."

This seems a little inconsistent with any high moral tone. It amounts to saying:

"If you are thinking of any hostile action against my only good debtor, please leave her alone. If she didn't pay her debts, you could do as you liked!"

It might have been thought that as a corrollary to the Monroe Doctrine in the Western hemisphere, there would have been reluctance on the part of the U.S.A to intervene in the Eastern hemisphere. In the course of the past twenty years Washington has more than once had most unfriendly discussions with one or other of the Latin American states, but neither the Soviet Government nor any other European state has thought it proper to intervene in such discussions. One can imagine the umbrage that would have been taken by the government of the United States had any such message been sent to it, for example, in the Nicaragua disputes, of which details are given in the Catalogue of Aggressions, on page 251.

KALININ REPLIES

The reply from Kalinin ran as follows:

"I consider it proper to remind you, Mr. Roosevelt, that the political independence of the Republic of Finland was recognised by the free will of the Soviet Government on December 31, 1917, and that the Sovereignty of Finland was secured to her by the treaty of peace between the R.S.F.S.R. and Finland of October 14, 1920. These acts of the Soviet Government defined the fundamental principles governing the relations between the Soviet Union and Finland.

"It is in comformity with these principles that the present negotiations between the Soviet Government and the Government of Finland are being conducted. Contrary to the tendentious versions spread by circles who are evidently not interested in European peace, the sole object of these negotiations is to consolidate the relations between the Soviet Union and Finland and to strengthen the peaceful co-operation of the two countries in the matter of safeguarding the security of the Soviet Union and Finland."

(Hostile critics may suggest that this letter is hypocritical; but the excellent record of the Soviet Government for consistency in policy, and still more all the circumstances of the negotiations and of the actions taken in connexion with Finland, set out in this book, really do entitle the U.S.S.R. to claim that its sincerity should be recognised.)

The episode of this letter gives ground for believing, as does the Press campaign mentioned above in Chapter VII, that the U.S.A. Government was beginning to join in the general campaign against the U.S.S.R.; but an even more revealing piece of evidence emerges in connexion with the attitude of the U.S.A. to relations between the Soviet Union and Japan. To the U.S.A., the Soviet Union is, of course, a Pacific Ocean state; and the U.S.A. is strategically and economically interested in the balance of power in the Pacific. It has, too, great interests in the Chinese market.

Now, throughout the last ten years, when the peace of the Soviet-Manchurian and Mongolian-Manchurian frontiers has been constantly disturbed, the U.S.A. has watched these troubles with complete equanimity. In particular, from May right up to the middle of September of 1939, there had been hostilities going on upon these borders between Japanese-Manchurian and Soviet-Mongolian troops—not mere frontier incidents but serious hostilities engaging all arms, including aeroplanes and heavy artillery; there were several sanguinary battles. The U.S.A. did not intervene, even by sending messages, either from humanitarian or commercial motives.

But when, on the 15th September, 1939, there was concluded in Moscow a Soviet-Japanese agreement which stopped hostilities, improved existing Soviet-Japanese relations, appointed a joint frontier commission, and opened up the possibilities of Soviet-Japanese trade negotiations, this was apparently not at all to the liking of the American Government. So soon as it thus appeared possible that some friendlier relations might be established between Japan and the U.S.S.R., and might even take the form of a non-aggression pact, the American ambassador called on the Tokyo Foreign Office and made representations as a result of which a statement was issued by the Foreign Office denying that these friendlier relations were being negotiated.

It was thus to be expected that, when the situation was changed on the 30th November, the U.S.A. Government should offer help to Finland. It at once announced that it was ready to forego the use of the Finnish debt and to put it aside as a fund for the benefit of the Finnish Government; and oil firms were notified by the President that they should not consider supplying petrol to the U.S.S.R. (which one would suppose the U.S.S.R. had no intention of buying from them).

In addition, Senator Key Pittman, Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the U.S. Senate, called at the State Department to present arguments in favour of breaking off diplomatic relations.

This sudden readiness of the U.S.A. to risk becoming entangled in a European war, in the face of the intense aversion of the great mass of the population to any such entanglement,

is significant. It cannot be explained on grounds of high moral principles; as I have said before, governments do not risk great wars for such reasons, and the attitude and behaviour of the U.S.A. Government and Press long before the 30th November makes it plain that the campaign existed before the hostilities in Finland, and would presumably have been carried on if they had never happened. The suspicion must be very strong that American influences, and possibly British influences, too, desiring to bring the U.S.A. into the present war, are seeking for an indirect way of bringing her in by trading on the intense hostility of her ruling class to Socialism.

A WARNING

I must end this chapter with a warning. If the British Government is—as it plainly is—embarking on fomenting a "war of rival ideologies," to borrow the terminology which so many Ministers use when they are earnestly assuring us that they would never allow the country to be involved in such a war under any circumstances, we must remember that the U.S.S.R. will of necessity defend herself against any such attack. The time has gone by when she could hope to rely upon collective security, or international goodwill, or on anything but the rule of force which Europe has now enthroned as the only influence that counts, for the protection of her interests. As Sir Norman Angell wrote in his latest book:

> "The West having rejected the Collective Security in which she was prepared to co-operate, she had had to turn to the development of her own national power as the only available alternative."

People in Britain, whatever their point of view, must realise what this means. The people of the U.S.S.R. do not regard themselves as barbarous; they think that they are building up a much finer civilisation than ours, a better one materially and culturally, a civilisation in which men and women can develop their minds and bodies in security, irrespective of the colour of their skins, the class into which they were born, or the

material wealth of their parents, and can put them to every use except the exploitation of each other for profit. It does not matter whether they are right or wrong in this view; the point is that, holding that view, and thinking that the capitalist countries want to destroy their civilisation, they will obviously defend their country with all the strength they have, by the only effective weapons to which capitalist barbarism, as they view it, concedes any respect, the weapons with which they expect to be attacked. If the changing manœuvres of their enemies render any other point of land as vital to their defence as Hangö, they will seek to take it, for they are not prepared to commit suicide when they are so profoundly convinced that they are fit to remain alive.

CONCLUSION

I AM now at the end of this sorry and sordid story. It is a picture of the British (and other) governments, which might have re-established the peace of the world by an agreement with the U.S.S.R. last summer, contemplating deliberately, for the defence of the capitalist system—which is surely doomed, anyhow—the extension of the present war to embrace 180,000,000 people in the Soviet Union—and perhaps 140,000,000 in the United States, a war which might last for years. War spreads like a forest fire, and if these reactionaries have their way, they will burn down the world in the ineffectual effort to save their own position in it.

It would seem at first sight that no humane person, no sane person even, could do anything but seek at all costs to prevent such a horror coming to pass; and yet we see great masses of people, including many with some political knowledge and experience, allowing themselves to be drawn into the game and adding to the danger. (Some, even, take up the attitude of vigorously condemning the U.S.S.R. and at the same time protesting against the cry for war against her; they remind me of a man throwing petrol on a fire while he calls for help to put it out.)

Is there any gleam of hope in this tragic mixture of hypocrisy, murder, and ideological warfare? I think there is; it lies with the mass of decent people in Britain. Once before, in 1920, when the British Government was egging on the Poles and equipping them for a war of aggression against the Soviet Republic, working-class resentment and hostility in this country forced them to abandon the project. To-day, whilst it seems for a moment as if the war-mongers were having propaganda successes, governments are more conscious than

ever of the necessity for placating public opinion, and of the real impossibility of carrying on any war for long unless they can keep the support of an immense majority of the population. It is thus relatively easy for even a small body of opinion to make the Government halt before it is too late.

It is thus quite within our powers to prevent this war being spread, or switched, to the U.S.S.R. A comparatively modest proportion of the men in the street can do it, if they wish. And surely they must wish to stop it, if they think what it means. They do not need to be Socialists; they do not need to be interested in the Soviet Union; they do not need to be left wing or right wing; they do not need even to want to avoid the deaths of millions of Soviet citizens; it is enough if they want to avoid the deaths of millions of their own fellow-countrymen, who will surely die, and die to no purpose, if our ruling class is allowed to fight the new Socialist state in the effort to maintain their own system.

CATALOGUE

OF THE AGGRESSIONS AND INTERVENTIONS OF THE MAJOR POWERS FROM THE OUTBREAK OF THE WAR OF 1914–18 TO THE OUTBREAK OF THE PRESENT WAR

1915 Aggression by Britain, France and Tsarist Russia against Greece.

Allied troops, despite protests by Greece, occupy Salonika, a Greek port.

1916 Intervention by the U.S.A. in Mexico: U.S. troops operate against General Villa during the Mexican Civil War.

1916 Further aggression by Britain, France and Tsarist Russia against Greece.

Allied troops occupy Corfu and Greek Islands, though Greece is neutral. The Allied fleet blockades the Greek mainland to enforce a change of government and a Greek demobilisation.

1917 Aggression by Britain against Persia.

Though Persia was neutral in the Great War British troops occupied the greater part of the country, including the capital Teheran.

1917 Aggression by Britain, France and Russia against Greece.

The Allies withdraw recognition from the Greek government of King Constantine in Athens, recognise a revolutionary government set up in Salonika, land troops in Greece and compel King Constantine to abdicate.

1918 Intervention by Germany in Finland.
German troops invade the country and occupy Helsinki.

1918 Aggression by Britain against the Soviet Republic.
British troops are landed at Murmansk.

1918 Aggression by France against the Soviet Republic.
French troops landed at Odessa.

1918 Aggression by Germany against the Soviet Republic.
After the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk German troops occupy the Ukraine and beyond.

1919 Intervention by France and Britain (assisted by Rumania and Jugoslavia) in Hungary.
Allied troops enter Hungary to assist the Whites to drive out the communist government.

1919–1922 Intervention by Japan against the Soviet Republic.
Japanese troops occupy the eastern and maritime provinces of Soviet Asia.

1919 Allied Intervention against the Soviet Republic.
British and French contingents and naval forces support the anti-Soviet military bloc of Kolchak, Denikin, Yudenich and Mannerheim. British forces operate against the Soviet Union in the Caucasus and Turkestan.

1919 Allied Intervention against the Soviet Union.
British and French troops and naval forces in the Baltic and the Black Sea are used to support Denikin and Yudenich, and assistance is given by the Allies to Poland to attack the Soviet Union.

1919 Aggression by Italy against Jugoslavia.
D'Annunzio with a body of Italian "volunteers" seizes Fiume.

1920 Allied Intervention against the Soviet Union.
British and French materials and naval forces are employed to assist Poland in war with U.S.S.R. and General Wrangel fighting in the Crimea.

1920 Aggression by Poland against Lithuania.
Without declaration of war Polish troops seize and occupy Vilna, the capital of Lithuania.

1921–1922 Finnish intervention in the Soviet Union.

Finnish White Guard forces attempt to provoke Civil War in Northern Russia and invade Soviet Karelia.

1923 French intervention in Germany.

French troops occupy the Ruhr district of Germany. Efforts are made by the French to set up a separatist movement in the Rhineland.

1923 Aggression by Italy against Greece.

Italy seizes Corfu and occupies it temporarily. (League of Nations makes Italy withdraw).

1925 Intervention by Britain and the United States in China.

British and U.S. naval forces landed at Hankow.

1926 United States intervention in Nicaragua.

The United States support a *coup d'état* by the conservative party against the liberal president of Nicaragua, who intended bringing in various financial and land reforms thought to be injurious to foreign interests.

1927 Further United States intervention in Nicaragua.

(Note from the Annual Register for 1927: "The year 1926 had ended with a great victory of the liberal over the conservative forces . . . the United States, however, without directly intervening, placed insuperable obstacles in their way. It sent additional forces to Nicaragua which gave at least moral support to General Diaz (the conservative leader) and it extended the neutral zones, a step the effect of which was to set free conservative forces and to hamper the movements of the liberals. Also in March it allowed General Diaz to purchase on credit 200,000 dollars worth of munitions from the United States war department. . . . Fighting went on without decisive results, accompanied by much bloodshed and great cruelty." Finally President Coolidge sent an envoy, Mr. Stimson, to Nicaragua. "Mr. Stimson told General Moncaba (the liberal leader) in plain terms that if he and his followers did not lay down their arms the United States would use force against them. In face of this threat the liberal leader considered that

he had no option except to comply with Mr. Stimson's demands. . . . A section of them, however, under General Sandino continued to hold out in the mountains of the north . . . in an engagement . . . some 300 of the rebels out of a force of 500 were mown down by machine-gun fire from United States aeroplanes while the United States troops did not lose more than a couple of men. . . . In spite of the efforts of this and other bands the pacification of the country went on apace and when General McCoy, who had been sent by President Coolidge to supervise the presidential elections, arrived . . . he expressed satisfaction at the change which had taken place.")

1927 British and other intervention in China.

During the Chinese Civil War British expeditionary forces of 20,000 men are sent to Shanghai and Nanking bombarded.

1928 Japanese intervention in China.

The Japanese occupy Shantung.

1928 Further United States intervention in Nicaragua.

1929 Aggression by the Chinese War Lords in Manchuria against the Soviet Union.

Attacks are made by Chinese troops upon the Russian-owned and managed Chinese Eastern railway which runs through Manchuria and connects Vladivostok with the Trans-Siberian railway.

1931 Aggression by Japan against China.

Japanese troops invade and seize Manchuria and part of North China.

1931–38 Continual aggression by Japan against the U.S.S.R. in the form of frontier attacks.

After the Japanese occupation of Manchuria there are continuous violations of the Soviet frontier by the Japanese, and numerous incidents.

1933 Further aggression by Japan against China.

Japanese forces seize Jehol and parts of Hopei two provinces of China.