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LEVIATHAN
AND THE PEOPLE

R. M. MACIVER

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FOREWORD

For what they have done to bring into being this book, prepared under the auspices of the Edward Douglass White Lectures, I express my particular thanks to Charles W. Pipkin, Dean of the Graduate School, Louisiana State University, and to Marcus M. Wilkerson, Director of the Louisiana State University Press.

R. M. MACIVER

Columbia University
July, 1939

CONTENTS

	PAGE
FOREWORD	v
 PART ONE: THE OPPOSING PRINCIPLES	
I THE NEW LEVIATHAN	3
The Old and the New Leviathan	3
Rise of the New Leviathan	9
Historical Relation of Democracy and Dictatorship	16
The International Aspect	23
 II THE GENIUS OF DICTATORSHIP	31
What Is Common to All Dictatorships	31
Dictatorship and Human Nature	40
Ways of Dictatorship	48
Philosophy of Totalitarianism	57
 -III THE GENIUS OF DEMOCRACY	63
Some Misunderstandings	63
Positive Character of Democracy	70
Democracy and the Economic Order	79

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Final Argument for Democracy	86
The American Contribution	91

PART TWO: COMMENTARY

IV ON THE NEW LEVIATHAN	101
End of Laissez Faire	101
Various Meanings of Dictatorship	104
Crucial Problem of Modern Capitalism	106
Detachment of the Individual in Modern Society	110
Personal Philosophies of Hitler and Mussolini	112
Only Principles Endure	113
The Goal of Autarchy	117

V ON CERTAIN ASPECTS OF DICTATORSHIP	120
Religious Pretensions of Dictatorship	120
The "Reality" of the State	122
Virus of Intolerance in Marxism	124
Attribution of a Fascist Character to the Soviet System	127
Explanations Offered for Fascism and Other Movements	129

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Propaganda as Gospel and Propaganda as Technique	132
Long-Run Effects of Propaganda	135
Meaning of Ideology	137
Co-ordination of Culture	138
Philosophies of Totalitarianism	140
 VI ON CERTAIN ASPECTS OF DEMOCRACY	 142
Dictatorial Claims to be Democratic	142
Confused Thinking about Democracy	145
Effective Range of Public Opinion in a Democracy	148
Democracy and Majority-Rule	151
Distinction of Government and State	153
Distinction of Community and State	154
Democracy and Political Parties	155
Identification of Democracy with a Par- ticular Economic System	157
Democracy and Economic Planning	159
Democracy and Equality	161
Democracy and Liberalism	163
Economic Democracy	168
Psychology of Irresponsible Power	168
 APPENDIX	 173
 INDEX	 177

PART ONE
THE OPPOSING PRINCIPLES

.

I

THE NEW LEVIATHAN

THE OLD AND THE NEW LEVIATHAN

“**U**PON earth there is no power to compare with it”—these words, said of that great Leviathan before which all men tremble, were taken by Thomas Hobbes as the motto for his famous book on the state. And in the frontispiece of his book he pictured a gigantic mailclad figure towering with sword and crozier over the settlements of men. To Leviathan they surrendered their all. To the rights and prerogatives of its sovereignty there were no limits. For men never abide in peace unless there is some power to overawe them all. This power, this “mortal God,” is the state.

When Hobbes published his book in 1651, a dictator was preparing to rule England, the only dictator England has known. Though Hobbes preferred the old monarchy to the new dictatorship he was ready to defend any form of absolute government. But the cause he defended was then already lost. The deeper processes of social change worked on, unheeded of the systems of great philosophers. Leviathan was shrinking. Its omnipotence, its suprem-

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

acy even, was being effectively challenged. It was no longer the complete master of man—there were some who boldly declared that it was only his servant. In fact they took up the challenge concerning the might of Leviathan that was flung at them with proud irony:

Will he make many supplications unto thee? Will he speak soft words unto thee?

Will he make a covenant with thee? Wilt thou take him for a servant for ever?

They did make covenants with Leviathan. They bound him with constitutions. They exacted pledges and guarantees from him. They fenced great areas against him, the first being religion and thereafter immense tracts of economic activity. Less than a century after the death of Hobbes another great English philosopher wrote a still more celebrated book in which he vindicated the "simple system of natural liberty" and declared that the whole of man's work-a-day life was better and more happily regulated when the state left it practically alone.

So far did the state shrink, but no further. Leviathan was not so easily disposed of. The forces of social change regarded Adam Smith no more than they had regarded Thomas Hobbes. Throughout the nineteenth century Western states, even while they were moving towards democracy, came to as-

THE NEW LEVIATHAN

sume ever greater control in the economic sphere. And in the twentieth, the worship of those who revere the state as the "mortal God" has become the accredited religion of a number of countries and finds enthusiastic adherents in all. Nor do these worshippers ground their faith on the practical considerations that influenced the timorous Hobbes. Instead, they find an intrinsic glory in the might and the dominion of the state; they bear it a reverence that would have seemed absurd and scarcely sane to the shrewd and skeptical philosopher of the seventeenth century. The state has indeed become Leviathan again, a new Leviathan—or rather two new and very different Leviathans. One of these is the dictatorial or totalitarian state. The other is modern democracy. For democracy too has taken on the dimensions of Leviathan, though without his terror.

• In these addresses we shall be concerned with the portent and the problem of the modern state. There is much loose talk about democracy and much loud talk about dictatorship. I shall endeavor to avoid both the looseness and the loudness and to discuss with you, as clearly as I can, the essential difference between the two principles. I shall endeavor to present each of them fairly and without distortion, but I shall not take refuge in the false objectivity which deals with human values as though they were not

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

values at all and vainly claims for this indifference the name of science. I shall seek, not to conceal, but to reveal the profound significance of the alternatives that we are facing, and not we alone, but the whole world, broken in its faiths but still one in all its human necessities.

But first let us ask this question: Why has the modern state taken on these vast proportions, these great new functions and powers? Why has Leviathan expanded again in democracy and dictatorship alike? What forces of change have been at work since the time when Adam Smith explained that the wealth of nations depended not on the activity but on the passivity of government? In answering this question I shall call to your attention certain historical facts, facts that are known to us all but the impact of which is frequently not realized. Unless we have in mind the trends of social change we cannot understand the changing political systems of our own times. No doubt it would be much better if we could see the new Leviathan in the light of things yet to come, but lacking this prophetic gift we must be content to see it in the light of the continuing processes that have been fostering its development.

As soon as we seek to do so, one very significant fact at once emerges. It is that the states we think of as democracies have taken their form and character

THE NEW LEVIATHAN

as the result of a long series of adaptations to emergent conditions and needs. They were not created, they evolved. They have been responsive to influences that broadened from generation to generation. At no moment could we have said of them: "Today a democracy has been born." At the end of a thousand transitions they have become democracies, and that status is itself a shifting thing of less and more. Here or there revolution accelerated the process, but most of the work thus erected in haste had to be rebuilt more slowly and on surer foundations. Whereas, the states we call dictatorships took their characteristic pattern almost as swiftly as molten metal cools in a mold. They presented a sudden break in the historical process. They were the offspring of war, crisis, revolution. Had it not been for the violence of world-shaking events they would not have been established. Once established, they formulated their principles with the precision of a textbook and with the dogmatism of a new religion. In an access of rage and fury, bred by accumulated miseries, spurred by external oppression or internal tumult, they destroyed an old order and set a new one in its place.

To gain a perspective on the crucial issue between the totalitarian and the democratic state it is necessary to keep in mind this simple historical fact. Dictatorship is the swift solution of an emergency;

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

democracy is the slow solution of the broad and cumulative problem of government. Dictatorship arises to meet the immediate demands of a crisis or a series of crises; democracy is rooted in the heritage of experience and essays the longer task of adjusting the diverse demands of a complex civilization which must find unity within its differences and must reconcile its order with its liberties. The temporary character of dictatorship is revealed, as we shall see, in all its works, and not least in its proud claim to be eternal.

But we must answer our initial question, why in one form or in another the modern state has expanded in so many directions, why it has so many departments and so many functions, why it is concerned with matters which previous states hardly ever entertained—such as public health, social insurance, unemployment, standards of living, labor conditions, monopoly conditions, competitive practices, banking conditions, conservation of natural resources, control of raw materials, housing, hospitals, educational institutions, institutions for the handicapped, and so forth—why, in short, it impinges so much more directly and so much more frequently on the everyday business of living. We may like the fact or dislike it, but since all states, for all their differences, have moved notably in this direction there must be some good reason for it beyond our likes and our dislikes.

THE NEW LEVIATHAN

RISE OF THE NEW LEVIATHAN

The state took over all these new functions, assumed this new vastness, not because philosophers changed their minds, not because people adopted new fashions of thought, certainly not because they were free to choose between the shrunken laissez faire state and the mighty Leviathan. The state changed because the whole civilization changed. Let me briefly recall to your attention some of the extraordinary changes that have taken place in one of the most remarkable periods of all human history, that lying between the end of the eighteenth century and the present day.

In 1800, 4 per cent of the population of the United States dwelt in cities containing ten thousand or more inhabitants; today the proportion of city dwellers is nearly 50 per cent. In the various countries of Europe during the same period the proportion of city dwellers has increased two-fold, three-fold, four-fold, five-fold, and many-fold. With this process went the shift of the center of economic power from agriculture to industry and again from industry to finance. With it went the increasing mechanization of production and the spread of mechanization from industry to agriculture, from the factory to the office, from the place of work to the place of recreation, from the arts of peace to the arts of war, from the business of making a living

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

to the business of living itself. With it went the triumphant march of technology. With it went the rise of productivity, the unprecedented decline of the death rate and of the birth rate and the steady growth of population, the mobility of employment, the concentration of wealth and of economic controls, all the features of a modern capitalist economy. With it went the growth of a middle class in numbers and in political power. With it went the rise of the great corporation. With it went the organization of labor and the emergence of the class-conscious proletariat. These changes brought new struggles, disturbances, dislocations, culminating in world-wide economic crises. And in the international area new forms of conflict arose, for markets and trading advantages, for investment opportunities, for sources of raw materials, broadly for economic dominance or economic autarchy.

At all times the economic system had been the subject of serious questioning. At all times there had been exploitation and destitution, the waste and the maldistribution of wealth. But these seemed to depend on the selfish interests of men where they did not arise out of what the earlier economists called "the niggardliness of nature." But now that the inventiveness of man was disproving the niggardliness of nature, problems of another order altogether were appearing. Unexpected difficulties emerged in the "free" economy. There was, in particular, the

THE NEW LEVIATHAN

discovery that purchasing power did not automatically expand with the power of industry to produce more and more goods. There was the discovery that the dynamo of the economic system was subject to baffling periodic failures, preventing idle hands from grasping idle tools and idle money from moving idle goods.

Thus far I have been suggesting only the external aspects of the great transition. The inner transformation was no less remarkable. In this great flux men were unmoored from long-established traditions and from accepted mores. Their creeds and their attitudes were deeply disturbed, their adjustments and their loyalties were shaken. With the growth of urban industrialism the family became a smaller and relatively isolated unit in a competitive world. It lost many of its functions. The individual, at least in the cities, could no longer fall back on it for support as in the old days. The sense of neighborhood, of the near community, dwindled, while the sense of nationality, of the great community, gained a new potency. The individual became more mobile, more detached, more competitive, more autonomous, and more insecure. There was a yearning for new certainties where the old ones had failed, a quest for new solidarities and for new faiths. New cults and new religious sects arose, but on the whole authoritative religion lost control of the industrial masses. Economic interest was accompanied by new

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

economic gospels, from Owen and Fourier to Karl Marx, from Marx to Mr. Townsend. The advance of science and the spread of education brought new liberations and new controls, new powers and new insecurities. Foremost among the new controls was that exercised through the new agencies of propaganda, the multiplication of the written word through the press and finally the multiplication of the spoken word through the radio. The latter was a genuine miracle far transcending any of the mythical miracles recorded in human history.

Every one of the changes we have so briefly touched upon had its impact on the state. The state inevitably changed with all the rest. It did not direct the social transformation but it could not effectively resist the underlying forces. Every one of these changes imposed on it new tasks and new responsibilities. We could deal with each of them in turn and show how they all conspired to destroy the assumptions of the shrunken laissez faire state, but the general conclusion is clear enough. It was no change in the fashion of political thinking, it was no return to the outmoded logic of Hobbes, it was the experience of new needs and of new problems that built up the modern state. Gradually, slowly, and even reluctantly, the industrialized states of the Western world moved towards a broader democracy, distinguished from older types by the number and range of its economic activities and of its eco-

THE NEW LEVIATHAN

conomic problems. This was the situation before the Great War came to disrupt the whole process of political development.

The immediate consequences of the war seemed indeed to assure a greater and yet swifter advance of the democratic process. The mighty dynasties of Europe, the Hohenzollern and the Hapsburg, were overthrown, and new republics were set up in their stead. The rest of the world appeared to be joining the march of the victorious democracies. The movement ran from Spain to Turkey.

But the appearance was hollow. The War, and still more the Peace, had left other legacies that the democracies had not reckoned with. The impossible terms of peace, the embitterment of nation with nation and the consequent intensification of the nationalist spirit—nationalism being first the friend and later the foe of democracy—the frustration and collapse that attended both defeat and victory, the profound economic discontents and despairs that burst through the so-called settlement, the temper of an age habituated to the violent discipline of war itself, the inability of the new democratic governments to cope with the tremendous burdens and problems imposed upon them, all these things led to a profound revulsion. In Russia an epoch-making dictatorship had already been set up. To some it was the shining promise of a new and better age, to others it was the last abomination; to

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

all it was a challenge no less formidable than that of the war itself. In Europe the challenge precipitated desperate strife, and in this crisis the clamor rose high against democracy. It was too halting, too confused, too distracted. Men became impatient with democratic methods. They called for the strong man, the dictator. The disturbance of the ordinary conditions of living was so great that, in certain countries, a change of government was not enough. They had to change not the government but the whole system of government. They were in the grip of a desperate need, not only economical but spiritual. They were seeking salvation by resort to a new form of authority, no more the authority of king or emperor or pope but the authority of the prophet arising from the people, the charismatic leader, the man of destiny.

So it came about that the world of modern civilization became sharply divided into two political camps; on the one side the vast Bolshevik dictatorship and the fascist dictatorships of Germany and Italy, with approximations in Poland, Hungary, Lithuania, Jugoslavia, and various other countries, including Japan; on the other side the Western democracies, the United States, France, England, the Scandinavian countries, Holland and Belgium, Switzerland, and the self-governing dominions of the British Empire. In some countries the issue lies in the balance. In all countries it has provoked ten-

THE NEW LEVIATHAN

sions and difficulties. For this issue is not simply one between countries, it has come to be one between principles, between ideals, between human values. The democracies are committed to one scheme of values, but there is uneasiness among them. The dictatorships are committed to another scheme of values, but in spite of all their parade of unity and their hundred-per-cent-or-near-it plebiscites deep uneasiness pervades them too. Everywhere, within as well as between countries, one abiding issue sets the lines of struggle.

In this struggle the democracies, and particularly the two great democracies of Europe, have been on the defensive. By the war settlement they were committed to a cause that from the first was bad and in the end became impossible. The historical realities took no cognizance of the plea that if the Central Powers had dictated the settlement it would have been a still worse one. The democracies defended their bad and undemocratic cause with a bad conscience and therefore with weakness and vacillation. They blundered and bungled, bullied when it was wisdom to concede and conceded when it was wisdom to be strong. They have been shortsighted and thrown away golden opportunities. They refused to meet the reasonable demands of the distressed countries of Central Europe and thus they raised up against themselves new governments that were ready for extreme measures. The dictatorships sum-

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

moned their peoples to action amid the acclaim of multitudes. They exalted the prostrate nationalism of their peoples. The good in their evil brought them to triumph, and the evil in their good defeated the values that democracy cherishes. Myriads were won over to them who disliked their form of government but whose pride had been trampled on and whose hopes had been frustrated by the dominant democracies.

The sudden emergence of these dictatorships in Western civilization broke the longer trend towards democracy, setting up against it a bitterly antagonistic principle. Before we deal with these principles in themselves, let us consider them in the light of their respective historical derivations.

HISTORICAL RELATION OF DEMOCRACY AND DICTATORSHIP

The proponents of dictatorship frequently claim, that democracy is outworn and historically obsolete, that it was a phase characteristic of the nineteenth century, and that in the process of historical evolution dictatorship has taken its place. The fascist philosophers, under such leaders as Gentile and Rocco, pour particular scorn on parliamentary institutions; and Mussolini himself, whose one consistency throughout his career from revolutionary socialist to fascist dictator has been his contempt for democracy, has summed up the position in his

THE NEW LEVIATHAN

famous reference to the decaying corpse of the goddess of liberty.

It is true that all our cherished systems, systems of government or systems of thought, pass away. They have their day and cease to be. Every particular system is a time-product and time devours all its children. If we identify democracy with any specific set of institutions, such as parliamentary procedures or congressional government or modes of popular representation, then doubtless it belongs only to a period. But we shall see later on that democracy cannot be defined in such terms. Institutions change and pass. Only principles endure, principles that have their roots in human nature itself, principles that can be embodied in changing institutional forms. The principle of democracy will outlive any of its historical embodiments, and only the arrogance of the passing hour proclaims its passing.

Modern democracy and modern civilization have grown together, grown through the centuries. Modern dictatorship is a sudden revulsion, brought into being under conditions of grave tension. It was violently born in countries that had not passed through the longer evolutionary processes of democracy. The weak beginnings of Russian democracy were swept away in a consuming tempest and feudal autocracy was transformed into soviet autocracy. The immature republic of Germany was unprepared to meet the economic shocks and the spiritual frustra-

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

tions of the post-war period. Italy had a somewhat longer experience of democracy, but the attitudes of its people, except in the industrial north, were more attuned to regional autocracy than to national democracy. Its whole hierarchical system, political, economic, and religious, had for ages rested on assumptions uncongenial to the democratic spirit. Where, on the other hand, that spirit had long been awake, as in Switzerland, Scandinavia, England, France, and the United States, the movement towards dictatorship has never succeeded. It may be that these countries were not so profoundly shaken by the universal crisis. It may well be that, had the pressure been further intensified, some or all of them would have followed, though more reluctantly, the same road. There are catastrophic conditions under which democracy cannot flourish or even endure. If under such conditions the whole world resorted to dictatorships this phenomenon would offer no evidence for the permanence of that system. Men will take refuge from a storm in caves, but it does not follow that they will continue to live in them. They will crouch in dugouts during a bombardment, but they return to their homes when it is past. In a crisis men must abandon their normal ways, their normal hopes. In the political crisis, for the sake of certainty and swiftness of action, they may be ready to abandon their normal freedom, but

THE NEW LEVIATHAN

there is no reason to assume they will therefore acquiesce in its permanent suppression.

For dictatorship solves the problem of government by cutting out one half of it. The permanent problem of government is to reconcile fundamental liberties with a fundamental order. Liberties cannot be assured without order, but order can be assured, and often is immediately assured, by the sacrifice of liberties. Democracy is the only principle that really seeks to solve the total problem of government. It accepts the demand of men that they participate freely in controlling their own destinies. Through the history of the modern world this demand has been a factor of increasing importance, stimulated as it has been by the specialization of work and of life, by the diversity of groups, by the disappearance of universally accepted dogmas, by the spread of education, by the increase of economic resources, by the breakdown of caste systems, and by the general conditions of urban life. These conditions are not transient and neither is the demand which they stimulate. For a time, under stress, men may hold it in abeyance. But neither the crisis nor the passions which it engenders can last forever. The dictator may seek to stir up new crises, but either way he is in a dilemma. If he does not create a sense of stability he has not fulfilled his promise, he has not given men that for which they were ready

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

to sacrifice their liberties. If he does end the crisis then he ends the reason for his own existence and for the drastic compulsions he imposes. These considerations throw doubt on the claim of permanence, and particularly on the claim that the evolutionary process is one that leads through democracy to dictatorship..

• It is very doubtful whether a system of government congenial to emergency conditions can meet the more normal requirements of civilized man. There is a lack of assurance in the order created by dictatorship wherein the fiat of one man prevails, where there is no difference between decrees and laws, where morality means little except allegiance, where justice is confounded with political expediency, where every career depends on orthodoxy, where honest criticism counts as treason. This lack of assurance bites into the minds of all who are not bound to the cause by powerful emotions or by powerful interests. With the ever-changing tides of human affairs ever larger numbers are likely to lose their first enthusiasm and to join those who walk precariously, as though there were no solid ground beneath their feet.

The dictatorial solution of the problem of government is ⁽⁶⁾not only one-sided, it is also temporary. In the first place it arises in the atmosphere of war. In modern times war is inevitably conducted by semi-dictatorships, thus preparing the way for actual

THE NEW LEVIATHAN

dictatorships. But modern warfare is so destructive that it can occur only at relatively long intervals. The years of peace must vastly outnumber the years of war, even under the worst conditions. The war-bred dictatorship sustains a wartime mentality. It uses military methods and follows military objectives. But times of peace foster a different set of attitudes and the needs of peace are promoted by quite different methods. For example, in the economic area the military-minded dictatorships pursue the goal of autarchy, economic self-sufficiency. In so doing they tend towards the impoverishment of nations, narrowing the economic basis of national activities, limiting the range and the volume of trade and thus the production and the distribution of wealth. Those countries which efficiently follow an opposite principle are certain to enhance their relative economic strength over against the dictatorships. Here, as in other respects, war-minded policies may prove very unfavorable in times of peace. The dictatorships have indeed achieved their triumphs, and these should not be underestimated. But they are triumphs mainly in the re-establishment of a shattered power-system, and after a relatively short time a limit is reached where the further assertion of power is checked by increasing resistance, unless dictatorial policy is willing to plunge the world into war again and thus to dissolve the system it has built.

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

In the spiritual sphere the dictatorial solution is no less temporary. Every dictatorship sets up its particular orthodoxy, its national gospel. How else could it deny men the right to their own opinions, to their own thoughts? It commands men to devote their whole lives, their very being, to its exclusive service. It invests itself with the aura of religion. The leader is the messiah; his words reveal the true faith, and the state is the highest and the holiest good. Even fascism, the most superficial and glib of the new political doctrines, declares itself through the mouth of Mussolini to be a "religious conception." Soviet Russia dethrones other religions, sets up the shrine of Lenin, and makes his iron disciple the new anointed one. Nazi Germany humiliates all other faiths and seeks to replace them by its own dogma of the mystical organism of the nation. It too has its saints and its martyrs, its hymns and its altars. All these dictatorships promise man an abiding place for his distracted, crisis-torn spirit, a refuge from his sense of detachment, a spiritual home in which to rest from his vain yearnings and his endless quest. Unless we recognize this aspect of dictatorship we will fail to understand its hold on the mass of its devotees. But it is more than questionable whether these manufactured faiths provide any permanent substitute for the religions they would displace. Orthodoxy in a church is one thing—where the believers can go apart from other men. Ortho-

THE NEW LEVIATHAN

doxy in a state is another thing altogether, where all within its frontiers must willy-nilly subscribe to the creed. Universal orthodoxy is alien to our complex modern civilization and to our widely diversified culture. Compulsive orthodoxy is at length self-defeating, since it demands the impossible. Even old Hobbes declared that "belief and unbelief never follow men's commands." State orthodoxy has no transcendental revelation to inspire continued reverence and awe, to sustain the faltering believer and to confirm the doubter. Many men challenge it in secret and await the opportunity to challenge it openly. The critical spirit is leashed for a time but at length it must break free. The existence of dictatorship in the modern world is entrusted to an ever more precarious orthodoxy.

These considerations have nothing to do with the temporary service or success of dictatorship. They refer solely to the question of its permanence. They are meant to show the weakness, indeed the vanity, of its proud boast to be the historical heir of democracy.

THE INTERNATIONAL ASPECT

Short gestation usually means short life. The new dictatorship, viewed historically, is the temporary result of an unusually violent, if not unprecedented, crisis in world affairs. The signs of its temporary character are written all over it, in its peculiar de-

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

pendence on the personality of a leader, in its lack of a system of constitutional succession, in its peculiar need for the drastic suppression of the spontaneous tendencies of its people, in the hectic mass emotions which it continually incites. The dictatorship lives on the edge of the moment. Therein lies its striking-power and its own peril. Therein lies also the peril it creates for the longer established and more settled states, while in the name of destiny it takes advantage of its hour. Temporary though it be, it may unloose forces, in the first instance destructive forces, of incalculable importance in world history. We have so far considered only the internal aspects of the new dictatorship, but we cannot see its real significance unless we turn to the international aspect.

The conditions of modern civilization, the conditions which brought into being the great national state, have generally been favorable to, in fact have rendered imperative, some kind of international order. Increasing facility of communication and of contact, diversified large scale production, the development of international trade and of national interdependence, had up to the time of the Great War been preparing the way for an international system. The new dictatorship opposes this trend. It stands for the closed state, closed both economically and culturally. It denies any common interest of humanity. The Soviet dictatorship alone is a partial

THE NEW LEVIATHAN

exception. Faced by a dangerous anti-Communist alliance it has pledged itself to international peace. This is a strategic fact of vast potential importance, even though the peace-seeking states have been too distrustful of communism to make adequate use of it. Nevertheless the fact remains that the Soviet dictatorship, like the rest, detached its country culturally and economically from the rest of the world. In its early days it adopted the principle that its very existence depended on the incitement of the proletarian revolution in other countries. When this policy failed it accepted the inevitable, and though it intensified its cultural detachment, it joined at length the League of Nations and since then has remained committed to the principle of collective security.

In the other dictatorial countries no such considerations have mitigated the effects of exclusiveness. If Soviet Russia wanted an internationalism on its own terms—the spread of the communist revolution to other countries—the Central European dictatorships have opposed internationalism on any terms. They have glorified separation, force, war. They have rejected the comity of nations as the illusion of decadent democracy. The state is the whole, the absolute, the crowning fulfillment of mankind, the march of God on earth, the limit of all morality, all duty, all brotherhood. There is nothing beyond the nation except conflict and alliance for

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

conflict. Each nation lives to itself alone, though one is marked by destiny as superior to all the rest. Each nation is Leviathan trampling through the world jungle, though one is a higher breed than all the rest. No covenant binds them to one another, except as a temporary expedient, broken at will in the struggle for power. The only law of nations is force. "The formation of the nation"—(*das Volk*) as one of their writers, himself a Protestant theologian, puts it, "demands *wrathful separation from others*. . . . Nobody in human history can stand faithfully to his nation without also being obliged to conform to the stern dark ruthless law, 'nation against nation.' " This dark ruthless lawlessness, this rule of the jungle, is what the dictatorships oppose to the hopes and aspirations that have filled the literature of all the great civilizations of the past and that came so close to achievement in the period preceding the Great War. "Mankind is a zoological expression or an empty word," exclaimed Oswald Spengler, one of the advance prophets of Nazism, and the dictators have done all in their power to make it an empty word.

But Hobbes was right when he said that life in the jungle was "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short." Since the unity of civilization has been destroyed by these dictatorships, the condition of all nations, including their own, has been rendered more insecure, more impoverished, more beset by anxieties

THE NEW LEVIATHAN

and dreads, more burdened by monstrous costs of armaments. In the international sphere there is no trust, no honor, no truth; only envy and bitterness and hatred and intrigue, with no solution in sight—so long as the dictatorships prevail—but the unimaginable cataclysm of universal war. The vast creative forces of our modern civilization are turned to the devices of death, its economic resources are consumed in new engines of destruction, its spiritual powers are balked and in many countries stifled. Thus is fulfilled the "dark ruthless law" that the perverted philosophers of dictatorship proclaim. This is the goal to which the nations are led, like sheep to the slaughter, while the exalted leaders preach to the hosts beneath them the empty and the fatal worship of the state. So darkness covers the earth and great darkness the peoples.

- Within their own states the dictators worship force and they persecute truth. In their relations to other states the same attitudes find their fullest expression. They do not know that in the rejection of truth they have blinded themselves to the truth about force itself. Force has indeed played a major role in world history, but never sheer force, only force as the concomitant of the purpose and strength and intelligence of peoples. Sheer force has constructed nothing, certainly not the building of great states and empires. It is no accident that the great empires of the ancient world, Egypt, Athens, Rome, were those

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

of the peoples who in their own times contributed most to the products of the mind. The states that have reached and maintained greatness have applied force to assert advantages that were prior to their force, advantages without which their force would have been as vain and short-lived as the shadows of the passing clouds. On the one hand were their economic opportunities and resources; on the other their enterprise, their character, their mental energy, their skill, their initiative, their adventurous intelligence. When these advantages failed, their force failed also. Moreover, when nearly equal forces meet in conflict, as in modern warfare, the only sure consequence, no matter who wins or loses, is mutual devastation and collapse. And this consequence increasingly outweighs all others with every advance that science contributes to the terrific destructiveness of modern war.

On this account, apart from all other considerations, the only sane solution of the problems that face modern states is one built on the ground the dictators repudiate, that of an international order. All in all, the international politics of European states throughout the modern period have been a barren record of waste and folly and ruin. In the name of the sovereign power of the state the sorrows of the masses of men have been multiplied and their poverty, which might have been removed by intelligent application of resources, has been fas-

THE NEW LEVIATHAN

tened upon them. The fury of Leviathan against Leviathan, viewed not in the mystical light of political majesty but as revealed on the common earth, has turned into nothing but the blood and the tears of the people.

And this fact brings us to a concluding reflection. We have been speaking of Leviathan, the great state, but we must always be on guard against the easy delusion that the state is some high entity above us, some vast creation not our own, endowed with power or with right other than that which we bestow upon it. This delusion has made men its willing slaves, its sacrificial victims. It has been grossly fostered through the ages by those who wield its power or exploit its prerogatives or benefit by the submission of the people to its dictates. They have turned to their purposes the doctrine of old Thomas Hobbes—"upon earth there is no power to compare with it." They have cultivated the philosophers who have proclaimed the state to be the march of God on earth. But their state is only an idol. The real state is nothing but a particular organization of human beings. It is real only in the way in which an organization, any social organization, is real. Vastly important as this kind of organization is, it is nothing but men organized, and its quality is nothing but the quality of the citizens who compose it and of the men who guide it. Immense as is its range of service it is at most an agency that men have pain-

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

fully built to serve their ends. It is no wiser than they, no loftier than they. How strange and ridiculous that loud-mouthed braggarts or low-brow fanatics, seated on the throne of kings, should summon the multitudes to reverence the state! Here there is no divinity, no majesty, nothing but great empty words to cow our superstitious minds. The state trails no clouds of glory from its past. That too is a delusion. For an organization has no memory, no living past. Achievement belongs not to the organization but to the human beings within it who have achieved. If we ascribe heroic worth to the state itself we are like people who do honor to a building and not to the builders. Indeed we have not their excuse. For the building once created endures as such through time, but the political organization, unlike the framework of steel and stone, is not constructed once for all. This invisible framework lives only in the will and the vision of its members. It is changed with every change of government and with every change in the policies of government. Today it is great if, and only if, its people and its leaders are great. Tomorrow it is contemptible if they display pettiness or folly. One thing that may be said for democracy is that on the whole it is most free from this delusion of the transcendent state. One thing that must be said against dictatorship is that for its own ends it implants and fosters the delusion.

II

THE GENIUS OF DICTATORSHIP

WHAT IS COMMON TO ALL DICTATORSHIPS

WE all are familiar with, some of us have even suffered from, the way people have of branding as extremists all those who belong to a political or social camp other than their own. If you advocate some modest change in the system of government your opponents will label you a revolutionist. They will proclaim you a traitor undermining the constitution. Of such are the people who appear before Dies Committees and nominate mild philanthropists and well-intentioned liberals for membership in the Communist Party. They meet in their patriotic organizations and draw up formidable lists of writers and speakers whose utterances are a menace to society. I observe incidentally that this tendency is at least as unrestrained in women's organizations as in those of men. And it operates just as freely in the parties of the left as in the parties of the right. The extremist polarizes all opinion into his own and the opposite extreme. If he belongs to the left wing he calls the reformer an appendage of capitalism, the liberal a reactionary, and the con-

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

servative a fascist. Now while this attitude may seem relatively harmless in a democracy, as being the ordinary concomitant of party strife, I suggest that it is really a dangerous thing, since it is the verbal equivalent of what all dictatorships practice.

It is the technique of all dogmatic systems that they reduce the alternatives of human thought and action to two polar extremes, the one they themselves espouse and the damnable opposing heresy. You must choose their heaven or go to their hell. If you are not proletarian you are bourgeois in all your ways. If you are not fascist you must be the sinister thing called a communist. If you are not communist you are the creature of an equally sinister capitalism. All the intermediate ground is cut from under your feet. All the rich varieties of human experience, all the experimental diversities of human progress, all the unexplored peaks and valleys of human thought, are brought down to this strait and narrow choice. All the colors of the earth and the sky disappear in the imposed dichotomy of black and white. All the angels are on one side and all the devils on the other. If you do not profess the true faith, all your virtues, your courage, your honesty, your high-mindedness, your devotion, are transformed into vices. No matter who or what you are, scientist or philosopher or literary genius, Catholic prelate or Lutheran pastor, a Schuschnigg or a Beneš, you are spattered with obloquy, and are thrust, if they can compass it, into

THE GENIUS OF DICTATORSHIP

the miseries and tortures of a concentration camp. Hitler tells his people they "must be dedicated completely to this mission, and he, who interferes . . . whether as Bolshevik, democrat, revolutionary, terrorist, or reactionary dreamer, is an enemy of the nation" (speech of Feb. 21, 1938). To doubt or to question is to betray. The system you are offered is perfect and the countersystem has no redeeming feature. The one needs no reform, the other is incapable of any. There is no place for gradual betterment, for social evolution: to think in such terms is treachery or cowardice. The word of the Lord is spoken. You are enlisted in a holy war, and must accept the terrifying simplicity of the cause proclaimed by the high priests. You must not look inquiringly on the world, with eyes that seek to understand. The Party line delivers your thoughts to you. You are no longer an individual. You have no being—unless you are one of the high priests—except mass being, no hopes and fears except mass hopes and fears. If that does not suffice you, then retreat into your silent cell, but even there beware, lest the very walls of your cell proclaim your treason to the cause, the blood, the race, the divine mission.

This is the mentality that under the shocks and crises of a cataclysmic war and an intolerable peace crept again from the near recesses of primitive mind, surged into blind strength, and finally reached the seats of dictatorial power. This is the spirit of Levia-

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

than as dictator, the glow of consciousness that animates its brain and its mighty armor-clad body. The genesis of this Leviathan we have already suggested. In brief it is generated by the operation on the mass mind of wars and threats of war, of gross fears, and intolerable necessities. It grows by the contagion of the crowd emotion. It is fed by doctrines that promise mass deliverance or triumph, that with fanatical or unscrupulous certitude point to some opposing principle as the fatal cause of all the sufferings of the faithful. It is finally led to its throne by the charismatic leader, the man of destiny, the anointed one, the magical incarnation of the victorious cause.

The doctrines of intolerance on which this Leviathan feeds change from age to age. By the nineteenth century states no longer breathed religious intolerance as they had formerly done. Religious schism, the emergence of diverse creeds and sects within the same state, brought the inestimable benefit of the separation of citizenship from church membership, so that a large measure of both religious and civic liberty was attained. But two new doctrines were gaining the ascendant. One was nationalism which, having in many Western states gained its primary end, the self-government of the nation, was no longer content to be a source of unity within the established nations but, in the economic expansion of the times, was turning into a deadly engine of

THE GENIUS OF DICTATORSHIP

exclusiveness and division between them. The other and newer doctrine was Marxian socialism, also in its first intent a protest against oppression and exploitation. But from the first it nourished also the virus of intolerance. It substituted the absolute principle of class for the absolute principle of the nation. My chief count against Marxism is not its oversimplification of economic reality nor its derogation of spiritual values to the mere reflection of economic conditions, but the fact that it sets an unbridgeable gulf between its adherents and all other men. It is a form of the extremism that would first reduce all other opinions to the contrary extreme in order to crush them all. Every gospel divides men into the saved and the lost, but this gospel is of the kind that makes it quite impossible for the saved and the lost to live together in the same world. It scorns all compromise or half-fulfillment. It will have all or nothing.

When one such extreme doctrine effectively enters the arena of opinion, it is apt to breed the opposite extreme and thus precipitate a violent civil war of opinion, in which, as in other warfare, any middle ground becomes untenable and therewith the possibility of democratic solutions. This phenomenon has frequently appeared in the course of history. In times of crisis the vicious interaction of extremes is particularly manifest. Thus Marxism, itself the counterextreme to capitalist ruthlessness on the one

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

hand and to anti-Semitism on the other, nurtured fascism. The process is well illustrated in the recent history of Germany and Italy. It has imperiled democracy in France and threatened it in other democratic countries. The tragedy of Spain offers one of the most illuminating examples. An arrogant and backward feudalism had for generations been breeding intransigent radical movements of syndicalism and anarchism. When the antifeudal party came to power they made sweeping demands which might have been not unreasonable under other conditions but which were excessively drastic there and then, in view of the lack of preparation for them. There was nothing to mediate between the two extremes and the country was plunged into the devastation of an insensate civil war.

Communism nurses fascism and fascism nurses communism, until one of them destroys the other, and with it all alternative systems. The same necessity drives each of them. Mortal enemies as they appear to be, the same spirit breathes in each of them. With respect to all the essentials of government they adopt the same institutional structure. Though they stand for the most divergent philosophies, the totalitarian character of the power they wield compels them to use similar political methods, and in their common rejection of democracy they exhibit a remarkable and growing resemblance one to the other. The disappointed radical agrees with the de-

THE GENIUS OF DICTATORSHIP

feated heretic in branding the Stalin regime as fascist. The capitalist who looked to fascism as the way of salvation is beginning to fear that between fascism and communism there is only the difference between the frying pan and the fire. I have heard a German business man confide in private conversation that they are now subject to controls that resemble the early stage of Bolshevism.

It is no accident that dictatorships, for all their proclaimed differences of ideology, should bear so strong a family resemblance. Far more than the older oligarchies and dynasties they present the complete negation and counterpart of democracy. Every feature of their system is the precise antithesis of a democratic principle. In a democracy the legislative is the highest positive agent of government; in a dictatorship the legislative is abolished or remains only as an empty shell. A democracy cherishes the distinction between laws and executive decrees; a dictatorship puts executive decrees in the place of laws. In a democracy the government is temporary and is clearly distinguished from the state; in a dictatorship government and state coalesce. Thus in a democracy it is only the short-lived government that stands for the particular views and interests of a party, whereas in dictatorship the state itself is their embodiment. A democracy establishes the principle, even if on occasion it fails fully to vindicate it, that civil justice is something utterly apart from political

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

expediency; a dictatorship unashamedly reduces the essential principle of justice to the mere consideration of expediency. In a democracy the conflict of parties is the process through which the movements of public opinion make and unmake governments; in a dictatorship political parties are proscribed in favor of a single national party whose sole function is to buttress the existing government. In a democracy the fiat of the government is limited by constitutional processes of various kinds; in a dictatorship the fiat of the government is supreme, arbitrary, peremptory, untrammelled. In a democracy the state has no mission save to respond to the changing tides of opinion; in a dictatorship the state is invested with the dogmatic authority of a sacred mission, which under dire penalties all its citizens must accept and of which the government is the sole accredited interpreter and exponent. In a democracy the individual citizen has inalienable rights; in a dictatorship the individual is submerged, co-ordinated, nullified—except in so far as he is innately responsive to the mold of authority or finds a mystical consolation in the thought that he is fulfilled in the nation-soul or the race-soul or whatever abstract entity is substituted for the earth-born beings that we know.

The list of resemblances could be carried much further, but those just mentioned penetrate so far into the substance of human values as to leave no

THE GENIUS OF DICTATORSHIP

doubt that the major conflict of modern world history is not that between communism and fascism but that between the dictatorial and the democratic principles themselves. From another angle it is the contrast between the states founded on political dogma and those founded on liberty of opinion. Or again it is the contrast between the states that profess an extremist position and those that, attached professedly to no doctrinal position, tend, through the interplay and clash of opinion, to follow the middle way of experimental change.

For our present purpose we shall therefore ignore the differences between one form of dictatorship and another, significant as these may be from other viewpoints, and confine ourselves to the issue between dictatorship and democracy. In the last resort this issue will not be fought by military or economic forces. Even if the nations meet at Armageddon to decide it, it will not be decided there. For the final conflict is one between human values, it is one within the human mind itself. It will be settled not between states, but within states. If dictatorship fails, it will be because human nature in the dictatorships revolts against it; if democracy survives it will be because human nature in the democracies vindicates it. No theories of government, no imposing philosophies, no proclamations of eternal principles, though scaffolded by propaganda to the skies, have any validity, or any enduring worth, except in so far as they arise

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

out of, and are responsive to, the larger and deeper experience of civilized mankind.

DICTATORSHIP AND HUMAN NATURE

How does dictatorship meet this test? Once upon a time the dictator was a man given supreme command of the state to tide over a crisis. Dictatorship in this sense was merely an interruption of the ordinary processes of government, not a substitute for them. When the state was saved the dictatorship ended. There are times when this expedient is necessary. There are certain conditions, such as those of war, under which at least a virtual dictatorship is inevitable. Dictatorship in this sense has striking successes to its credit, successes of a kind that governments adapted to more normal conditions can rarely achieve. If the dictatorship ends with the crisis its achievements are net gains. The post-War dictatorships have had in certain directions remarkable successes, but their achievements are not net gains. When Cincinnatus returned to his plow the republic went on as before. But the modern dictator is not so obliging. Instead, his first act is to destroy the old order, to crush all opposition, to set up a permanent system of power. Therein lies the enormous debit against his services, no matter how great we may adjudge these to be.

In a grave crisis, in any situation where men are oppressed or desperate, in a time of serious menaces

THE GENIUS OF DICTATORSHIP

or severe tensions, above all when these are accompanied by deep cleavages within the people itself, the ordinary methods of government, and perhaps particularly of democratic government, are likely to prove too slow or too uncertain. At such times there is impatience of discussion and deliberation, of divided courses; there is intolerance of opposition, longing for drastic authority, and thus a strong urge towards dictatorship. The modern dictator manipulates this crisis-born power in such a way that the forces creating it shall no longer be free to break it. Every government seeks to retain power. A democratic government cannot perpetuate itself without destroying democracy, whereas dictatorial governments cannot yield their power without destroying dictatorship. Modern dictatorship is therefore the crystallization of a crisis, but no power can crystallize the changing needs of men. How does the dictator meet this problem? To succeed he must appeal not merely to the demands of an emergency but to some permanent attributes of human nature. Why do the peoples submit to dictation? Why do multitudes enthusiastically acclaim? What spirit animates them? What do they gain in return for what they surrender to this all-demanding Leviathan?

In every society there are considerable numbers who have no interest in the larger issues of politics, whose lives revolve wholly in the little circle of their own immediate concerns. They do the tasks they

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

have to do, they endure what they have to endure, they find what satisfactions lie near at hand, they scramble a little and they scheme a little, they make love for a little while, they raise families, they struggle along somehow. In every society, though particularly in such as have not been long habituated to political freedom, there are those who dislike responsibility, who are natively submissive to authority, who in fact seek their master, who do not want to call their souls their own, and who to save themselves from the burden of decision will take suggestion as a cat laps milk. In every society there are many whose main need is security, a refuge from the intolerable hazards of existence, greatly aggravated as these have been in some directions by the swift transitions, detachments, and disturbances of modern industrial development. All such are prone to accept the dictator who promises deliverance, security, an assured goal, an infallible creed, and the reward of the faithful. The numbers disposed to acclaim the dictator are vastly increased by the tensions and the redoubled hazards of any great emergency. They yearn for a deliverer, a messiah. Many who in the old days would have sought consolation and deliverance in religion turn now to the prophet of national rebirth. The language of religion is echoed in the testimony of his converts. "His never-to-be-forgotten speech affected me as the words of a prophet." "He emanates a power that draws

THE GENIUS OF DICTATORSHIP

everybody to him." "I wandered about, a crushed soul. . . . I went to a meeting . . . Dr. Goebbels of Elberfeld spoke on the theme: 'What does Adolph Hitler want'. . . . My heart grew light, something in my breast arose." "The Leader spoke. For the first time I heard his voice. His words went straight to the heart. From now on my life and efforts were dedicated to the Leader." These are samples of the way the simple rank-and-file followers responded to the dictator's call.

But the emotions generated by crisis and even the sense of deliverance are apt soon to wane. How does the dictator endeavor to sustain them? If they fail can he forge new bonds of allegiance? He demands so much that he must make appeal to strong emotions or to strong interests or to both together.

In accounting for the phenomena of modern dictatorship there are some who lay particular stress on emotional needs and others who find the clue in economic interests. The former explanation points to such conditions as the distraction of war-ruined peoples, the disillusionment of defeat or again of fruitless and baffled victory, the revulsion from the fever of war-stimulated beliefs, the total disorganization of life, the bewilderment, the degradation of former hopes, the sense of humiliation, the upthrust against imposed inferiority or subjection, the yearning for order and unity, the quest for renaissance, for authority, for a new solidarity. There is much

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

evidence to show that these feelings and aspirations were active during the gestation of the great dictatorships, and the speeches of the leaders certainly have made constant appeal to them.

This psycho-sociological explanation is given a psycho-analytic turn by commentators who have a bent that way. From our present point of view they mean the same thing in different language. If we find more satisfaction in talking of neuroses and traumas and id-drives and compensation-complexes and castration-phobias, we will use that manner of speech. If on the other hand we are old-fashioned we will describe in ordinary words the same familiar and yet ever perplexing manifestations of human nature.

The economic realists present a very different thesis. For them dictatorship is but an episode in the final-class war. In Russia it is the fulfilment of the Marxian prophecy, the seizure of the state by the proletariat class in order to prepare the way for the classless reign of communism. It is in their eyes the overthrow of capitalism by the embattled workers fighting to deliver first themselves, and then the whole world, from exploitation, from class dominance, from economic necessity. In fascist countries it is the last stand of capitalism, for the support of which democracy no longer serves. Faced with the growing revolt of the oppressed, alarmed by the breakdown of their decaying system, as shown by the increasing unemployment, the ever more severe eco-

THE GENIUS OF DICTATORSHIP

conomic crises, the ever sharper cleavage of class interests, they resolved to save themselves at any cost and promoted the fascist reaction to crush the impending and still inevitable revolution.

That economic distresses and revolts played an important role, that in the post-War dissolutions class bitterness and class hatreds were intensified, that his fears drove many a frightened capitalist to fascist defenses, we would not wish to dispute. These things too are in the record and their significance should certainly not be ignored or minimized. But the extremism which we have deplored as action is no less to be deplored as thought. Human nature is not so simple. Men have emotional or spiritual needs as well as economic needs. Both are strong and urgent. The two blend in strange, even inextricable, ways. Who can say that in the vastly complex surge of historical revolution one alone commands? Was it economic interests that inspired Lenin, himself the prophet of economic realism? Was it economic interests that gave a fanatic power to Hitler and enabled him to draw to his side enthusiastic multitudes? The dogma is too simple. Dress it up in the most elaborate dialectic, and it still remains, at the core, naïve. Perhaps it is always a mistake to separate human motives as though they were detachable causes of historical events. Certainly it requires a curious assurance to single out one, in the whole ferment of mass movements,

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

as supreme and sufficient. Human motives blend and react to a multitude of conditions, not only those discernible in the hour of crisis but also those that work unseen in the cultural heritage. The fascist type of dictatorship expresses an unstable moment in the combined operation of the economic-cultural drives of a people. Its appeals, its triumphs, its compulsions, its failures, its menacing and precarious power, cannot be understood except as a response to the whole tangled situation, precipitated by the shock of war, by economic misery, and by the follies of prior statesmanship.

Even were the economic realists correct in their interpretation we would still not have found any sure ground on which dictatorship, outside of crisis, can maintain its appeal to average human nature. The communist dictatorship itself has been impelled more and more to stimulate the emotions associated with other than economic interests. The enthusiasm for Five Year Plans and Four Year Plans will not carry beyond at most the second economic blueprint. The oratory of Hitler and Mussolini never put economic issues first, and if these artists in mass emotions choose other issues I am ready to admit that it is because they know their trade. They speak in certain terms because these are the terms most likely to evoke the desired response. Leaders can lead only because followers will follow. Here at least we need not seek for any deeply

THE GENIUS OF DICTATORSHIP

hidden explanation. Listen to their speeches, observe the applause of the multitude, read the controlled press, and the nature of their appeal is manifest. It is there before us. We do not need any philosopher or any psychoanalyst or any economic realist to tell us what it is. But observe also that the appeal is still and always to the emotions of a crisis, to the emotions of the instigated and excited crowd. Dictatorship must make crisis permanent, lest the qualities of human nature that it suppresses should break through. Its life, unlike that of the older oligarchies and dynasties, depends on the emotions of the mass. It must never allow them to settle down. It can never admit that the crisis is over, that the needs of the situation have changed. The longer it endures, the more it must enter into conflict with the underlying conditions. It is imperiled alike by success and by failure.

The fact that this modern dictatorship, while thoroughly dependent on mass support, cannot find any confident and permanent ground of appeal to human nature is particularly revealed in the devices to which it resorts. It is in the curious dilemma that it must put its trust in human nature and yet dare not do so. It has to keep some human emotions at fever heat and to prevent other equally human emotions from growing warm. It must always live dangerously, as Mussolini proposed. It must undertake the formidable task of mastering its own final

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

master, the people. How does it set about it? Let us look at some of the ways of dictatorship.

WAYS OF DICTATORSHIP

The exaltation of force, the ruthless suppression of dissent, the elaboration of orthodoxy to control every aspect of life, the omnipotence assigned to the state and to its divinely ordained ruler—all that is a very ancient story repeated from age to age. What is new about Leviathan is not what it demands of men or what it does to them, but the new means it possesses and the new words in which it justifies itself. These it takes from the civilization it conquers. It develops new techniques of control because it commands modern instruments and turns them wholly and solely to its purposes, not merely the means of physical coercion but above all the means of spiritual coercion. It monopolizes the press and the radio. It dominates the school and the university. In the name of enlightenment it takes complete charge of the education of youth. It puts extreme pressure on the church. All the instruments of communication, the development of which is peculiarly characteristic of our civilization, it converts into exclusive instruments of propaganda. It engrosses, in order to enslave men again, the means that more than all others have been historically effective in liberating their minds.

There is propagandism everywhere, in all socie-

THE GENIUS OF DICTATORSHIP

ties at all times. The air of social existence is impregnated with it. There is propagandism in democracy as well as in dictatorship. No human being breathes the pure propaganda-free air of truth. The freest press never tells the whole truth, even the whole truth that it can discern. It never prints "all the news that's fit to print." It is never equally fair to every cause. Every human being, even the most impartial scientist, sees the human scene in the light of his own values. When I speak to you now about propaganda I can scarcely avoid being in some measure a propagandist, however much I try to avoid it. Every means of communication is also a means of propagandism. Propagandism begins at the mother's knee and its impact ceases only when life ends.

Does this fact justify the propagandist policies and methods of dictatorship? On the contrary, it conveys the final refutation of them. Because there is propagandism everywhere, the most arrogant and the most pernicious of all claims is that of the authority which enforces by sheer physical compulsion the sole right to its exercise. The vital difference between democracy and dictatorship lies in the freedom of counterpropaganda, allowing men the opportunity to discover what truth it is possible for each, with his particular temperament, his reasoning power, his insight, to grasp. Morally as well as intellectually there is all the difference in the world

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

between a political system under which criticism is admissible and competing doctrines can be proclaimed and a political system under which every opinion, every utterance, that opposes the official faith is radically suppressed. The latter system involves, as John Stuart Mill well said, "the sacrifice of the entire moral courage of the human mind."

* Even the truth, as he and others have pointed out, loses its truthfulness when supported on such terms, and hardens into a dead dogma.

* Probably no other state has ever carried on so comprehensive and so insistent a censorship as has the modern dictatorial state, or has been so assiduous in converting every agency of control and every means of communication into the exclusive service of its creed. Behold its purges, its persecutions, its heresy trials, its book-burnings, its *ogpus* and *gestapos*, its party tests, its espionage systems, its concentration camps, its youth organizations, its ~~mass~~ demonstrations, its radio broadcasts, its shibboleths, its "co-ordinations," its endless regimentations, its hundred per cent purities, its fanatical vituperations of every one and of every thing that varies from the Party line. What deep mistrust must animate a government that dare not trust its people in anything! What black fears must obsess a government that so desperately instills fear!

* In the dictatorships not only is the news habitually distorted but even the most obvious news is

THE GENIUS OF DICTATORSHIP

often concealed from the people, if there is any danger that it might lead them to think for themselves. In Germany, for example, in the last week of September, 1938, the people were unaware of the imminent war menace precipitated by their government. They thought it was only a matter of the rescue by German troops of an oppressed German population in Czechoslovakia. Their press did not report the appeals made to Hitler by President Roosevelt. They were not informed that Chamberlain guaranteed the evacuation by the Czechs of the Sudeten territories. The world was boiling with proposals and war preparations and panic alarms, but they believed the whole affair was only a simple expedition against a small people they were taught to regard as murderous. Even when the Führer called the momentous four-power conference, the news that ended the war scare and that was instantly flashed through the rest of the world remained unknown to them until the day after.

The behavior of the press, particularly in Germany and Italy, offers a very revealing illustration of the technique of dictatorship. One day it coos like a turtle dove, the next it spits out venom. One day it announces the government's eminent love of peace, the next it stirs up bad feelings against some country. One day it appeals for international justice and the autonomy of free nations, the next it points to the enemy beyond the gates, proclaiming the vir-

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

tues of warlike force, the inflexible pursuit of inevitable destiny, the conquering march of the chosen people. The wind blows where the Führer or the Duce lists. He bids opinions to rise and passions to surge as he bids feet to march. When he gives the word there are "spontaneous" outcries in his kept assembly—if he still keeps one—directed against whatever country he decides to disturb. For the crisis must always be kept in being. Or there are "spontaneous" clamors of the mob, "spontaneous" parades of University students, even "spontaneous" riots loosed with destructive fury against the tortured victims of the regime, while the police are conveniently around the corner and the Minister of Enlightenment explains to the world that this debauch is the natural and just vengeance of an outraged people. Surely it is the final insult to the liberty they have destroyed that they make it the excuse for the worst misdeeds they order.

The regimentation of opinion is no incidental character of dictatorship, it belongs to its very essence. It is the primary function of the whole system of government. It is the principle on which alone dictatorship can rest. It is the principle that alone makes possible all its distinctive features. Its other devices are secondary or sequential. Armed with an exclusive ideology it goes forth to battle. By the use of its ideology it drains all other organizations of power. With its aid the dictatorship pen-

THE GENIUS OF DICTATORSHIP

etrates foreign countries and dreams of conquering the world. With its aid the dictators prepare the ground in those particular areas or countries which they seek to annex or to control or to attract within their sphere of influence or even to make receptive for some trading deal. Suppressing all minorities at home they diligently foment congenial minorities abroad, as propagandist centers to further their cause. By means of their monopoly of propaganda at home they perpetuate the sense of crisis so necessary to their continued existence. By this means they seek to divert the discontents of the people towards some hapless group outside the pale. By this means they discover plots and stratagems and treasons and thus stir up passions useful to their cause. By this means they cover with ridicule and scorn everything that outside of their range resists their will—democracy, antimilitarism, the League of Nations, the Catholic Church, the Nobel prize system, Mr. Eden or Mr. Churchill or Mr. Roosevelt, foreign journalists, and so forth. They are all transformed into agencies of a curious monster called "international Jewry." No wonder that Goebbels writes: "Propaganda in itself has no fundamental method. It has only a purpose, the conquest of the masses. Every means that serves this end is good."

The end is conquest, conquest at all costs, the conquest of the human mind by capitalizing all its

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

weaknesses, the ever more difficult conquest of the spirit of a people, which unless held in constant subjection will overthrow the system. The crucial problem for modern dictatorship over civilized peoples is that time fights against it. The crisis must pass, the forces of change must assert themselves. New conditions, a new order, must arise, in the face of which the indomitable will of the dictator is only an empty word. In desperation he may resort to war, but he will assuredly fall in the attendant ruin. The effect of the most insistent propaganda is temporary. It is a spell that fades with time. It is too soon yet to estimate the long-run effects of this modern type of propaganda but it is already sufficiently clear that they are very different from the short-run effects. The dictators may capture the minds of the young with their drilling and their schooling, with their Komsomol, their Balilla, their Avanguardisti, their Hitler Youth, and so forth, but these minds may not stay captive. Those of us who have observed how often the more rigorous and exclusive types of indoctrination practiced within the circle of the family are set at naught by the young in later years may be somewhat skeptical about similar experiments on a national scale. The human mind may be neither so simple nor so malleable as the dictators believe it to be. There are indications that in the countries in which the process of coercive indoctrination has been longest at work

THE GENIUS OF DICTATORSHIP

the response is weakening. My own observation on successive visits to Italy seems to support this conclusion. In dictatorship, moreover, there is no opportunity for the natural tendency of mankind, especially of civilized mankind, to indulge in criticism; there is an artificial barrier to check the divergencies and varieties of self-expression and of social evaluation; there is no vent for discontents except through their diversion to sedulously cultivated scapegoats and officially designated objects of hate. Under such a regime internal strains inevitably grow. The contradictions between the reality and the imposed mythology become more apparent. Economic distresses are not solved by incantations. Beneath the surface of unity secret rifts are widening. Behind the front of universal factitious enthusiasm there lurk secret fears and whispered dissents. In the longer run dictatorship does not heal, does not destroy, the tensions out of which it has risen; it only diverts or disguises them. An occasional spasm breaks through the surface—some purge, some assassination, some trial that is a travesty of every conception of justice—indicative of the seething trouble underneath. Coercive propagandism is not all-powerful. The peoples subject to it may at length understand the truth of Milton's words when he said that the censorship of thought is the greatest of all insults that can be committed against a people:

*Before I leave this subject I must add one word.

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

The considerations I have just been putting forward are condemnatory of dictatorship and its primary technique of control. Is this a proper attitude on the part of one who claims to be a student of political science, who seeks to understand with impartiality why systems of government arise and fall? Should the scholar maintain his neutrality and not take sides if he is to be true to his name and profession? In this particular instance I see only one possible answer. Here we cannot rest on the ground of historical necessity. Everything that happens can claim necessity, but men live by values. The scholar too has his values. No scholar, no scientist, no teacher, can without conscious or unconscious betrayal of his mission approve or advocate, as a regular system of government, the regime of dictatorship. Dictatorship is the sworn enemy of the freedom of thought and of discussion which is the breath of all intellectual life. The scholar who justifies dictatorship refutes his own existence. Sometimes it is conscious betrayal, like that of the head of the Eugenics Institute of Berlin who when Hitler came to power suddenly discovered that his researches into race had led him astray and that ethnological truth had been divinely revealed to the Austrian corporal. Often it is unconscious betrayal, and of this even those scientists whose genuine sympathies lie with the dictators are guilty. For their professed objective is the discovery of truth, and they know in their

THE GENIUS OF DICTATORSHIP

hearts that dictatorship and the quest for truth cannot live together.

PHILOSOPHY OF TOTALITARIANISM

A philosopher of our own day, who is also engaged in politics, has said that "philosophy normally involves choice between goods, whereas politicians must chronically choose between evils." At all times the business of government has been a masterful and precarious thing, a strange blend of ambition and folly with here and there an ingredient of insight or of high purpose. "Don't you know," said an ancient sage, "with what a tiny spark of wisdom the world is governed?" Yet at all times men have cherished ideals and set them over against the reality, at all times they have sensed the difference between government as it was and government as it might become. Whatever political advances have been made we owe to this spirit. But the modern dictatorship would destroy this spirit, flatly denying that there is any contrast between the actual and the ideal, forbidding men even to think it. The system is holy and perfect, the leader is inspired and infallible. This is the thing that distinguishes totalitarian ideologies from other philosophies of the state.

It is true that one of these ideologies, the Marxist form of communism, put forward at first an evolutionary principle even though it was an evolutionary principle to end all evolution. In this conception the

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

dictatorial state was a temporary necessity in order that a classless society might be brought into being. That accomplished, the state would be needed no more and would "wither away." But since the date of this final apocalypse has been advanced to the Greek calends, since the actual state is absolute and ruthlessly purges all heresies, since the Party line is the only way of salvation, the state is in effect the sacred embodiment of all truth. Dictatorship cannot escape from its own principle. It may open for a moment the vision of a stateless society but it must in operation exalt the actual state to the pinnacle of wisdom as well as of power. It may set up a nominally democratic order, as in the Soviet constitution of 1936, but democracy with a dictator, democracy without parties, democracy without freedom of opinion is meaningless mockery. All dictatorships must practice the same essential philosophy. Starting from opposite extremes of belief about the state, Soviet Russia and Nazi Germany have arrived at nearly the same place.

They differ, of course, in the words they use, in the images they conjure up, in the ways they rationalize their inevitably similar power-systems. But they cannot differ in their essential working philosophies, no matter whether their words are communist or fascist, whether their emblems are the hammer and sickle or the axe and rods. The reason for this can be simply stated and it is, in my judgment, quite irre-

THE GENIUS OF DICTATORSHIP

futable. It is that dictatorship harnesses the culture of a people to its chariot of power. That culture is no longer allowed to be itself, to be creative and free. It too becomes the servant of the state, the servant of the needs of the dictatorial state, and the greatest of these needs is power. The Soviet author must write "*for the strengthening of the socialist order,*" as that is understood by the men in power. The Italian philosopher must dedicate himself to the doctrine that Mussolini dictates. The Lutheran preacher in Germany must obey the edicts of the state minister for religion, and render unto Caesar the things that are God's. Every medium of cultural expression is controlled—art, music, the drama, the movies. Even humor is co-ordinated and the comedian who does not display what is called a "positive attitude" towards authority is deprived of his job and his bread-ticket, although there is surely an element of bitter humor in hearing Hitler prescribe what is good in painting and sculpture or in seeing General Goering take command of the art purge!

Now when culture is thus controlled there is in the first place the distortion of all intellectual values, and, furthermore, there is the profoundly important consideration that the coercion of culture is utterly alien to its nature and destroys the very spring of its being. You can drill a squad and order a regiment about, and the responsive obedience is the very function of squad and regiment. You can bid a servant go

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

and he goeth and come and he cometh, and that is proper to the relation of master and servant. But when you co-ordinate an artist or a philosopher or a minister of religion—or even a comedian—you corrupt his function. He is enrolled in the squad and does what the drill sergeant commands. He does not paint his own pictures or think his own thoughts or preach his own gospel. Even the comedian, in the Homeric expression, "laughs with alien lips." The squad, the regiment, and the army are depersonalized by virtue of and in the fulfillment of their function, but when you depersonalize the artist or the thinker, by putting him in the squad, you take away from him the very quality on which his cultural being depends. Cultural achievement is peculiarly personal and has always been the product of cultural freedom. In times of tyranny and dogmatism it has often found refuge in those areas where authority left it alone. But in the totalitarian state no area is left alone. Therefore the cultural life loses its vitality. Incorporated in the political power system it becomes itself political, the mere reflection of prevailing power. And that is why the ideologies of all dictatorial states, no matter how different their starting point, no matter how different the language in which they are dressed, grow fundamentally alike. It is only because totalitarianism can never fully accomplish its ends that there remain differences between them.

THE GENIUS OF DICTATORSHIP

The Nazis in particular have erected a mountain of clouded romantic theory, full of turgid words about destiny, the nation-soul, the primeval blood, German honor, German virility, alien perversions, the racial ideal, corporate wholeness, the mystic *Volk*, the glory of war, the omnipotent state. Hundreds of works have been dedicated to grandiose philosophizing on these themes. The recipe is as follows. You take a simple, emotion-filled image, an image often so simple as to be almost witless. You elaborate and exalt and magnify it with endless play of categories and with perfect contempt for all unaccommodating facts or principles. You live with it and you cherish it and you gaze at it until all sense of proportion disappears and its wonder fills the skies. You say, for example, "the state is an organism." The expression is extremely debatable, certainly unclear, though not so obviously foolish as to say that the state is a white mouse or a Teddy bear. But your business is not to clarify the statement, still less, to examine its truth. That would be miserable skepticism, might even be high treason. Instead you dilate on the metaphysical miracle of this transcendental organism. You call it a vegetative-spiritual *Volk*-organism, of ineffable substance, of eternal worth, of predestinated supremacy. By this time it is obvious that you are speaking not of mere organisms, not of mere states, but of a species so rare, so absolute, so holy, that it has only one exemplar in all

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

the universe, the German state. Who then would dare to deny you when you say the state is an organic being? "Upon earth there is no power to compare with it."

In this guise or in some other guise the lineaments of Leviathan are drawn and displayed for the worship of the peoples. The pictures of the Leviathans differ, like the breeds of any other species. There is the vast sprawling fumbling Leviathan of the Soviets; there is the quick-changing double-jointed Leviathan of the fascists; and there is the truest example of the breed, the close-knit Nazi Leviathan, with its proud scales and its terrible teeth and the smoke that goeth out of its nostrils.

III

THE GENIUS OF DEMOCRACY

SOME MISUNDERSTANDINGS

THERE must be some universal appeal in the name of democracy, for even its destroyers proudly claim possession of its soul. Fascist writers announce that theirs is the genuine democracy and that so-called democracy is only a sham. Soviet spokesmen assert that they have now the most democratic constitution on earth, and Stalin himself declared that the 1937 elections in Russia were "the most democratic the world has seen." Not to be outdone, the Nazis, who can also point exultantly to their unanimous plebiscites, profess, as one of their leaders put it, that "the National Socialist form of state, as authoritarian dictatorship of the people, is, in truth, the most modern form of democracy in history." Hitler himself calls it "Teutonic democracy," and no doubt the adjective makes all the difference.

We may smile, sarcastically or sadly, at these professions coming from lands where men fear to whisper a word of criticism of their government, where it is perilous even to listen in to foreign radio

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

stations. But we ourselves are often very careless in our definitions of democracy, and sometimes, as when we identify it with majority rule, we define it in ways which would actually justify such preposterous claims. It is highly important that we clear up this notion of democracy, so as to see precisely wherein it differs from dictatorship. Although or because so much has been written about democracy, for or against democracy, in these times, the concept itself is still beset by serious confusions.

- Recently a gentleman introduced a new variety of the game of contract bridge, claiming that it was much more "democratic" than the usual form, and proposed to call it for that reason "American contract." The main idea was that all the suits should have equal value. No doubt it would become still more "democratic" if all the ~~cards~~ were given equal value! There are those who think that democracy means giving everyone equal authority, so that no man has any more power than another. This scheme would assure, not the presence of democracy, but the absence of government—in short, chaos, the "state of nature." There are others who think it is democratic to take a vote in order to decide the merits of plays or pictures or cigarettes or movie actresses, as though there were some necessary relation between merit and popularity. The New York World's Fair, in planning its art exhibition, announced that it would have a nation-wide system

THE GENIUS OF DEMOCRACY

of selection committees and that quotas would be established for the various regions throughout the United States, and they called this system "the most complete application of democratic methods ever attempted in an exhibition of this kind." There are also those who think that to be democratic is to show to everyone a "hail-fellow-well-met" spirit. There are certain organizations calling themselves democratic—not unknown, for example, in New York City—where the idea of democracy is to share the spoils among the members and to distribute bread and coal to the deserving democratic poor. There are other organizations that propose to establish democracy by handing things out all round. In the first democracy that history clearly reveals the idea got abroad—it was in ancient Athens—that there was something peculiarly democratic in the rotation of office, and they created so many offices that practically every citizen had his turn in one of them. To make the principle complete and give every man an equal chance they decided to use the lot instead of the ballot.

A more important confusion is that which equates democracy with the government of the many, opposed to the government of the few. The many in this sense never actually govern. They never do and never can decide the specific issues of policy that governments are always facing. Mr. Walter Lippmann once wrote a book (*The Phantom Public*) in

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

which he told us that the ordinary man was quite disillusioned about democracy, because he couldn't possibly give attention to all the pressing questions of the day. Democracy was an "unattainable ideal" because the man in the street was unable to attend to banking problems one day and Brooklyn sewers the next and Manchurian railroads the day after—and so on. Of course if anyone entertains such an illusion about the nature of democracy he certainly ought to be disillusioned. No serious political thinker has ever put forward such a theory, with the possible exception of Jean Jacques Rousseau. Democracy can never be government by the people in that sense. They can broadly decide the general direction of governmental policy and little more.

Nor can we say that democracy is any system under which the majority of the people support the existing government. Apart from the mere technical difficulty that it is sometimes not easy to say whether a democratically elected government still holds a majority or not—though no doubt Mr. Gallup is of great service to us here—there is the glaring fact that a dictatorship may have the support of a majority, and any definition that will not enable us to distinguish democracy from dictatorship is worse than useless. Assuredly that is not what any intelligent defender of democracy means. We must carefully avoid the definition of democracy as simply majority-rule. Democracy does involve one form of

THE GENIUS OF DEMOCRACY

majority-rule, a form in which there is no fixed majority entrenched against the processes and tides of free opinion that could reduce it again to a minority. But a majority-system that silences all opposition and censors all contrary opinion is emphatically not to be named a democracy.

Still less can democracy be defined as mass-rule. Here I am using the term "mass" or "masses" in the sense given to it by the Spanish writer Ortega y Gasset in his famous alarmist book, *The Revolt of the Masses*. For him the mass is the average man, as a multitude and he declares that the mass in this sense is in our days triumphing over all leadership, over all distinction, creating a "hyperdemocracy." I call the book alarmist because it dogmatically presents as a universal modern menace a phenomenon that is far from universal and that is not peculiarly modern. It is not true that the average man normally hates distinction. He generally applauds it where he understands it, as is very evident in the field of sport. And if leadership in the field of politics is often commonplace, a charge to which the party-system of the United States has been peculiarly liable, realistic investigation shows that this condition is due more to the manipulation and machination of wire-pulling interest-groups than to the instincts of the average man. There is indeed an element of truth in the position of Señor y Gasset. It is that in times of stress and crisis the mass tends

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

to coalesce into one or more dynamic movements, responsive to the orator or the demagogue who understands their mentality, though he may understand nothing else. Such movements can easily triumph in such times, and it is true that democracy affords the free and open forum in which they are bred. But so long as democracy endures, such movements sink as easily as they rise. It is only when democracy falls that they gain the character which Señor y Gasset attributes to them. "The mass," he says, "crushes beneath it everything that is different, everything that is excellent, individual, qualified, and select." The description has more obvious application to the dictatorial than to the democratic spirit.

There is one further confusion about the nature of democracy which we must seek to dispel before we turn to its positive character. Democracy first expressed itself in a certain type of representative system, a parliamentary system, and on the whole it is still associated with that system. But it is quite possible to conceive of democracy as existing without parliamentary institutions in the traditional sense; that is, apart from a central assembly composed of the elected representatives of the people, an assembly which debates in public, by majority vote, and constitutes the decisive and central organ of government. Historically the growth of democracy was the growth of parliamentary institutions,

THE GENIUS OF DEMOCRACY

and it remains true that parliamentary institutions are impossible without democracy, without the free expression of opinion as the basis of national policy. But we must not assume that the free play of public opinion *must* register itself in parliamentary forms. Historical evolution may reveal an endless train of yet undreamed-of modes of government, adaptations to changing needs and changing demands. Democracy is on the whole a recent development. Parliamentary institutions arose when the problems of government were simpler than they are today, when public opinion was more homogeneous, less diversified by specialized corporate interests, when representation of localities or areas had a meaning that now it has for the most part lost, when agriculture was the predominant occupation of men and the relation to the land everywhere the paramount relation. All that is changed. Already, in every democracy, important activities of regulation are outside the direct control of parliaments. Everywhere the necessities of administration have created boards and commissions, controls and corporate functions, devoted to fundamental national tasks. If this process continues, parliaments and congresses may cease to be the main centers of national life. But if freedom continues, democracy will still prevail. Still the free tides of opinion will determine who shall govern, who shall be entrusted with power. The mechanism of democracy must always

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

change if conditions change and the principle of liberty abides.

POSITIVE CHARACTER OF DEMOCRACY

If then the institutions of democracy are subject to change and must be forever readapted to changing conditions and changing needs, must we give up the attempt to discover the political form of democracy and seek instead to identify it by its spirit? I would rather not resort to that refuge. It is too inconclusive. It is also dangerous, since even its enemies may, and indeed do, claim for themselves whatever we assign as the spiritual quality of democracy. I must still define it by its form or structure, though realizing that only a congenial spirit, only an appropriate set of attitudes, can sustain that structure. I believe the problem is solved by the distinction between the form of *government* and the form of the *state* itself. No form of government is permanent but there are abiding forms of state. Democracy is such a form, and wherever it has existed in the past or exists in the present, it can be identified by two simple criteria. By means of these we can tell whether democracy prevails or whether instead we are confronting a political system which should be called by some other name, such as that of dictatorship.

The two are as follows. (1) *Democracy puts into effect the distinction between the state and the com-*

THE GENIUS OF DEMOCRACY

munity. Among other things this implies the existence of constitutional guarantees and civil rights which the government is not empowered to abrogate. (2) *Democracy depends on the free operation of conflicting opinions.* Among other things this implies a system under which any major trend or change of public opinion can constitutionally register itself in the determination both of the composition and of the policies of government. Let us take in turn each of these criteria.

By a community I mean an inclusive area of social interaction within which men share the basic conditions of a common life, whether on the scale of a village or a city, a tribe, or a nation. It is thus a relatively definite area of society, and the boundaries of a state, the political organization, may or may not coincide with some such area. But whether they do or do not, the state and the community, or more broadly, the state and society, must be distinguished. In everything I have written about the state I have sought to lay stress on this distinction, and the more often I return to the subject the more vital does it appear to me to be, alike for the understanding of the social reality and for the general guidance of social policy. Because democracy in effect affirms this distinction, its foundations, however weak the superstructure, are sunk into the rock of reality. Because the totalitarian state in effect denies this distinction, its foundations rest on shift-

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

ing sand. No might, no flourish of doctrine, no ruthlessness, can ever destroy the difference, can ever reduce society to the proportions of the state. For the state is men organized under government and no body of men, not even the most totalitarian, make the total surrender of themselves, of all their living and thinking and believing and loving and fearing, to the power-control of government. They could not if they tried. They are the creatures of customs and traditions and of morals and creeds, of hidden loyalties, of daily habits, that are not controlled or controllable from any mere center of power. We live in a social matrix that is immensely more rich and subtle than the rigid delineaments of the state. That matrix sustains our daily life whereas the state is aloof and impersonal, a majestic name we reverence or an ominous thing we fear. Behind the majesty or the dread there is only a group of men clinging to power, limited in their visions, in their sympathies, in their understanding. The state can do only what government can regulate, what the ruler, a mere man or assembly of men, can effectively decree. And when in arrogant pretension or insufferable narrow-mindedness the ruler decrees that all men shall think as he thinks and shall value only what he values, he passes beyond the limits of his power. For a time the credulities or the passions or the necessities or the despairs of the masses may lead them to support his inordinate claims. He may

THE GENIUS OF DEMOCRACY

be the instrument of destiny, even the temporary messiah of his people. But his will is only the will of a man, placed in power by the conjuncture of events, a man subject to sickness and to age, to the delusions of pride and to the corruptions of power. His will may rule the state but no man and no assembly of men can comprehend or control the creative forces of society. That the total being of a community should be shaped and measured by this totalitarian will is as absurd a pretension as the old belief that the sun goes round the earth.

The state is a particular type of social organization and in so far as it has intelligible meaning or function it is an agency of the community it regulates. Under all conditions it is a logical confusion to identify the state with the community, with the people, the nation, the country. The people engage in myriad activities, enter into myriad relationships, that by no stretch of language can be called political. The people display myriad differences of opinion, thought, morals, creed, and culture. The government of the state may formally suppress them, but they are still there, no longer in the state, the political system, but in the community, the social system. Unfortunately language abets the confusion of thought. The same word—"United States," "England," "Germany"—denotes both the state and the nation-community. We say indifferently, "the United States makes a treaty" and "the United States is

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

recovering from a depression." The first sentence refers to the state, the second to the country. We speak of the "national" debt—it is the debt of the state, not of the country; it is in fact owed to the country. When we say that "Germany overthrew the Weimar Republic," we mean that the people, or a part of the people, overthrew the state, we do not mean that the state overthrew itself. As soon as we begin to think about it we perceive that the state and the community are two different things, that the state is not the community but the political organization of the community. The customs of the people may conflict with the laws of the state. Men and women, as social beings, are not merely citizens of states. They act in other relationships. Their thoughts, their strivings, their fears and hopes, their beliefs, their affections and interests, their family life, lie largely outside the scheme of government altogether. In war or in grave crisis the state commandeers the community, demanding that the citizens forget their other relationships, their other interests, but the cost is always heavy. Only at an immense temporary sacrifice does the state even approach the universal partnership that orators such as Edmund Burke have called it.

Now what democracy does is to establish through constitutional forms the principle that the community is more inclusive than, greater than, the state. In many older forms of state, in ancient em-

THE GENIUS OF DEMOCRACY

pires, the distinction was implicit. The scheme of daily life, the customs of the people, remained almost untouched by government except for incursions by the taxgatherer and the occasional disruptions of war. But only in democracy is the distinction made the foundation of a political system. In effect democracy asserts that the state is one form of organization of the community, for certain ends of the community. Not for all ends, since that would destroy the right to be different and therefore the possibility of democracy. The ends of the state must be somewhere limited, if opinion remains free, if government is to be an agency of the people instead of the principal of which the people are an agent. Under democracy the cultural life of the community is in general withdrawn from the direct control of the state. For if culture is co-ordinated, then divergent opinions and creeds are suppressed, free thought is suppressed, and democracy cannot exist. Democracy so understood is not a specific form of government attached to a specific historical set of institutions; it is a mode of government corresponding to a set of attitudes. The forms may change, must change with the conditions if the creative processes of democracy endure.

Just as the democratic state alone explicitly establishes the distinction between the state and the community, so the totalitarian state alone explicitly denies the distinction. Just as the democratic state

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

makes government the agency and the people the principal, so the totalitarian state makes the people the agency and government the principal.

Our second criterion, the constitutional right of opinion to determine policy, is, as we have just suggested, a corollary of the first. It is the way in which the distinction between the state and the community is carried into effect. The state regulates the common interest or what is conceived to be the common interest. The community nourishes many interests that are not common to all the citizens but only at most to particular groups. The democratic state is a limited state in that it cannot, without destroying itself, suppress the freedom of opinion, with the possible exception of such opinion as advocates the abolition of free opinion. It is limited in that it cannot entertain policies abrogating the right of assembly or of association, policies preventing religious or other cultural groups from pursuing their particular principles or tenets after their own manner, provided they do not assault the peace and order of the community.

The constitutional right of opinion to determine policy necessitates the existence of a party system. In democracy opinion is both free and controlling. It cannot control unless it is organized. It cannot be organized unless there are political parties. It is true that the founders of the American Constitution had no place for parties. But they were contemplat-

THE GENIUS OF DEMOCRACY

ing a simpler and dominantly agricultural society. In the modern state, whatever sins parties may commit, they are still the *sine qua non* of democracy. A single party on the totalitarian model is in the proper sense no party at all. It is a monopoly preventing the free formation and expression of opinion. It is the precise antithesis of the party system. Nor can a substitute be found for political parties through vocational or functional organizations. Such organizations, syndicates, occupational corporations, and so forth, are either voluntary or state-controlled. If they are voluntary, then they will act on party lines. A workers' organization will take one stand, an employers' organization another. Or else they will divide on political issues and so parties will re-emerge. If they are state-controlled, they will be merely organs of governmental control, as in Italy, and will not function as free agencies of opinion. At most they will divert attention and energy from genuine political issues to minor questions of particularist material interests.

It may be remarked in passing that there are good historical reasons for supposing that democracy is on safer foundations when a country is habituated to a two-party system than when parties are divided up into numerous separate organizations. In the latter situation a single party, holding the balance of power in a crisis, or taking advantage of popular excitement, or proclaiming a panacea for

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

the nation's ills, may seize exclusive power without arousing the profound resentment that must be provoked if one of the two alternative parties attempted to suppress the other. A democracy is then most safe when the political struggle lies between two historical parties, adapting themselves to changing conditions, so that third parties are either very temporary or else represent only a small minority. That is one reason why it is good political sense to encourage those representative devices that strengthen the two-party system and discourage those that tend to break it up into multiple parties and blocs. Of the latter devices the most potent is the seemingly fair and innocent principle of proportional representation. In a number of instances, and notably in that of the Weimar Republic, it has been a factor in preventing the formation of a workable democracy.

The two criteria we have offered provide the sufficient and conclusive ground for distinguishing democracy from all other forms of state. In so far as these principles prevail a political system is democratic. No political system other than democracy is founded on these principles. A dictatorship may rest on a majority will, but if so it prevents all minority wills from attaining expression. Hence it is not the number who support a government that determines whether the state is a democracy or a dictatorship. Quite possibly a greater proportion of the citizens

THE GENIUS OF DEMOCRACY

support or have supported the Nazi or the Soviet government than in this country favors the present administration at Washington. Again, in the earlier forms of dynastic state the people on the whole, whether through conviction, indoctrination, superstition, fear, or inertia, acquiesced in, approved, or even venerated the governing power, but the opinion of the people was not creative, could not constitutionally translate itself into policy. Only on the grounds we have mentioned can we adequately define democracy and set it properly apart from other forms of the state.

DEMOCRACY AND THE ECONOMIC ORDER

Our definition of democracy may help us to clear *our minds on certain issues that have a vital bearing on its future*. We are told, for example, that political democracy is impossible or meaningless without economic equality. The communists tell us that we cannot have democracy so long as there are class distinctions. From the opposite school we hear that democracy is incompatible with economic planning. And we are asked to choose between Mr. Max Lerner, who believes that the only way to keep democracy is to espouse socialism and to do it quickly, and Mr. Walter Lippmann, who believes that the only way to avoid dictatorship is to eschew socialism and all its works.

Now democracy is where you find it and it is most

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

where you find most of it. Actually every democratic system we know has been associated with some type of class system, whether it be the socially aristocratic tradition of England, the bourgeois-familial organization of France, or the wealth-stratification of the United States. This is a simple statement of fact, not an argument in favor of any of these class principles. It merely shows that people can accept and even believe in social distinctions or economic inequalities and still remain attached to democratic institutions. On the other hand the only systems that have professed social and economic equality or have claimed to engineer it have been dictatorial or despotic. This latter fact is not an anomaly or an accident, nor does it involve a contradiction between the form and the spirit of institutions. In human society, on every level and within every group, even among the outcast and the despised of men, differences making for individual inequality and social distinction are forever seeking outlet and expression, and they cannot be suppressed except by a dominant power, so dominant that it can take control of all the sources of difference and thus is inevitably authoritarian and anti-democratic. This fact also is so patent that I cannot trust the good faith of those ideologists of democracy who refuse to acknowledge it. Equality of voting power—yes, that is easy to achieve, and democracy achieves it. Equality before the law—yes, that is formally es-

THE GENIUS OF DEMOCRACY

established under democracy, and it is a proper aim and ideal of democracy to make this formal equality ever more substantial. Equality of opportunity—yes, the democratic state can go a long way to remove the impediments, social and economic, that prevent men from rising in the scale, from finding the place and the function for which their native talents qualify them. All these things democracy has it in its own power to achieve, but absolute equality is a mirage, a most dangerous mirage. The inherent struggle of men for advantage and position, leading to distinctions of social class, cannot be prevented without the overwhelming tyranny that crushes initiative and democracy alike. And in the end we will have established absolute and fatal inequalities of power where once there were only relative inequalities of wealth and social class.

There are indeed certain forms of economic inequality which in this age particularly it is the imperative task of democracy to control and remove, because they provoke the greatest danger it faces and because their removal is essential to the social well-being. These inequalities arise out of the hazards of the industrial life, above all the hazard of unemployment. Let us not forget that the dictatorships have on the whole, in one way or another, abolished this hazard for their peoples. If they had not done so they could not have held their peoples. It was a necessity imposed upon them and necessity

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

found a way. The democracies have taken various measures to mitigate the effects of unemployment, but the main problem is unsolved. Not only is there a considerable permanent volume of unemployment but there is always the prospect of a new depression which will severely aggravate that volume and shake the foundations of democracy. Sooner or later, in the ordinary course of capitalistic industry, the prospect is certain to be fulfilled. Democracy must prepare against it. If the people lack bread they will not accept stones—they will throw them instead. Here is where intelligent economic planning is necessary. It is not a question of dictatorship or of democracy. It is a purely technical problem. Since in a depression there are idle hands and idle plants and idle materials and idle finished products and idle funds and idle enterprise, it is perfectly obvious that the trouble is a failure in the working of the great economic machine, that somehow the monetary and credit system is not adequately geared to the productive system. It is a momentous problem but one that economic intelligence can surely solve. And it is ridiculous to say that the solution is not consistent with democracy. For even a partial solution would enhance the prosperity of all classes and of all interests. No doubt public opinion would require to be prepared for the application of whatever controls are found to be most desirable. But these controls would not seriously interfere with

THE GENIUS OF DEMOCRACY

fundamental democratic liberties. No individual, not even the most powerful, controls the price level at will or determines the rate of interest or the accessibility of credit or the insurance of the risks of the entrepreneur. The need for intelligent control is urgent. If it were widely enough realized that here is the greatest of challenges alike to our economic intelligence and to our constructive statesmanship, there are, I believe, already sufficient indications that a solution would be found and that this solution, instead of imperiling democracy, would be its most needed safeguard.

Democracy must meet its problems in its own way, and the most persistent of the problems of any government are economic problems. In this respect the goal of the democratic state has been growing clearer in the course of modern history. It cannot abolish social classes but it can suppress the exploitation of one class or one group by another, assuring each, among other things, the equal right to organize and to pursue its collective interest. It cannot abolish differences of wealth, but it can mitigate them while allowing initiative still its opportunity, and it can assure to all its citizens a reasonable standard of security, a decent minimum scale of living, and a share in every increase in the national prosperity.

There are some who declare that this is not enough, that it will not work, that we must turn

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

our political democracy into an economic democracy, unless the very word "democracy" is to be a snare and a delusion. I have puzzled considerably over this phrase, "economic democracy," and have come to the conclusion that I do not know what it means. When I try to give it meaning, on the assumption that it is to be taken literally, I find myself lost in the fog. I know what economic equality means, even if I do not see any practicable means of realizing it in any full sense, certainly not under democratic conditions. I know what is meant by the democratic control of national economic policy. The determination of economic policy is a major function of every government, whether it is democratic or not. I know what trade-union democracy means, for obviously the members may assert their right to elect their leaders and say whither they shall lead. But when I am told that political democracy is futile unless it is accompanied by economic democracy, or when I learn from Professor Laski that "a political democracy seeks, by its own inner impulses, to become a social *and economic* democracy" (*italics mine*), again I am lost in the fog. Does it mean that just as the citizens form parties to elect a government, by the same token the workers will form parties and stage campaigns and then decide by a majority vote who will run banks and factories and transportation systems and what policies they will follow in conducting these businesses?

THE GENIUS OF DEMOCRACY

I do not think that can be what Mr. Laski means, for nowhere in the world does that happen and certainly not in a socialist state. Yet that is as near as I can come to the strict meaning of the words "economic democracy."

I observe, however, that when Mr. Laski and others refer to economic democracy, they go on to speak about measures for safeguarding the workers against exploitation, for assuring them the right of collective bargaining, for giving them a larger share in the fruits of industry, and generally for raising their standard of living and their security of tenure. With these aims I am in hearty sympathy, and one of the most important agencies for their attainment is and has been political democracy. It is of course only one of several conditions necessary for the furtherance of such objectives, but I do not observe that any responsible person, whether in a capitalist or in a socialist state or in the mixed capitalist-socialist state that is really characteristic of our times, claims that one of the other conditions is the practice of deciding business policy, in the insurance company or the bank or the industrial corporation, by a majority vote of the workers.

In fact various indications lead me to suspect that "economic democracy" is a question-begging phrase and that often when it is used the writer or speaker is not thinking of democracy at all but of certain economic ends which on other grounds he finds de-

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

sirable and which by other methods he deems attainable. The analogy between political democracy and economic democracy is a very loose one. Political democracy is a form of state, and all the citizens are members of a state. What is the corresponding locus of economic democracy? Is it the business unit in or for which we work? But there are myriads of these, of all sizes and patterns. Obviously therefore it is only in the state itself that what is spoken of as economic democracy can be realized. But if so, and if economic democracy is distinguished from or contrasted with political democracy, the former term must be simply a way of describing the kind of policy approved by the speaker, the one he thinks a political democracy *ought* to follow. Once again he is not talking of democracy but of something else altogether.

Against this misuse of language it is important at this time emphatically to protest. The enemies of democracy are ready enough to distort and misrepresent the meaning of democracy; its friends should not lend them aid.

FINAL ARGUMENT FOR DEMOCRACY

In this age of ours, when the form of government has become the most momentous of the issues that divide men and nations, we have peculiar need for clear thinking about democracy. If we defend it we should do so without misunderstanding what it is.

THE GENIUS OF DEMOCRACY

if we attack it we should know what we attack. To question and to seek the truth is still our democratic privilege. In defending democracy one need not and should not be blind to its limitations and to its defects. Public opinion is no wiser, no better than the people who hold it. The people are easily led by demagogues. They are beset by prejudices, moved by slogans, deceived by specious sentiments. They are often inert and often confused. They are often roused by things that matter little and often unresponsive to things that matter much. Let us freely admit all this, but let us equally admit the fact that we do not get away from the prejudices and the confusions of the people by resorting to dictatorship. In the modern world every system of government must rest on the general consent of the mass of the people. On this score everything that is said in the indictment of democracy applies with yet greater force against dictatorship, since the latter must use every technique to prevent the people, on whose mass emotions it depends, from becoming more enlightened.

There are true charges to be made against democracy, but there are also false charges. The people may deceive themselves but they do not deceive anyone else. In this sense they are sincere, often more sincere than their rulers. Of their own accord they march neither to heaven nor to hell but remain on the level earth. There are indeed some

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

prophets of doom among us, who think that democracy works some fatal magic on society. But their prophetic utterances are based on such flimsy argument and are so contradictory one of another that we can afford to disregard them. So we will not pause over Mr. N. J. Lennes (*Whither Democracy*) who, peering into his biological crystal, sees democracy, because in it men have an opportunity to rise from the class in which they were born, leading straight to a caste system, thoroughly stratified on hereditary principles; nor will we concern ourselves with those other seers who, like Mr. Ralph Adams Cram (*The Nemesis of Democracy*) and the late Professor Irving Babbitt (*Democracy and Leadership*), are equally convinced that the end result of democracy is a universal "dead level of incapacity" or "a huge mass of standardized mediocrity."

In the modern world there is no way to save government from the people or to save the people from itself. It is idle to ask for a government of the best men, as distinct from a democratic government, for who will elect the best? And if by some strange chance they should elect themselves, how long would they remain the best? It is idle to seek a government of laws and not of men, for a government of laws will turn into a government of lawyers, who happen also to be men. Every alternative to

THE GENIUS OF DEMOCRACY

democracy is subject to a charge more fatal than any that can be laid against it, the irremediable defect of irresponsible power. It is on that ground that many outstanding political thinkers, men who like John Stuart Mill were very conscious of its weaknesses, men who, like most of the Fathers of the Constitution, had no great confidence in the people, nevertheless have championed its cause.

Possibly no discovery of the physical sciences, however world-shaking it may be, has been of more profound importance to mankind than the discovery that power could be made effectively responsible. This was no easy achievement but the painful task of centuries. Before it could be realized the discovery had to break through age-old entrenchments of established interests, guarded by traditions, by ceremonies, by taboos, by magic, by religion, by dire penalties, by all the means, physical, economic, spiritual, that power itself can dispose. At best it has been a partial and a precarious achievement, but we should not minimize on that account its immense importance. Democracy is the generic name for that achievement, and its significance is understood only when we contemplate the effects of irresponsible power, not merely on those who are subject to it but above all on those who possess it. Who that has lived many years on this earth can have failed to observe how even a modicum of

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

irresponsible power perverts the intelligence and hardens the sensibilities, how the jack-in-office struts in pompous undiscerning pride, how the bureaucrat loses touch with humanity, how the petty boss, when no superior watches, becomes a wretched bully? In every sphere of human activity, in the factory, in the trade-union, in the home, in the church, in the barracks, in the prison, even in the seats of learning, let power be uncontrolled and it will work the same effects. With some of his bitterest words Shakespeare characterized this phenomenon :

Man, proud man,
Drest in a little brief authority,
Most ignorant of what he's most assured,
His glassy essence, like an angry ape,
Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven
As make the angels weep.

And if uncontrolled power works these effects on the lower level of everyday affairs, how much more evil it can be when it is set on high and calls for veneration! The intolerable experience of such exercise of power drove the politically minded peoples to seek a safeguard against it—and they all had experience in plenty. The safeguard was democracy, and it is this hard-won safeguard that the dictatorships now ridicule and trample on. They laud and magnify the irresponsible power which corrupts the best and turns the worst into loathsome brutes.

THE GENIUS OF DEMOCRACY

THE AMERICAN CONTRIBUTION

In the development of this epoch-making discovery, that power can be made responsible, various peoples have played a part. The Greeks made the first great contribution, the Romans added something, the mediaeval cities began to explore it anew, the English rediscovered it on a national scale and broadened its foundations through the centuries. Here in conclusion I would say a word about the contribution of America. For at this juncture in world affairs the United States has taken on a new and more decisive role in the drama of democracy.

Although many of the pioneers in the making of America came in the quest of religious freedom, social emancipation, or economic opportunity, America contributed little to the practice or principle of democracy until quite modern times. In colonial days dogma had too strong a hold. Those who had found religious freedom for themselves were generally ready enough to deny it to others. Except in certain local arrangements there was relatively little democracy. Except for certain heretics, such as Roger Williams, there was relatively little democratic theory. Indeed there was very little political thinking at all that had any independence. Even in the crisis of the Revolution the eighteenth-century thinkers went back for their philosophical inspira-

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

tion to the English thinkers of the seventeenth century. What was most congenial to them was the common-sense liberalism of John Locke, while the radicalism of Tom Paine had only an ephemeral flare of popularity and the democratic fervor of Rousseau had practically no appeal at all. The leaders of the Revolution accepted the principle that the people were the locus of sovereignty, but the people were conceived of in the Lockian sense. They were the substantial solid folk as distinct from the rabble. The appeal to the people was not the appeal to the whole people. Nor was it only the socially conservative, like Alexander Hamilton, John Adams, and Ames, who distrusted "the imprudence of democracy." There are evidences of the same distrust in Samuel Adams, even in Thomas Jefferson. The leaders of that age were in the dilemma that they must build the revolutionary state on the foundation of democracy and yet they were fearful of the foundation. So in the various states as well as in the Union they restrained the operation of majority voting by constitutional enactment—a process that particular states have since carried much further—and they legislated additional property qualifications for voters and still more stringent ones for electoral candidates.

The system of checks and balances was itself ambivalent. It might serve to restrict the advance of democracy, even to defeat its purposes. The de-

THE GENIUS OF DEMOCRACY

tachment and independence of the executive might stay the legislature, the primary arm of every democratic system, while the powers implicit in the Supreme Court might be applied to annul the will of the majority as expressed in legislative acts. The complicated machinery of amendment might block the free course of democratic change. There were many who looked to the Constitution to hold democracy permanently in leash. On the other hand the system could be viewed as a safeguard of democracy. The argument of *The Federalist* (no. LI) could be maintained, to the effect that in this intricate balance of powers there was provided a double security for the rights of the people. "The different governments will control each other, at the same time that each will be controlled by itself." The checks and balances could be justified as keeping each department of the government to its appointed task, without encroaching on the ultimate sovereignty of the people. The elaborate distribution of powers could be defended as a bulwark against tyrannous usurpations. The Supreme Court could be hailed as the final guardian of the citizen against the arbitrary exercise of power, assuring "the fundamental rights of minorities," and protecting the people "against the abuses threatened by gusts of passion and prejudice which in misguided zeal would destroy the basic interest of democracy." So the purpose of the constitutional system has been

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

characterized by the present Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, in an address delivered before a joint session of the Congress, March 4, 1939.

In actuality the system was ambivalent. It could restrict democracy and has restricted it. It could safeguard democracy and has safeguarded it. Which of the two tendencies would prevail depended, as it still depends, on the emergent attitudes of the people.

- But before another fifty years had passed a new spirit was beginning to pervade the growing republic. It had cast off the intellectual dependence of colonial days. It had begun to create a distinctive social order in which property qualifications disappeared along with primogeniture, in which European traditions of rank and class were set at naught, in which a different philosophy emerged, signalized by the robust individualism of Whitman and Emerson and by the optimistic faith of Lincoln in the common people. In this vast movement the influence of the ever-expanding West predominated, fed by the vision of free men and by the presence of free land. Thither went those who had discarded tradition or who had none to discard, the dispossessed and those who had no possessions. There was generated the spiritual individualism which nursed the characteristic democracy of America. Individualism is not always the friend of democracy. Starting from

THE GENIUS OF DEMOCRACY

individualistic premises Thomas Hobbes had deduced the necessity of totalitarianism. But in this age of free land and rich exploitable resources, individualism was tolerant of the liberties of the common man, even though it sustained also the boss, the spoils-seeker, and the robber-baron. The common man emerged from social subservience to an extent nowhere else attained in the civilized world. American democracy thus became a new thing, no longer dependent on European principles but developing along its own lines and growing fully conscious of its new-world quality.

Such in briefest outline has been the character of American democracy, reflecting the spirit of the individual's trust in himself, unhierarchal, tolerant of differences, lacking in class consciousness, and distrustful of the repressive powers of government. The picture is complicated by other factors, by the tendency to reverence the Constitution as a final political revelation, by the more powerful operation of the principle of judicial review with its influence in the direction of socio-economic conservatism, by the consolidation of economic power in vast corporate empires, by the presence of a large racially separate population not in effect accepted into the framework of the democratic system, and by the preponderant growth of an industrial urbanized population whose conditions of life and whose problems of security and employment are utterly remote

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

from those that bred the American doctrine. It is not difficult to imagine that from some alignment of these factors might come a serious menace to the American democratic tradition. The frontier has receded into the Western ocean. Free land belongs to the past. Economic individualism forlornly fights a rear guard action against the billion dollar corporation and centralized finance and organized labor and the ruthless economic cycle and large-scale unemployment. New times have brought new attitudes and new needs. Democracy too must find a new voice, a new conviction. The old forms crumble but the old faith in humanity endures.

In its reassertion the United States has a particular contribution to offer and is beginning to offer it. For the United States has something more than its resources, its enterprise, its belief in the future. In it the great middle ground on which democracy stands has not been deeply invaded by the extremists, as in so many countries of Europe. Its people do not reverence authority and rank. They are not prone to any worship of the state.

Witnessing the tragic consequences of extremist positions in other lands they can take a new assurance in their own golden mean, in the greater tolerance and restraint that happier circumstances have made it easier for them to maintain. They can take a new devotion to the cause of democracy. The world needs this assurance and this devotion as per-

THE GENIUS OF DEMOCRACY

haps never before. It needs this assurance until extremist passions defeat themselves, until extremist philosophies, the untimely birth of violent crisis, lose their hold upon the peoples, and the noise of their mighty conflict dies away.

PART TWO

COMMENTARY

A series of observations and reflections on various topics discussed in Part One. The comments are arranged according to the order of treatment in Part One, as indicated by the page numbers in the margin.

IV

ON THE NEW LEVIATHAN

END OF LAISSEZ FAIRE

IT is a commonplace that the reign of economic *p. 5*
laissez faire, really a brief transitional period
in the history of modern civilization, has ended.*
What is less often recognized is the manner in which
the scale and complexity of modern society has
rendered the earlier system both politically and
economically untenable. There are tradition-bound
economists and others who protest against its pass-
ing and plead for its return. Many people still talk
as though every activity of government in the eco-
nomic sphere were an "interference" with or an
"encroachment" on a self-regulating system. This
language dates back to the eighteenth century and
is no longer meaningful. There is wise and there is
foolish economic regulation, but economic regula-
tion is no longer an optional activity of government.
It is an inevitable and essential aspect of the civili-
zation in which we live. Today an "economist" who
is not also a student of government is an anachro-
nism, and likewise any "political scientist" who is not
also a student of economics. Unfortunately these

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

anachronisms are numerous. So it is still important to insist on the tremendous process of change that has occurred between the end of the eighteenth century and the present time.

In the days when from 60 to 80 per cent of the population depended upon agriculture, when a factory was large if it employed from fifty to a hundred persons, when practically all women were household workers and the household produced for itself most of the goods it used, when productivity per worker was a tithe or even a hundredth part of what it is today, when money was merely a specially valued commodity and not the product of a mysterious credit system controlled by governments and banks, when there were no labor unions and no price-fixing agencies, when distance was not yet vanquished and every man saw the work of his hands and its destination—when, in short, men lived and thought in the eighteenth century, they could hold without manifest contradiction of reality the premises of the "simple system of natural liberty." We need not concern ourselves with the question whether these premises were ever sufficiently sound to justify the erection upon them of the laissez faire theory. At least they were plausible then and are not plausible now. It was plausible to think of the competitive system as natural, as resulting in the optimum distribution of resources, as harmoniously conjoining individual interest and social well-being. The idea

ON THE NEW LEVIATHAN

of natural harmony in the economic sphere runs all the way from Adam Smith to Karl Marx, except that Adam Smith made government the serpent of that Eden, and Karl Marx made it instead the capitalist—the capitalist who prevents the worker from receiving the natural and due product of his labor.

In the face of the conditions we have just referred to the plausibility of *laissez faire* has departed. A complex mechanism needs an engineer, and the modern complex economic mechanism, constantly subject to partial breakdowns and to violent changes in tempo, has no engineer *inside* it and is obviously not safeguarded from *above* by any “invisible hand.” Wherefore, this necessary function as obviously devolves on government. With some aspects of this function we shall be concerned in later comments.

It should be here observed that the force of our argument is directed solely against *economic* *laissez faire*. For purely technological reasons the economic system is utterly inseparable from the political system. To function at all they must function together. In this sense they together constitute a single system. But no such necessity holds for the relation of the political system to the numerous systems of belief, opinion, creed, style, artistic expression, and cultural endeavor generally, that rise and change, flourish and decline, in the free creative life of modern society. For purely technological reasons only one politico-economic system can prevail in any ter-

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

ritory, but nothing except the dogmatic preoccupations of a tyrannous government prevents the simultaneous existence, side by side, of many faiths and of the most divergent schools of thought. The argument against laissez faire is no argument for totalitarianism. The realm of necessity should not be confounded with the realm of liberty. The civilization in which we live depends on the recognition of each, and its clear separation from the other. (On this subject see my book *Society* [New York, 1937], chaps. xiv-xviii.)

THE VARIOUS MEANINGS OF DICTATORSHIP

- p. 7 When in this book we contrast dictatorship with democracy we are referring to a particular type of government of which Germany, Italy, and Russia furnish the outstanding examples. To keep the record clear we should note that the term "dictatorship" is used in two other senses. Practically all that the three usages have in common is that they alike designate a government that is suddenly created and that suspends the regular course of constitutional procedure, that is highly personal, and that formally concentrates all authority in the will of the dictator.

(a) In its original sense dictatorship was a temporary interruption of constitutional government so that all the resources of the state might be put at the disposal of one leader, whose task it was to

ON THE NEW LEVIATHAN

save the people in some great emergency. In republican Rome, with its two consuls and its complicated system of magistrates and comitia, this device was not infrequently applied. When the state seemed imperiled by invasion or otherwise, the regular governmental procedures were suspended and a single man was solemnly invested with complete power, being commissioned, as the formula ran, to take measures "lest any harm befall the republic." These dictatorships in the earlier republican period were of short duration, the longest lasting not more than half a year. But in the troublous times of civil dissension towards the close of the republic, dictators got themselves appointed, beginning with Sulla, who refused to relinquish power and strove to set up a dictatorial regime. They defied the constitution, after the manner of the Greek "tyrants," and so became instruments in the dissolution of the republican system.

The principle of dictatorship in the old Roman sense is not unknown in the modern world. Provision for the suspension of the constitution in an emergency was made in article 48 of the Weimar constitution. The original Marxist doctrine of the "dictatorship of the people" had in it something akin to the Roman idea. It was to be a temporary and exceptional form of government to prepare the way for the inauguration of a new dictatorless—in fact, stateless—order.

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

(b) The word "dictatorship" is also rather freely applied to governments of a personal nature set up as the result of a coup d'état, of which Central and South America have furnished so many instances. These are not totalitarian or ideological governments, but regimes resting on control of the army. They are temporary simply because they are insecure. Their head is usually a general and always the leader of a band of personal followers, who often call themselves a "party." Most of the countries in which they appear have a "democratic" constitution, but the dictator controls the vote and makes the constitution serve his own purposes, until he is effectively challenged by some new leader who takes advantage of popular discontent, ousts the old dictator, and sets himself up in his stead. See on this subject the article "Dictatorship" in the *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, Vol. V.

It is obvious that the dictatorships with which we are concerned in this book have a very different character.

THE CRUCIAL PROBLEM OF MODERN CAPITALISM

While, as suggested in "End of Laissez Faire," the functioning of the complex mechanism of modern capitalism is subject to serious disturbances and maladjustments, it has long been sufficiently clear that one type of disturbance is of peculiar moment

ON THE NEW LEVIATHAN

for the future of the whole system. This is the more or less cyclical movement of business activity culminating periodically in a severe crisis. The psychological and political repercussions of these crises are such that, unless politico-economic means can be devised to break their impact and to moderate the violence of business fluctuations, our age is likely to witness the general decline and fall of capitalism. We are here considering, not any of the moral issues involved in the alternatives of a capitalistic and a socialistic order, but a purely technical problem. The nature of this problem is not properly realized by such traditional economists as profess to believe in the "natural" restorative principle of liquidation. Apart from other naïvetés inherent in their philosophy they forget the essential fact that we are dealing not simply with an economic system but with a *politico-economic* system. The political factor will not allow us to wait for a problematic self-operating recovery. On the other hand the problem itself remains a technical one, that is, one that can be solved only by the application of economic intelligence. The crux of the matter lies in the relation of productivity to purchasing power. Complicated though the situation is by other factors, it is apparent that the monetary and credit system does not flexibly adjust itself to the ever increasing productivity of modern industry. Under an ideal system, unit prices would fall proportionately as unit costs fall, but there are

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

so many obstacles in trade usage, price agreement, profit calculation, and broadly in "imperfect competition," preventing this adjustment, that this goal seems quite impossible of realization. Hence it is necessary to resort to political methods to achieve, so far as may be, the economic desideratum. The plausibility of inflationary schemes, share-the-wealth panaceas, and social-credit doctrines, shortsighted and ill reasoned as they are, depends on an obscure popular conception of the nature of the economic malady, for a sick man knows his own pain but seldom the way to cure it.

The problem, though obstinate, may not be insoluble. Certainly there are important measures which at the least can greatly diminish it. If, as we believe, the essential trouble lies in the inadequacy of the credit system, there are various non-inflationary methods which can at need increase the volume of effective purchasing power. There are always idle resources and there is always a vast potential demand. It would be belittling human ingenuity to assume that the two cannot be brought effectively together. One method susceptible of considerable extension is that exemplified by the Federal Housing Authority, which insures the risk of individual enterprise in housing, so that a development important for the general welfare can be financed at low interest rates. The loss to the state is negligible and

ON THE NEW LEVIATHAN

the release of credit quite considerable. The collectivization of credit risks might well be applied in other directions when the times called for it. In a similar way liquidity could be given to resources that constitute genuine wealth but have no ready market. To advance particular economic developments of public moment, for which the short-run incentive of private profit is inadequate, the state could release large-scale credit at specially low interest rates or even at no interest rate whatever. (An important proposal in this direction is being prepared for publication by A. A. Berle.) Thereby new national wealth would be created where otherwise the existing wealth deteriorates—so long as available funds remain impotent to stimulate business activity and potential credit goes to waste in idleness. The final and irremediable waste is of course not that of mere funds but the human waste of unemployment and privation. Our method of reckoning wealth by exchange value can never reveal the true balance sheet of the nation.

The methods here instanced may or may not be adequate, and certainly the problem at issue cannot be solved in any summary fashion. We mention them merely in order to suggest that constructive economic statesmanship can, if properly brought to bear, find a way of meeting one of the most urgent challenges of our times.

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

DETACHMENT OF THE INDIVIDUAL IN MODERN SOCIETY

p. 11 Unemployment is the economic counterpart of that social and spiritual detachment the individual is liable to suffer in the transitions of modern civilization. It has frequently been pointed out that the small urban family unit, separated in the competitive city from the inclusive kin group and the larger household of the country, affords little refuge for its members in time of trouble; that the urban family is less unified in itself, less of a home, since its members follow divergent interests and are attached to different outside organizations; that the neighborhood disintegrates when the city invades the country; that community life everywhere loses its cohesion while a variety of specializations, interest-groups or associations, particularist codes, sects, and schools become the foci of social life. Statistical evidences are adduced respecting the increase of divorce, of occupational and residential mobility, of the lack of contact between near-dwellers, and so forth. Sociologists give considerable attention to the phenomena of "social disorganization" apparent in urban life (as, for example, E. R. Mowrer, *Family Disorganization* [Chicago, 1927]; P. Sorokin and C. C. Zimmerman, *Principles of Rural-Urban Sociology* [New York, 1929]; Lewis Mum-

ON THE NEW LEVIATHAN

ford, *The Culture of Cities* [New York, 1938]). Certain social philosophers look upon these processes as evidencing the breakdown of social solidarity altogether. This was suggested in F. Tönnies' famous book, *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft* (Leipzig, 1887), in which he spoke as though civilized man's dependence on associations (*Gesellschaften*) involved the loss of the more intimate, more "instinctive," and more profound unity of primitive life. This notion was given prophetic amplitude by Oswald Spengler in his grandiose volumes on *The Decline of the West* (Eng. tr., New York, 1926), and is in part accepted by various commentators, such as Lewis Mumford in *The Culture of Cities*. We may or may not accept these interpretations, for similar gloomy prognostications have accompanied the whole growth of civilization. But, for good or ill, the fact is clear that the modern individual, not only economically, but also spiritually, is less fully integrated into the substance of a single community life and is more likely to become a detached unit fighting his own battles, so that, particularly in times of crisis, he yearns for a spiritual security he cannot find. The decline in the effective authority of religion for large numbers is in one aspect a cause but in another only a symptom of this transformation.

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

PERSONAL PHILOSOPHIES OF HITLER AND MUSSOLINI

p. 16 The brother dictators of Central Europe are extremely unlike in temperament, in mentality, in cultural background, and in their personal philosophies of life. The author of *Mein Kampf* reveals himself in that work and throughout his whole record as consistently dedicated to his national mission. He is a single-minded ascetic who demands fanaticism of others because he is inspired by it himself. He never questions his cause, pursuing it inflexibly with concentrated fervor, with boundless energy, and hitherto with uncanny intuition of the right moment. His philosophy is as simple and unswerving as that of his humblest follower. He is the incarnation of one idea and regards himself as the divinely appointed agent of its fulfillment. The idea is a traditional atavistic conception of Germanism, of the chosen people and the one right way of life, cherished quite uncritically and most tenaciously. It is perhaps not without significance that this apostle of nationalism was born outside of the country that fires his missionary zeal. Hitler has the zealot's belief in the exclusive purity of his faith and is ruthless and intolerant by sheer conviction. If he breaks without scruple his pledges to other countries it is because they are all beyond the pale. Whatever means will bring him nearer to the goal are thereby justified, no matter how they affect the rest of the

ON THE NEW LEVIATHAN

world, no matter what other values of humanity are crushed in the process. Whether this unswerving zeal will always be proof against the insidious influences of absolute power is one of the most interesting problems of his future, but up to the present that power has scarcely complicated his outlook.

Mussolini, on the other hand, feels himself "above the battle." He is the egotist *in excelsis*, so much the individualist that all other individualities must be suppressed to make room for his own. He uses convictions for his purpose and changes them at need. He is not absorbed in any "national soul." He has read widely in modern philosophy and is, in contrast to Hitler, entirely sophisticated. If he believes in anything it is in the ideas that are congenial to his dominance. He is ready, like Sorel, to inculcate whatever "myths" are appropriate to the purpose in hand. If they help to assure his personal mastery, to impose the necessary discipline and obedience, that is enough. For the personal history of Mussolini see the illuminating study by G. Megaro, *Mussolini in the Making* (Boston, 1938).

ONLY PRINCIPLES ENDURE

The notion that because everything in human history changes, everything also passes away and is succeeded by something different and new, even as the old generations disappear and new ones take their place, is often applied dogmatically and erro-

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

neously. This notion is particularly congenial to those whose thinking about society is colored by the organic analogy. They believe, with Oswald Spengler, that every cultural creation, every type of thought, activity and achievement, is purely historical and is always at a determinate stage of its life history, nearer to, or farther from, its inevitable and predestined end. Thus what we know as democracy must pass away, since like all other human products it has its own particular and limited vitality, its own length of days. They look around to discover its successor, even though the new order of things they herald may be only a variation of something still more ancient than that whose approaching demise they so confidently prophesy.

An example or two may suggest the fallacy of this notion. There are dead languages and living languages but it by no means follows that all living languages must die and be *replaced* by others. The living languages are themselves the result of an immensely long process of development and transformation. Greek and Latin never disappeared, they merely underwent continual change while other languages emerged from obscurity and, borrowing from these more developed tongues, became vehicles of cultural advance. There is nothing to support the idea that any language used over a large area must become obsolete, though of course it must always change—not because it is dying but because

ON THE NEW LEVIATHAN

it is living. A similar statement may be made concerning nations or peoples. What is wrong with the conception of their mortality is the dogmatic assumption that peoples are from some moment of birth a specific formation with a specific culture, remaining as such through a specific life cycle. This conception is entirely out of accord with the historical facts. Again we find endless transformations and fusions of elements, endless change, but no beginnings except in the sense of migrations and no endings except for the somewhat rare catastrophes that have extirpated some insulated civilization—and in the modern world no people and no civilization remains insulated. It does violence to the evidences of historical change to say that peoples have a time of birth and a time of death.

What is impressive in the historical record is not the death of peoples but the fall of empires. All power systems have within them the conditions of mortality, not for any mysterious reason but simply because in a world of change every power system is necessarily unstable. Power depends on a conjuncture of advantage that is unlikely to endure; it breeds resistance, and it has an unlimited urge to expansion which at length accumulates sufficient resistance to bring about its downfall. Not only power systems but all institutional forms are transient. Institutional forms and specific modes of organizations are socially contrived means to perpetuate certain

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

situations or to provide for certain needs. We might as well expect particular engineering contrivances to endure forever. Like these, the institutions of any society are subject to obsolescence. The situation and the needs are always changing, and even if they were not the ingenuity of man would in time devise more efficient institutions.

There is besides one aspect of all human activity and achievement that is marked by mortality. This is the aspect of *style* that inheres in every cultural form. Every style is dated, for it is man's attempt to express himself, and all expression is imperfect and inadequate, a partial fulfillment that is also a limitation. The history of all arts, thought forms, philosophies, reveals the incessant coming and going of styles, even though they may not be quite so perishable as institutions, for often they seem to come back to life just as the most superficial of styles, viz., fashions, may recur after decades or even centuries. (For a fuller account of this subject see my book, *Community*, Book III, chap. ii.)

What then is implied in the statement that only principles endure? It means that behind institutions and beyond styles there are permanent demands that human nature makes on the social order. If we are asked how we know they are permanent, the sufficient answer is that they are manifested in degree under all conditions of human life and that in the more evolved societies they find more definite mani-

ON THE NEW LEVIATHAN

festations. The general formulations of such demands are the enduring principles we have in mind. Thus the division of labor is a permanent principle, though the specific arrangements in which it is embodied are always changing. Of another type is democracy, defined as we have set it out in chapter iii. It is of course true that human nature makes other demands on the social order which under certain conditions negates the demand for democracy. But this gives us no justification for assuming that the demand itself has lost its vitality. It is merely suspended, awaiting the opportunity for its reassertion.

THE GOAL OF AUTARCHY

From ancient days the assumption has been held p. 21 that the state provided the conditions under which men could live together an autarchic or self-sufficient life. It was definitely put forward by Aristotle as the very end for which the *polis* or city-state existed (*Politics*, I, 2). But in Hellenic thought this "autarchy" was a different conception from that which is fostered by modern dictatorships. For Aristotle, the important point was that the *polis* was inclusive enough to make it possible for men to enjoy within it all the advantages and opportunities requisite for the development and the exercise of their faculties to the fullest and highest achievement. He was not pleading for the exclusiveness of the *polis*. He was

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LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

not thinking of it as autarchic from a military or an economic aspect. This latter notion, though it was congenial to Plato, was not emphasized in ancient thought about the state. It did not in fact gain prominence until quite recent times, when it was promulgated by the German philosophers of the "closed state," Fichte and List and Hegel and Treitschke and many others. Even these philosophers did not carry it to the extreme point advocated by the present apostles of totalitarianism.

Two factors may be held responsible for this present-day development. One is the intensification of nationalism bred by the war and the post-war dislocations. The other is the breakdown of international trade under the same conditions. Since complete economic autarchy is unattainable, the totalitarian states, and particularly Germany, after going as far as possible in the substitution of home products for imported ones, have made the importation of nationally needed supplies and the conquest of markets for their own exports a matter of political manipulation in place of the former relatively free economy of international trade. These things are determined mainly by barter diplomacy and governmental pressure. Such tactics are more congenial to the closed state principle than to the principle of democracy. The methods employed are so cumbrous and so destructive of the advantages of normal international exchange that men of economic percep-

ON THE NEW LEVIATHAN

tion defend it only on the ground of necessity. Thus Hjalmar Schacht, in a speech of November 29, 1938 (as reported in the *New York Times*), declared that only the unfortunate conditions of international economic relations made the resort to deals and barter necessary and that it would be gladly abandoned were these conditions removed. But Schacht's ideas have not proved acceptable to the totalitarian regime, as his later dismissal from office showed. The totalitarian principle is itself one of the main factors in the fixation of the "unfortunate conditions" which he deplored.

V

ON CERTAIN ASPECTS OF DICTATORSHIP

RELIGIOUS PRETENSIONS OF DICTATORSHIP

p. 22 **I**T is the inherent tendency of modern dictatorship to suppress all existing religions, in so far as it cannot make them purely subservient to its own cause. But wherever there is vitality in religion, it must at some point offer resistance to the claims of dictatorship. Thus the Lutheran faith, though specifically German and though more inclined than most forms of Protestantism to accept the duty of obedience to the secular authority, could not without complete surrender of its principles admit the denial of human brotherhood to the Jews or allow the state to dictate not only its actions but also its beliefs. It still must believe in a kingdom that "is not of this world." The Catholic faith, on the other hand, could not, whatever other concessions it might make to the political exigencies, admit the absolutism of the state or qualify the international character of its mission. Hence, whatever *modus vivendi* it may for the moment accept, it is bound to reject the implications of totalitarianism.

ASPECTS OF DICTATORSHIP

At the same time the totalitarian principle must always be at strife with every religion that is not its own emanation, the mere transcendental projection of its own policies. If the state is the ultimate authority over the minds of men, there can be logically no other religion but that which conveys this authority. If to think otherwise than the state bids is heresy, then the state itself must be "the march of God." If men must sacrifice everything to the needs or demands of the state, then the state must be the final good. We consequently find that the advocates of totalitarianism freely apply the language of religion to their system. The will of the state is sacred, its Leader is God-appointed, its institutions are divine ordinances, even its wars are sacraments. This tendency finds its completest expression in Germany. In Italy it is limited by the powerful influence exerted by the Roman Church. In Soviet Russia it is less explicit, since, owing to the collapse of the Greek Orthodox Church which had too servilely joined its being to the prerevolutionary state, there are no opposing claims against which the state must assert its absolute role. But in Germany it has full play and has brought to birth a curious state religion, a romantic compound of pagan myths and appropriately "revised" Christian images; of which the most remarkable expression is to be found in the writings of Alfred Rosenberg.

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

THE "REALITY" OF THE STATE

p. 29 In the opinion of the writer few errors are more pernicious to the common weal and particularly to the establishment of an international order than the common tendency to conceive the state as though it were some self-existent majestic being, endowed with attributes which are other and greater than those conferred on it by the organization of its members. This tendency is especially characteristic of the Hegelian philosophy and of the doctrines of totalitarianism, though as a philosophical mode it stems back to Plato, flourished in various mediaeval concepts of the state, and was given a new impetus in the doctrines of Rousseau. To the influence of this unrealistic notion must be attributed the vain age-long disputations about the nature of sovereignty defined as "supreme power," "one, inalienable, and indivisible," "irresistible, uncontrollable power," "all-highest," "the real will of its members," and so forth. If the authors of these doctrines had studied the actual authority exercised by kings and parliaments, instead of looking at the mythical image of the state, they could never have come to such conclusions. But it is not the waste of empty thinking that is mainly to be deplored, it is the practical consequences of the acceptance of these notions. Ideas are no less powerful because they misapprehend the reality to which they are addressed, and

ASPECTS OF DICTATORSHIP

these ideas have been a strong magic preventing men from making the state the instrument of social purposes. Slowly the majesty of the self-existent state has lost its hold on domestic policy but it still reigns over the minds of men when they think of international relations.

These notions are buttressed by the confusion of the state with the nation or people or country—on this subject see the argument under "Positive Character of Democracy," chapter iii. Before they can be dispelled we must understand that the state is simply a way in which the people of a determinate territory are organized. This political organization is different from, say, a religious or an economic organization in that it has, for its function of assuring law and order, a more fundamental jurisdiction as evidenced by its exclusive right to use coercive power. But it is still an organization, with all the limitations, prejudices, and clashes of interest that beset any other association of men. It is greater than most other organizations only because it wields more power, because it deals with the larger issues of an ordered life, and because—or in so far as—its leaders and members have built up over a long time a body of accepted rules that incorporate some part of the wisdom of experience.

As such an organization, the state is certainly real. We do not accept the psychological "realism" that dissolves an organization back into its units, as

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

though the established relationships between them were fictional. No system is an aggregate of units with blank interspaces around each. Authority is something more than the *habit* of one man to give commands and the habit of other men to accept them. A law is not simply what certain officials do about disputes, as Karl Llewellyn would have it. An institution is not just a number of people engaged in some particular behaving. The "realists" who hold such views are as far from apprehending the social reality, the *system* of social life, as a man would be from understanding music if he defined it simply as a number of notes that accompany and follow one another. But this opposite fallacy is not relevant to our argument, and so we will not discuss it here. Those who are interested can find a good short refutation of it in Hermann Kantorowicz's article, "Some Rationalism about Realism," in the *Yale Law Journal* of June, 1934.

VIRUS OF INTOLERANCE IN MARXISM

- p. 35 The attack of Karl Marx was directed as much against nationalism as against capitalism and for the purposes of his polemic he identified, though illegitimately, the two principles. His summons to the proletarians of all countries was an appeal to overthrow both of them together. In the pursuit of this aim he simplified and exaggerated the character and the role of class distinctions. Following out his

ASPECTS OF DICTATORSHIP

dogma of economic determinism he first defined social class in purely economic terms, as depending on the distinction between the ownership and the operation of the means of production, and then concluded that each of the classes so distinguished, viz., the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, had a clear-cut difference in outlook, morals, interest, and philosophy of life. He made the struggle of classes, thus simplified, the essential determinant of the course of human history. This position was proclaimed in the most forthright terms in the *Communist Manifesto* and in all the later works of Marx and of Engels. It was further elaborated and stereotyped by their followers, from Karl Kautsky to Lenin. No bridge was left between social classes. The whole area of common interests, on which the conception of the nation rested, was theoretically destroyed. There could be no common interest of humanity until the "classless society" was attained. On the other hand, the dividing interests of skilled labor and unskilled labor, of farmer and business man, of small capitalist and large capitalist (except for the claim that the latter actually ate up the former), of importer and exporter, of white-collar worker and artisan, of professional worker and entrepreneur, of industrialist and financier, were treated as being of no account. Society was looked upon, under all other conditions than that of complete socialism, as merely the arena of class warfare. The picture the Marx-

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

ists present is one of the unmitigated antagonism of social classes, regarded as two great opposing armies, and all human history is rewritten by them to bring it into accord with this hypothesis.

One of the two classes is viewed as simply the expropriators, the other as simply the expropriated. Each is endowed with the qualities appropriate for its role. Thus has been generated a new form of the dichotomy of religious intolerance, dividing the world once more into the good and the evil, the sheep and the goats, the destroyers and the creators, the believers and the infidels, the saved and the lost.

The rise of fascism is historically bound up with the prior permeation of Marxist principles and the formation of Marxist parties. The Marxist "dialectic," the generation of its "antithesis" out of every "thesis," is congenial enough to the conditions that Marxism postulates and endeavors to create. But this quick reaction was certainly a consequence unforeseen by the proponents of that philosophy. Believing that nationalism as well as capitalism was in an advancing stage of decay, in fulfillment of the dogmatic presumptions of their system, they minimized the potentiality of its resistance. So they fostered the war of extremes in which they themselves were crushed. The Russian situation, in which there was practically no middle class to support the opposition, was an entirely different one.

In the text we take the situation in Spain as an

ASPECTS OF DICTATORSHIP

illustration of the war of extremes and of the manner in which they breed a tragic intolerance. On this subject see, for example, Frank Manuel, *The Politics of Modern Spain* (New York, 1938).

ATTRIBUTION OF A FASCIST CHARACTER TO THE SOVIET SYSTEM

The Soviet system has been facing the profound dilemma that it proclaims an ultimate goal of human freedom and yet must employ in its quest those methods of political control that logically belong to systems of tyranny. So long as the "dictatorship of the people" could be regarded as a quite temporary phase the contradiction between means and ends might be overcome. But since that presumption has passed into the realm of utopian mythology the contradiction has grown ever more acute. For the means employed determine the political structure, and the structure demands corresponding attitudes on the part of both government and people. "Communism," says T. V. Smith (*The Promise of American Politics* [Chicago, 1936], p. 122) "represents a glorification of ends pursued under liberalism through the means exemplified by fascism." But means come nearer to men's daily lives than ends that remain only as mere detached ideals, and if long enough continued must surely mold the whole system to their likeness.

Disappointed radicals already assert that the

' LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

Soviet system has grown fascist. This point of view is expressed by Trotsky as follows: "In its intermediary and regulating function, its concern to maintain social ranks and its exploitation of the state apparatus for personal goals, the Soviet bureaucracy is similar to every other bureaucracy, especially the fascist." (L. Trotsky, *The Revolution Betrayed*, p. 248.) Max Eastman says to the same effect: "What the Stalin parties in general have done is to abandon the proletarian-insurrectionary aim of Lenin while retaining the conspiratorial habit, the centralized command, the jesuitical *mores*—in sum, the military tactics and the 'war psychology'—which were justified, if at all, only by that aim. That is exactly what Mussolini and Hitler did." ("The Communist Constitution," *The Nation*, June 4, 1938, p. 655.) These writers assume that the Soviet state has been diverted from the true communist goal. The deeper question is whether a totalitarian state, encompassing the whole national economy, can, whether it be that of Lenin or of Stalin or of Trotsky, follow any different road. Must not the totalitarian state, no matter what its ideals, evoke the "totalitarian state of mind," which Mr. Eastman himself regards as the enemy of civilization?

While we agree with these critics that fascism and sovietism have grown more similar in character and must continue to do so under the influence

ASPECTS OF DICTATORSHIP

of their like totalitarian structures we do not of course deny that there still remain very significant differences between them. The theoretical objectives of political control are vastly different and there is the still momentous fact that the Soviet state has practically abolished, instead of merely limiting, the nexus between economic wealth and political power. Moreover, since totalitarianism is never total, the ineluctable differences dependent on tradition, social evaluation, the temperament of the people, the stage of industrial development, and the prevailing conditions of the country as a whole, must always play an important part.

EXPLANATIONS OFFERED FOR FASCISM AND OTHER MOVEMENTS

The common human desire to find a simple all-p. 43
sufficient explanation of the great movements of history is amply illustrated in the voluminous literature on modern dictatorships. Not content to see in these movements a mass response to a total changing situation and to study the interaction of the various pressures and precipitants at work in the situation, many people cherish the belief that a single factor can bear the weight of imputation. To some it is the genius of a leader, to others it is a psychic disorder, to others the calculated contrivance of some interest group, to others the inherent quality of some racial breed. The "great man" explanation

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

is not so popular as it used to be. Its most modern successor is the psychoanalytic interpretation, which is exemplified by F. L. Schuman's book, *The Nazi Dictatorship* (New York, 1935). This work follows the same Freudian principle that led previous writers to explain communism as the expression of an "Oedipus complex," the father-image in the case being the industrial patriarch, the employer or capitalist. The National-Socialist movement is similarly another "regression to infantilism," exhibiting in particular the "castration-phobia" associated with the mutilation and impotence of the Fatherland. We need not discuss here the elaboration of this thesis by Schuman and others. It is subject to the general difficulty of all such theories that it turns mere analogies, which may no doubt be suggestive if used with discretion as such, into a complete and wholly unsubstantiated formula of interpretation. Psychoanalytic theories of social movements generally require this leap in the dark from symbol to cause.

The difficulty with the economic interpretation is of another order. It is true that the Marxist doctrine assumes the inevitable primacy of the economic factor just as the Freudian doctrine rests on the primacy of a pervading sex factor. But the economic factor is obviously inherent in the mass movement whereas the sex factor is merely inferred to be operative. There is an economic aspect to all hu-

ASPECTS OF DICTATORSHIP

man activity, but it is so inextricably bound up with other aspects that only a dogmatic confidence, often involving an illicit extension of the economic concept, can find in it the key to social behavior. The economic problem is definitely a problem of means but the means cannot be dissociated from the cultural ends they actually serve. Every great social movement is at the least a cultural-economic interaction. To interpret it as though it were dominantly economic is generally an unwarranted simplification. As applied to fascism it leaves out of account or minimizes a multitude of social-psychological evidences. A few of these are suggested in the text.

While certain studies of fascism (for example, E. B. Ashton, *The Fascist: his State and his Mind* [New York, 1937]) rely too exclusively on these evidences, other studies (such as R. E. Brady, *The Spirit and Structure of German Fascism* [New York, 1937], and John Strachey, *The Menace of Fascism* [New York, 1933]) are all too ready to discount them in favor of the Marxist hypothesis.

The quotations given on pp. 42-43 are taken from the autobiographies of Nazi followers collected by Theodore Abel and contained in his book, *Why Hitler Came into Power* (New York, 1938). The references are to pp. 153, 211, 212, and 298 of that work, which also contains a good brief critique of the psychoanalytic and economic-determinist theories.

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

PROPAGANDA AS GOSPEL AND PROPAGANDA AS TECHNIQUE

p. 51 Propagandism is like hypnotism, to which indeed it is closely allied. It can persuade people only to actions that are consonant with their inclinations, and its most dangerous power, particularly when it is able to block all counter-suggestion, lies in the fact that it distorts the truth in such a way as to invest the appropriate emotions with convincing reasons for their uninhibited operation. The Czechs, were murderous oppressors, the Albanians were ruled by a gang of traitors, and so forth. Thus it attaches a sense of right to everything that is done in the name of an already accepted gospel. But the gospel must be accepted before the technique of propagandism can conquer.

In the passage from Goebbels given on page 53 (from his book, *The Struggle for Berlin*, as quoted in the *New York Times Magazine*, February 14, 1937) the object of propaganda is frankly set out as "the conquest of the masses." To our thorough-going sophisticates propagandism is *simply* technique for manipulating the masses. It is that—but it is also something more. The masses are not an instrument on which any tune can be played. They respond out of their needs, out of their aspirations, and out of their misunderstandings. It is the sim-

ASPECTS OF DICTATORSHIP

plidity of sophistication that it talks only of symbols and not of meanings, though symbols without meanings are not symbols at all. A fine example of this would-be objectivity is found in the chapter on "The Strategy of Revolutionary and War Propaganda," by Harold D. Lasswell, in *Public Opinion and World-Politics*, edited by Quincy Wright (Chicago, 1933). For Professor Lasswell a revolution is the business of devising and applying new symbols to drive out the established symbols of authority. But this bloodless analysis never cuts to the quick of revolution. No mere technicians of propaganda can create the revolutionary spirit. They may foster it and direct it, as did Mussolini and his associates, but even so they are likely to be more effective if they themselves are imbued with the doctrine they preach. The great revolutionary leaders have been fanatics for the faith, both in religion and in politics. If Lenin and Hitler had been mere technicians, mere experts in manipulating symbols, mere professionals in exploiting what Professor Lasswell calls "the surviving credulities of their fellows" they would never have moved the world. "Our quest for some political analysis," says this writer, "is ultimately a search for the symbol of the historical-prophetic whole in which we find ourselves" (*op. cit.*, p. 196). It is in keeping with this attitude that he proceeds to suggest the reduction of ideas to

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

"verbalizations," and of "verbalizations" to "passing episodes in respiration, salivation, and excretion." Nor are we surprised when he concludes on a level of sheer detached egoism: "Skeptical and enquiring minds devote themselves to the study of the fulminating emotions of the masses, confident that though society at large will no doubt continue to suffer wars and revolutions, they at least can rise to partial mastery of their fate, and survive the cataclysms of mankind with a whole skin, a full pocket, and a resounding name" (*ibid.*, p. 221). They may survive the cataclysms on these terms, but it is certain that they will never understand them.

A more limited use of the manipulation theory is made by the left-wing realists who regard the rise of the Nazi party to power as essentially due to the scheming of capitalists to save their losing cause. This view is suggested in the works of John Strachey and Robert E. Brady referred to in a previous passage. While without doubt the fascist movement, like any other, has been exploited by those whose interests lie in the same direction, the thesis that it was engineered as well as controlled by some small calculating interest-group may be too naïve, too detached from the complicated historical realities, too aloof from a genuine "study of the fulminating emotions of the masses." The thesis has an engaging simplicity and it satisfies our all-too-human desire to unmask the villain of the piece.

ASPECTS OF DICTATORSHIP

LONG-RUN EFFECTS OF PROPAGANDA

There is accumulating a considerable body of evidence to show that the long-run effects of monopolistic propaganda are very different from those of the first impact. This subject has not yet received careful analysis and therefore in the space of a short note the present writer can do no more than advance some tentative conclusions, based largely on his own observations. p. 54

(a) There is a tendency in Germany and Italy to an entire skepticism regarding the inspired press and other propagandist agencies of their governments. This tendency is most apparent in the more educated classes but is not wholly confined to these. In Italy I was openly advised by very respectable people in good standing not to believe anything I read in the newspapers. In Germany many people are apt to shrug the shoulders in the face of inspired statements, to suspend judgment, and where possible to obtain information from the foreign press and other outside sources.

(b) People get tired of being told that the government is always right and beyond question. In their business and in their everyday life they incur the practical consequences of governmental policies, in the form of taxes and numerous restrictions; they see another side of the picture and draw conclusions that do not chime with the official announcements.

' LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

The natural tendency to criticize and to grumble cannot find public expression but discovers a variety of other outlets. The monotonous exclusiveness of the political propaganda tends to destroy at length its efficacy.

(c) The indoctrination of the young is a very powerful control, particularly over the first generation or two subjected to it. But the generations of youth, in school and college, in the youth organizations and on the parade ground, succeed one another very rapidly. The compulsory drill loses the first enthusiasm. The desire for new adventure, which is always resistant of compulsion, awakens. Abetted by the influences already working in the adult population, the newer generations again become less docile.

(d) Perhaps above all, it should be remembered that the monopoly of propaganda is the corollary of complete powerlessness on the part of the people to control their own affairs. It implies the loss of nearly all initiative, of all effective participation. Politics becomes for the people a kind of remote stage play in which they scarcely see the actors, though they have to pay the high price of the seats. They have nothing to do with what happens on that far-off elevated stage—nothing except to endure and to applaud. But instead of applauding they lapse into inertia. Outside the great theater they take some revenge in sarcastic criticism, and if they can do noth-

ASPECTS OF DICTATORSHIP¹

ing else at least they can pass endless private jokes on the capers of the actors.

MEANING OF IDEOLOGY

The extensive use of the term "ideology" is *p. 57* symptomatic of the conditions of our age. The word goes back to the eighteenth century French philosophers who were known as *ideologues* and whom Napoleon scornfully called "ideologists," the suggestion being that their reasonings were remote from reality. The modern application of the term is derived from the doctrine of Karl Marx and his followers. According to Marx all creeds and philosophies are essentially reflections of the "material" economic factors. But this "reality" changes, and those whose interests bind them to a passing order still cling to valuations and beliefs that no longer rest on the "material" foundations. Capitalism in particular is in an inevitable process of decay, and its defenders are therefore in the Marxist conception "ideologists." They have a "false consciousness" instead of one that (like Marxist socialism) rests on the basic facts. Hence "ideology" came rather broadly to mean any system of thought founded less on objective evidence than on the situation or interest-complex of those who espouse it. In this sense it was turned against the Marxists just as they had turned it against their opponents. The charge that most theories are "rationalizations" or

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

ideologies was very congenial to men like Sorci and Pareto. Pareto incidentally quotes with satisfaction a passage from Napoleon in which the latter attributes the misfortunes of France to "ideology," the "cloudy metaphysics" that ignores history and goes seeking "first causes" (V. Pareto, *The Mind and Society* [Eng. tr., New York, 1935], § 1793).

To our own age, with its anti-intellectual tendencies, the concept of ideology is very convenient. To some it is the watchword of a completely relativist position, from which all systems of thought are treated as valuational expressions of a particular social situation, having therefore only a pragmatic validity. To others it is an incentive to seek for the factors that condition our thinking, so as to explain our philosophies, at least in degree, as social products. Generally, the justification that any institutional system puts forward in its own defense or to secure allegiance may be classed as ideology. Thus ideology and propagandism are closely linked.

On the meaning of "ideology" consult Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia* (ed. Wirth, New York, 1936), pp. 49-67.

CO-ORDINATION OF CULTURE

- p. 59 By means of an elaborate system of controls, through the school and the press, the youth organizations and labor fronts, censorship of literature and art, the regulation of religious activities, and

ASPECTS OF DICTATORSHIP

so forth, the new dictatorships have dominated and captured the culture of their respective countries. This is the most deadly of all their attacks on human liberties. It is hardly too much to say that the larger history of mankind, the history that alone gives significance to the tale of kings and conquests and constitutions, is the history of cultural achievement. Always that achievement has depended on the range of free creative activity. The "lively power of the mind" (*vivida vis animi*, as Lucretius put it), that dared to transcend the established order, has made all that is memorable in drama and poetry, in religion and philosophy, in art and in science. It has transformed the consciousness of the tribe, its own earlier creation, into the consciousness of the great nation. It challenges all boundaries and quickens all values. But this power is stifled where it must march in step. The politico-economic system depends on conformity. In any community there can be only one effective code of law, one state, one constitution, one form of currency, one contractual order. But in any community there may be diverse creeds, diverse philosophies, diverse moral codes, diverse traditions, diverse approaches to the arts, diverse ways of living. Culture is the realm of diversity, and all its advances, from the time of Athens to the present, have depended on the admission of diversity. In short, the cultural life has a different principle from that which belongs to the politico-economic life, and

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

that principle is balked when culture is perverted into the mere instrument and servant of the state. One of the finest statements of this menace is contained in the famous letter (first printed in Zurich, 1937) of Thomas Mann to the Dean of the Philosophical Faculty of the University of Bonn, when the university notified this great artist of letters that it had struck him off its list of honorary doctors. In it he pictured the consequences of the "spiritual abasement and moral hollowness" to which Germany had been reduced.

PHILOSOPHIES OF TOTALITARIANISM

p. 61 The tremendous output of popular philosophizing being produced in the dictatorial states may be explained by the fact that these states have to justify themselves to their citizens in terms of the particular ideal that each is respectively presumed to embody. These philosophies, since they disregard conflicting political realities, differ considerably in the different states, almost the only feature they all possess alike being their equal denunciation of all heresies. Soviet political philosophy is largely concerned with the higher strategy of the yet unfulfilled revolution. Fascist philosophy is filled with the notions of the qualitative élite, the corporate structure, and the unique inflexible will that guides it in the way of its destiny. The brief description of National-Socialist philosophy given in the text may seem ex-

ASPECTS OF DICTATORSHIP

aggerated to those who are unacquainted with the recent literature of Germany. This literature is one of the most portentous phenomena of the intellectual life that any country has ever displayed. It must be studied before one can possibly realize how expediency, subservience, and for many the genuine devotion to a cause, can make the intelligence itself the sedulous servant of unreason. A similar phenomenon was witnessed in all the belligerent countries during the Great War. If we have forgotten or never learned the lesson, a perusal of the writings of Hans Günther, Wilhelm Stapel, and Alfred Rosenberg—to mention only a few out of a multitude—should suffice to drive it home. A bibliography of this literature will be found in A. Kolnai, *The War Against the West* (New York, 1938).

VI

ON CERTAIN ASPECTS OF DEMOCRACY

DICTATORIAL CLAIMS TO BE DEMOCRATIC

p. 63 **F**REQUENT assertions by the proponents of dictatorship that their system achieves a truer democracy than do the states which go under that name give point to the argument of the text that we should *define* democracy—and indeed every political system—not by reference to its spirit or purpose or ideal but by the positive distinguishing marks of its political structure.

There are interesting differences between the democratic pretensions of the fascist states on the one hand and those of the Soviet state on the other. In Soviet Russia there is a promulgated democratic constitution, rendered nugatory however by the lack of constitutional provisions for its realization and still more by the dictatorial control operating through the hierarchy of the one "party." Those who, like the Webbs, point to the constitution of 1936 and to the innumerable elections as evidences of democracy are singularly indifferent to the actual residence of power. The same claim is of course

ASPECTS OF DEMOCRACY

made by the Soviet leaders themselves who have the best of reasons for knowing better. In his speech before the 18th Party Congress Stalin declared that the U. S. S. R. had achieved "the complete democratization of the political life of the country and the creation of a new constitution, which is the most democratic in the world" (as reported *New York Times*, March 12, 1939). Later in the same congress Molotov dwelt on the role of the people and explained that the Five Year Plan was the plan of the people as a whole (*Daily Worker*, New York, March 20, 1939). Similar claims are common in the communist press everywhere. It is noteworthy that they stress the active participation of the people in the affairs of state. This position is congenial to the *ideology* of the Soviet state and affords one of the many indications that its conception of the *ends* of government is much closer to the democratic attitude than is that of fascism. But the dictatorial method relegates this ideology to the clouds.

The fascist states lay claim to democracy in quite another sense. The fascist writers falsify the meaning of democracy for their purpose, whereas the communist writers accept on the whole its genuine meaning but falsely claim that it is operative in the U.S.S.R. Mussolini in a speech at Berlin (September 28, 1937) declared that his country and Germany were "the greatest and soundest democracies in the world," because everywhere else capitalistic

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

groups dominate politics. Hitler has pointed to the practically unanimous plebiscites as proof that Germany has "quite a different sort of democracy" from the kind that wins popular support "only with the help of extremely doubtful methods." Such statements, like that which is cited on page 63 (taken from a speech by Otto Dietrich, as reported *New York Times*, September 9, 1936), are obviously defensive gestures and are entirely incompatible with the insistence on the absolute and omnicompetent authority of government. On one occasion, in an address made before the Reichstag, May 21, 1935, Hitler expressed himself as follows: "I conceive it my duty to be perfectly frank and open in addressing the nation. I frequently hear from Anglo-Saxon countries expressions of regret that Germany has departed from the principles of democracy. . . . This opinion is entirely erroneous. Germany too has a democratic constitution. . . . The German people have elected with 38,000,000 votes one single deputy as their representative." In a later address to the Reichstag (January 30, 1937) he declared that the German revolution "is actually democracy in the highest sense of the word."

Some German writers characteristically resort to the mystification that the *Volk* is an indivisible unity, not a mechanical majority and minority, and that the Führer is the representative of the *Volk*, who embodies and executes its will. For numerous ex-

ASPECTS OF DEMOCRACY

amples of this type of sophistry see the quotations in A. Kofnai, *The War Against the West*, chap. iii.

CONFUSED THINKING ABOUT DEMOCRACY

As an example of the confusions that today beset p. 64 the discussion of the nature of democracy we select a passage from the well-known recent work of Thurman Arnold, *The Folklore of Capitalism* (New Haven, 1937, pp. 44-45), in which he expounds the character of democratic reality. Our comments, in italics, follow the several statements.

"Thus has democracy changed from a creed to a word describing a political fact—from a set of symbols which must be followed regardless of their practicality or convenience to a recognition that every institution must keep the faith and loyalty of its members, or perish." *The process here described is obscure and of dubious historical authenticity, but let that pass. Does Mr. Arnold mean "some of the members," "most of the members," "all of the members"? Whichever he means, is the statement not as applicable to a dictatorship as to a democracy? How does it enable us to distinguish between them?* "To-day, when sophisticated men speak of democracy as the only workable system of government, they mean that a government which does not carry a people along with it emotionally, which depends on force, is insecure." *If they say that democracy is*

'LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

the only kind of government that carries its people—many or even most of the people—along with it, they must know very little about the history of government; if they say that democracy is the only workable system of government, they can hardly be very sophisticated. As A. D. Lindsay has pointed out ("The Essentials of Democracy," Lecture IV), no government rests on the "particularized consent" of the people and every government, however undemocratic, rests on its "generalized consent." "They mean that it is better for a government to do foolish things which can have popular support than wise things which arouse people against it." *Better for the government? Or for the people? But either way, what has this to do with the meaning of democracy? Do not dictatorships have popular support?* "They mean that if a man is not contented material comforts will do him no good." *Why not? Conceivably they may even content him.* "They mean that the art of government consists in the technique of achieving willing popular acceptance; that what people *ought* to want is immaterial; that democratic government consists only in giving them what they *do* want; that progress in government can come only by improving the *wants* of the people through the technique of removing their prejudices; and finally, that the removal of prejudice must come first or material and humanitarian progress, imposed by force, must fail." *From*

ASPECTS OF DEMOCRACY ' 1

this medley of disjointed antitheses nothing clear emerges. If what people ought to want is immaterial, how can it be important to improve their wants? If what people ought to want is immaterial, why should what governments ought to do be material? If the art of government consists in the technique of achieving willing popular acceptance, is that art peculiar to democracy? Is it not also cultivated at need by monarchs, dictators, and rulers in general?

Mr. Arnold is endeavoring to look at government in a spirit of detached "realism," and this attitude is one of the excellent luxuries with which dictatorships must dispense. The particular service it can render is to show the discrepancy between ideals and actual conditions. As Mr. Arnold himself well says: "The greatest destroyer of ideals is he who believes in them so strongly that he cannot fit them to practical needs" (*op. cit.*, p. 393). But Mr. Arnold is trying to ride two horses at once. On the one hand he proposes to look at systems of government as though they were unrelated to valuations or ideals. At the end of the passage quoted above, he remarks: "When we consider democracy as political fact, we are no longer concerned with the question of whether it ought to be admired as a fine thing or condemned as a stupid thing." If he means that political facts can or should be studied without consideration of their social implications or

'LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

consequences he is denuding political facts of their reality. All institutions are value-systems and have neither meaning nor existence apart from the functions they serve. These functions can be described only in terms of human valuations though the investigator must always endeavor not to let *his own* valuations distort his account of the facts. Only if he is careful in this regard can he fairly examine the relation between the values realized in the operative institutions and the values they profess to serve. This also Mr. Arnold undertakes to do. Ideals are only partially and very imperfectly embodied in systems of government, but the difference between the systems is significant precisely because the values they respectively serve are different. The failure to make a clear distinction between the two objectives may account for the confusions prevalent in Mr. Arnold's account of "democratic reality," as illustrated by the citations in the preceding paragraph.

EFFECTIVE RANGE OF PUBLIC OPINION IN A DEMOCRACY

- p. 65 What does public opinion decide? What can it decide? Mr. Lippmann in *The Phantom Public* (pp. 65 ff.) maintains that it cannot pass on the intrinsic merits of any issue and that even the broad trends of policy lie outside its range. The only consolation he offers his "disenchanted man" is the opportunity

ASPECTS OF DEMOCRACY

to sit on the side lines and observe which party plays more fairly according to the rules of the game. It is the wrong kind of consolation as well as a remarkably thin one. As we have pointed out, it is no part of any reasonable theory of democracy that the people should decide the endless specific issues that confront governments. Many of these the people cannot under any circumstances decide; others they should not decide because this mode of operation is too slow or too cumbrous or because the public lacks the expertness necessary for an intelligent decision. But the function public opinion really fulfills is precisely one that Mr. Lippmann denies it. It is the broad determination of policy. Take for example the trend towards socialism in Europe between 1870 and 1914. Governments were unanimously opposed to this trend; it was solely the change of public opinion that created it. A similar statement holds of many post-war developments.

There are two things, and perhaps two only, that public opinion can achieve directly in the political sphere. First, it can take sides for and against some principle or general program of government, a principle or program formulated either by the government itself or by an organized group or party. It concentrates from time to time on some particular measures expressive of the policy it approves or disapproves; and by its vote when an opportunity occurs, by delegations, petitions, and manifestoes,

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

even by unofficial indications of its attitude, it strongly influences the government to corresponding action. Second, it can express its pleasure and displeasure with the general record of the administration in power and determine accordingly, through periodic elections, whether the existing government shall be retained or another substituted for it. It may very well do so without adequate knowledge of the problems that every government has to face, and it often acts in a mist of misrepresentation and prejudice. But this is a problem of education, and the risk is one that must be incurred to avoid the major risk of irresponsible government.

The principle of democracy requires, not that the public should apprehend and decide all the actions of government—a quite impracticable idea fostered by Rousseau and his followers—but that the public should pass its decisive verdict on the program and the achievement of its agent, the government entrusted by it with power. So long as opinion plays freely over the focal points of government, so long as no one in office is shielded from ultimate responsibility for his actions, the essential condition of democracy is provided for.

Democracy is a way of determining who shall rule us and how. It sets up no standards by which one can judge the intrinsic merits of any specific contribution. Public opinion does not decide what is good art or good music or good science. In the cul-

ASPECTS OF DEMOCRACY

tural realm all that democracy can do is to leave all forms of art and expression free to compete for public favor; all it can provide is the freedom in which the competing forms can find their own opportunities for creative achievement.

DEMOCRACY AND MAJORITY-RULE

The identification of democracy with majority-rule is still prevalent, in spite of the object lesson of fascism. It is so defined, for example, by Max Lerner in his paper on "Constitutional Tradition" (*The Constitution Reconsidered*, edited by Conyers Read, pp. 199 ff.). This author is taking issue, quite properly, with the assumption he attributes to the political commentators, Dorothy Thompson and Walter Lippmann, viz., that democracy can have, does have, and should have some ultimate authority that is not a majority but either "the people as a whole" or some higher law that transcends majority-will. It is true that most written constitutions, and notably that of the United States, formally withdraw from the decision of a mere or bare majority the amendment of the fundamental law of the state. But this fact must be interpreted in one of two ways. On the purely legal level it gives a minority—determined inversely by the size of the more-than-majority required to amend the constitution, a two-thirds majority meaning a one-third minority and so forth—the right to veto changes favored by a

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

majority. But if we push the issue further and ask why the majority admit this veto-power^a of the minority the answer is surely that in the last resort there is a popular support for the fundamental law itself which is greater than any narrow or¹transient majority and which for the assurance of the total law is willing to accept the principle that no casual majority shall suffice to change any of its particulars. It is the larger majority for the broader issue limiting the right of any small emergent majority within it lest by action directed solely to particular issues it defeat the greater consensus. The proviso is obviously exposed to the risk that it confers a veto power on a mere minority, but it is at least susceptible of a different construction. It is an approach to what Rousseau considered the "general will," or in our terms it is the community will setting limits to the will of the state.

Perhaps this is what the commentators attacked by Max Lerner mean, but if so their statements need to be carefully safeguarded. On any specific issue there is no greater will than that of the majority for it or against it. On the most fundamental issue there is no greater will than that of the majority for or against it. The cardinal tenet of democracy is the liberty of policy-determining opinion, but a democracy can will its own demise, can commit suicide, and it is by no means likely that any restraint, constitutional or other, upon majority-rule

ASPECTS OF DEMOCRACY

can save it from doing so—if it so desires. If a people is free it is free to destroy its freedom, including that of the minority which clings to freedom. The two publicists attacked by Mr. Lerner do not fully face the problem that the only alternative to majority-rule is minority-rule. But neither does Mr. Lerner face the fact that majority-rule may hold in the most intolerant and anti-democratic system of government.

DISTINCTION OF GOVERNMENT AND STATE

Among the distinctions ignored by totalitarianism is that between the state and the government. The distinction itself is simple and obvious. The government is the administrative agent of the state, like the board of directors of a corporation. The state normally acts through the government, except in the process of choosing its agent when the state as the total organized body of citizens takes account of what the government has done and sets up government anew. But in a democracy the state never sleeps, for public opinion is active all the time, not only as an indirect determinant of governmental policies but as a judge taking evidence on which later to pass judgment. In some states this judgment may be passed almost at any time; in others, such as the United States, it becomes effective only at fixed intervals. This is what responsible government means. Under it the government cannot for-

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

get that it is the agent of the state and that its policies must be so shaped, on pain of forfeiting its agency, as to meet the approval of public opinion.

DISTINCTION OF COMMUNITY AND STATE

p. 71 This distinction, which we regard as basic to the theory of democracy, has suffered remarkable neglect in the history of political thought. Until recent times it has been almost completely ignored. Even today, in democratic countries, the state and its attributes are often defined in such a way as to deny the distinction altogether. The traditional doctrine of sovereignty, both in its legal and in its philosophical formulations, is a complete negation of it. On the legalist side the Bodin-Hobbes tradition has persisted, having been revived in the Bentham-Austin doctrine, and receiving present-day expression in such writers as John Dickinson ("A Working Theory of Sovereignty," *Political Science Quarterly*, XLII [1937] and XLIII [1938]). In its simplest form the doctrine is that "the sovereign has the complete disposal of the life, rights, and duties of the individual" (Cornwall Lewis, *The Use and Abuse of Political Terms* [Oxford, 1898]). In Austin's famous definition sovereignty is found where "a determinate human superior, not in the habit of obedience to a like superior, receives habitual obedience from the bulk of a given society," a definition that incidentally would turn a pirate ship,

ASPECTS OF DEMOCRACY ,

a criminal gang, or even a menagerie into a sovereign state. All such formulae overlook the distinction between the legal bonds of the state and the social bonds of the community. The Austinian doctrine of sovereignty is still prevalent in legal textbooks.

While the legalist theory implicitly denies the distinction between community and state various philosophical theories explicitly identify the two. Aside from the new totalitarian schools there are still the followers of Burke on the one hand and of Hegel on the other. They still assert that the state is a "universal partnership" or, with Bernard Bosanquet (*The Philosophical Theory of the State*, 2nd ed., London, 1910), that "the state is the whole social fabric and its will is our will." Such doctrines are demonstrably incompatible with the facts of democracy, as we show in the text, and even if they are applicable to totalitarian states they can have no validity as applied generically to *the* state.

For a fuller account of the distinction see my *Modern State* (Oxford, 1926), chaps. i, ii, and my *Society* (New York, 1937), chaps. i, xv.

DEMOCRACY AND POLITICAL PARTIES

It is part of the meaning of the distinction between community and state that in the community, men form other organizations that are not merely subdivisions of the political organization. The state

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

unites them as citizens, but citizenship does not comprehend the whole social life. The family is prior to the state and does not become a mere cell of a political organism. Various cults are organized on other bases than that of citizenship, for on the one hand they separate citizen from citizen and on the other they may unite the citizen and the noncitizen. Numerous associations of particular or specialized interest, having little or no reference to the fact of citizenship, characterize modern civilization. It is also very significant that one form of organization, expressly directed to political interests, is by its very nature outside the framework of government. This is the political party. A party in its proper sense can function only in relation to an opposition party or to several such parties. If political parties are "co-ordinated" they are first reduced to a single "party" so that the former meaning and function of parties is entirely obliterated.

Consequently the political party plays a crucial role in the maintenance of the distinction between community and state. This point is well made in an article by Max Ascoli ("Political Parties," in *Political and Economic Democracy*, edited by Max Ascoli and F. Lehmann [New York, 1937]). The writer of this article develops the view that the political party has the special office of mediation between the state and the community. "The actions and reactions of society are registered by these

ASPECTS OF DEMOCRACY

organs of mediation" (*op. cit.*, p. 206). Political parties prepare and define certain important adjustments between the state and the ever changing community. They prevent the established political system from hardening into a rigid system of power. They take certain aspects of the incessant reaction of the free community to the state and formulate them into terms of practical policy, submitting the formulations to the test of public opinion. It is easy therefore to see why the first business of a totalitarian state is the abolition of political parties.

IDENTIFICATION OF DEMOCRACY WITH A PARTICULAR ECONOMIC SYSTEM

As an example of the mode of reasoning that p. 79
denies the compatibility of democracy with any kind of economic planning we cite the following passage from Walter Lippmann: "The very essence of the democratic process is that the rulers are continually responsible to public opinion, and unless that opinion is free to change, and in changing to alter the policy of the state, there is no democracy. The very essence of the conception of planning is that a design can be adopted to which the people will thereafter conform. That is equivalent to saying that a democratic people cannot have a planned economy, and that in so far as they desire a planned economy they must suspend responsible government" (*The Good Society* [Boston, 1937], p. 109). The thin

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

logic of this argument could be used against all the institutional systems a democracy erects, including laissez faire. The antithesis between a "planned" economy and a "free" one is so stated as though one or other of these abstract alternatives must be chosen. Planning is always a matter of degree and the amount of it we have depends on the conditions. If a democracy wants more "planning" it can have it; if it wants less planning, it can also have that.

In this respect Mr. Lerner is more logical, since he acknowledges that there are all degrees of "planning"—and of socialism. "Let us keep in mind," he says, "the fact that the task of the future, despite Mr. Lippmann and Mr. Robbins, is not to rebuild the shining city of the eighteenth century: it is to explore the entire range of methods of social change and political administration which will enable us to get the economic benefits of planning without paying the price of economic breakdown." ("Do Free Markets Make Free Men?" *Southern Review*, III [1938], 625-39.) But he assumes that the state can and indeed must take over the whole economic system, and makes this the condition on which democracy can alone survive. It is surely obvious today that under the "corporate state" he advocates the concentration of power makes the continuance of democracy a practically insoluble problem. A fuller account of this subject is given in the next note.

ASPECTS OF DEMOCRACY

DEMOCRACY AND ECONOMIC PLANNING

Democracy has a historical but not a logical nexus *p. 79* with laissez faire. There is no inherent incompatibility between the principle of democratic government and large-scale schemes of economic reconstruction. The wisdom or unwisdom of such schemes must be determined on other grounds. Historically, modern democracies arose with the breakdown of mercantilism and the growth of industrial capitalism. In that historical conjuncture democracy inevitably stood for laissez faire. But there are other historical conjunctures with other demands, and democracy would indeed be outworn could it not change its policies with changing times. The only limit is that democracy should not undertake policies such as would endanger its own existence. It would do so if, for example, it sought to tax or legislate a whole social class into ruin or out of existence. It must not, as majority-rule, adopt measures that create so deep and implacable a resentment in a considerable minority that the general will, the attachment of all classes to the state, is disrupted. Those who lose out in the voting conflict must not on that account be permanently alienated from democratic procedures. Of course in every democracy there will be some who are its foes. But no large class or determinate group can be turned into its

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

implacable foes without imperiling its existence. The assumption of democratic voting is that all are prepared to accept, not to approve, the majority decision. Therefore there are final dividing issues that should never be put to the arbitrament of the vote. Clearest among these are the issues that stir the profounder loyalties of men or that are closely bound up with their habits and modes of living. It would, for example, be in flagrant contradiction of the democratic temper were a majority to vote the establishment of one of the different religions that the citizens profess. So in the economic realm it is anti-democratic even to propose the immediate transformation of a prevailing profits-system into a socialist order. (On this subject see the excellent chapter by Gerhard Colm, "Is Economic Planning Compatible with Democracy?" in Ascoli and Lehmann, *Political and Economic Democracy*, pp. 21-41.) It is anti-democratic, not on the ground of the intrinsic merits or demerits of the transformation, but simply and conclusively because it could not take place without the abandonment of the democratic principle on both sides, alike on the part of those whose bitter antagonism is stronger than their acceptance of democracy, and on the part of those who, in order to bring the change about, must resort to the system of dictatorship. These conclusions are so abundantly revealed in the history of our times that the people who propose an immediate

ASPECTS OF DEMOCRACY

revolution in the economic order and at the same time advocate the retention of democratic liberties must be either very shortsighted or very insincere.

But within the limits of the maintenance of democratic traditions, states have carried through large schemes of economic reconstruction. They have abandoned laissez faire and still remained democracies. A democratic state could quite conceivably, if the trend of opinion ran long enough and strong enough in that direction, change gradually from capitalism to a thoroughgoing socialism. In a democracy the people must become habituated to new ideas and conscious of new needs before new institutions are created. In a democracy there is always the flow and ebb of opinion, action and reaction. It is incapable of the masterful impositions of dictatorship.

DEMOCRACY AND EQUALITY

Both friends and enemies of democracy have p. 80 claimed that in so far as it is operative it makes all men equal. As an accusation the claim appears already in Plato, who declared in the *Republic* (Book IX, 558) that democracy "gives a sort of equality to equals and to unequals alike." The accusation is turned into a vindication by some modern writers. Mr. Laski, for example, attacks the famous dictum of Lord Acton in *The History of Freedom and Other Essays* (London, 1907, p. 57) that in the

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

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ASPECTS OF DEMOCRACY

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LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

French Revolution "the passion for equality made vain the hope of freedom." He maintains that liberty and equality are not antithetical but "complementary" and makes the somewhat obscure assertion that "the more equality there is in a state, the more use, in general, we can make of our freedom" (*Liberty in the Modern State* [New York, 1930], pp. 7-8).

The identification of democracy with social or economic equality is part of the same confusion of thought that underlies the common use of the phrase "economic democracy." Democracy is a type of political structure. It premises the equality of men *as citizens*, with respect therefore to their rights as voters and their rights before the law. The question at issue is whether their political equality involves, logically or psychologically, social and economic equality as well. On neither ground is the identification justified. Men can accept political equality without demanding social equality. They have done so for many generations in the old-established democracies. In fact, no democracy has existed anywhere in which men were equal socially and economically. If we regard all-round equality as a goal to be sought it must be for other reasons than that it is the fulfillment of democracy. Democracy is threatened where men feel that the economic order denies them opportunity. But opportunity is certainly not equality, since it enables men to differ

ASPECTS OF DEMOCRACY

in achievement and in fortune, in status and in authority. If men are in any sense "born equal," there is every evidence, from the life of the nursery to the life of the market place, that they are for the most part not content to stay equal. Only under the most ruthless despotic control, only under conditions in which every semblance of democracy disappears, can we imagine them existing on terms approaching to complete equality. As is well said by H. Speier ("Social Stratification," in Ascoli and Lehmann, *op. cit.*, p. 259): "The more closely social equality is approached, the less important become democratic institutions; the more differentiated and stratified society, the greater the mischief of dictatorial government and, conversely, the more imperative is democracy for a just and judicious form of political life." For a fuller discussion of this subject see, for example, W. E. Rappard, *The Crisis of Democracy* (Chicago, 1938).

DEMOCRACY AND LIBERALISM

Liberalism is a term of many meanings. Often it p. 83 is used to signify the philosophy that assigns a high or even supreme spiritual value to the autonomy of the human individual, the belief, as L. T. Hobhouse put it, "that society can safely be founded on this self-directing power of personality." This is the meaning given to it by John Stuart Mill (*On Liberty*), by G. de Ruggiero (*History of European*

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

Liberalism [London, 1927]), by W. E. Hocking (*The Lasting Elements of Individualism* [New Haven, 1937]), and many others. In this sense it comes near to expressing the logic of democracy. It is opposed to the insistence on order or establishment for its own sake, or on the virtues of force and conformity, or on the exaltation of the state and the subordination to it of the mass of men.

On the other hand the term is often identified with that particular attitude toward the sphere of the state which protested the rights of "the individual" against the claim of government to exercise certain economic controls. The home of this historic liberalism was England, where the landowners of the seventeenth century opposed the monarch who levied taxes without their consent and where the industrialists of the late eighteenth and the nineteenth century resisted the landed aristocracy which sought to maintain political supremacy against the new power of capital. Liberalism in this sense is dated and traditional, though by conjuncture it contained a spiritual element which belongs to the larger and more enduring meaning of the term.

But traditional liberalism, molded by compelling interests of the day, took (and still takes) the character of protest against particular types of governmental action, on the ostensible ground that human liberties generally depended on resistance to these. It protested against governmental "interferences"

ASPECTS OF DEMOCRACY .

with economic processes while at least tacitly approving the interferences of entrenched economic interests—a position blandly accepted by followers of Adam Smith to the present day. We might, for example, refer to such eminent representatives as Herbert Hoover (*The Challenge to Liberty*) and the majority justices of the Supreme Court (in a number of famous decisions, such as *Coppage v. Kansas*).

Thus the historical thought-system conveniently labeled liberalism is not the logical exposition of a principle. It is not what liberalism might have been if its primary loyalty had been to its own major premises. Since one liberty may clash with another and since therefore the sum of achieved liberty is the resultant of a system of specific liberties *and specific restraints*, traditional liberalism may, according to the conditions, be favorable or unfavorable to the ideals of liberty. For the same reason individualism may not, in a given social milieu, be calculated to promote the evocation of individuality. If we start from the unrealistic but superficially plausible position of Hobbes, that liberty exists only "in the interstices of law," we inevitably end with this type of liberalism—or its antithesis absolutism. If we postulate "the contradiction that is inherent between order and freedom," as does for example a writer in the *International Journal of Ethics* (E. Jordan, XLVI, 276–91), making much

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

to-do with categories and ignoring the distinctions that make them meaningful, then we will also say, with the same writer, that "democracy means liberty and the rejection of authority." But the most elementary analysis reveals that there are many types of authority and corresponding types of order, that some kind of authority and of order is necessary in every established state. that a certain kind is congenial in dictatorship and another kind congenial to democracy. Both kinds are subject also to *disorder*, but the disorder of democracy is always apparent while that of dictatorship is concealed until it forces the government to take new measures of violent suppression or unless it erupts in revolution.

One danger that comes from identifying the principle of democracy with the older "liberalism" is that it presents the democratic state as characterless and supine, an empty shell of institutions whose sole end is to keep an ostensible and unreal peace. Such a state wins little devotion, evokes no enthusiasms. Such a state is powerless against the strong interests that seek aggrandizement and control. It is the house swept and garnished after the old devil of state tyranny has been cast out but merely waiting for seven new devils to take his place. This is a charge which has been well expressed by the philosopher Santayana. "Liberalism," he wrote, "has merely cleared a field in which every soul

ASPECTS OF DEMOCRACY .

and every corporate interest may fight with every other for domination. Whoever is victorious in this struggle will make an end of liberalism; and the new order, which will deem itself saved, will have to defend itself against a new crop of rebels" (George Santayana, "The Irony of Liberalism," in *Soliloquies in England*, New York, edition of 1923). But democracy is no more devoid of character than the people who espouse it. True, it can proclaim no ideological faith. It can announce no eternal tenets. It must change with the currents of opinion, the winds of doctrine. But though majorities shift continually they are responsive to deeper, more real trends than any doctrinaire, authoritarian state can express. The unconscious spirit of a people speaks through them in a way that no dictator can compass. The differences of the hour are relative to the established traditions of the people. The spirit of the laws breathes in England and France and Sweden and America, breathes the more amply because it is unconstrained and not channeled in the narrow conduit of some dictatorial brain. What is constant in the people is embodied in more permanent institutions. What is fluctuating is recorded in changing governments. We find the character of a democracy in its history. It is far more subtle and far more complex than the artificial formulations of a dictator.

LEVIATHAN AND THE PEOPLE

ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY

p. 84 In the quotation from Professor Laski, taken from his recent work, *Parliamentary Government in England* (New York, 1938), the italics are mine.

The distinction between political and economic democracy can of course have no reference to what is sometimes called functional democracy, the idea of which is that representation should be by occupational or economic groups instead of on a territorial basis. This idea found favor with the guild socialists and the syndicalists, and is nominally incorporated in the program of the fascist "corporate state." But even if realized it would not constitute an economic as distinct from a political democracy.

PSYCHOLOGY OF IRRESPONSIBLE POWER

p. 89 The action of irresponsible power on the mind of the possessor has been a frequent concern of literature, in the novel and the drama, but has received no adequate study from psychologists and social scientists. Case-studies of the transformation of the psyche under the influence of unchecked power would be very illuminating and there are many records available for the purpose. A broad analysis is offered by Bertrand Russell in his book entitled *Power* (New York, 1938). Mr. Russell sets out "to prove that the fundamental concept in social science is Power, in the same sense in which Energy

. ASPECTS OF DEMOCRACY ,

is the fundamental concept in physics" (p. 12). It can hardly be said that he has achieved this objective, though he has with fine discernment traced the modes and ramifications of power in many of its social embodiments. While he professes to seek "the laws of social dynamics," his essential interest is "the taming of power," on the premise that "there is no hope for the world unless power can be tamed, and brought into the service, not of this or that group of fanatical tyrants, but of the whole human race" (p. 34).

Nothing that is said here against the abuse of power should be taken as depreciatory of the social necessity of regulated power, regulated in the last resort not by those who possess a countervailing or higher power of the same order but by those who lack it. It is thus, for example, that "the people" control the government. The ultimate control can be only that of those who assign to others the means and engines of power they do not and cannot themselves use. This is a necessary aspect of the democratic discovery.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

The first lecture foundation in the Graduate School of Louisiana State University was established in 1933, and named "The Edward Douglass White Lectures on Citizenship" in honor of one of Louisiana's greatest sons who, as United States Senator from Louisiana and Chief Justice of the United States, brought distinction and honor both to public life and to the profession of law of which he was a member. Each year a distinguished scholar or statesman is invited to give lectures dealing with problems of citizenship to stimulate a broader interest in public affairs and to interpret ideals of democracy based upon principles of law and justice and peace.

The first Edward Douglass White Lectures were given by Howard W. Odum, Kenan Professor of Sociology and Director of the Institute for Research in Social Science at the University of North Carolina, who spoke on "New Frontiers of Citizenship." The second series was given in 1935 by Manley O. Hudson, Bemis Professor of International Law at Harvard University and now Judge of the Permanent Court of International Justice, whose subject was "Three Pacts of Peace"; and the third was given in 1936 by William Y. Elliott, Professor of Gov-

A P P E N D I X

ernment and then Chairman of the Department of Government at Harvard University, on "The Future of the Constitution." In 1937, Thomas Reed Powell, Langdell Professor of Law at Harvard University and then President of the American Political Science Association, lectured on the general subject of "Some Ways of a Written Constitution," and the following year Herman Finer, head of the Department of Public Administration at the London School of Economics and Political Science, spoke on "The State in the Twentieth Century."

It is the privilege of Louisiana State University to give a permanent form to the brilliant lectures given in 1939 by Robert M. MacIver, Lieber Professor of Political Philosophy and Sociology at Columbia University.

For their distinguished contributions the University is deeply indebted to those who have lectured on the Edward Douglass White Foundation.

INDEX

INDEX

- Abel, T., 131
 Acton, Lord, 161
 Adams, J., 92
 Adams, S., 92
 American Constitution: and political parties, 76-77; and democracy, 92-95; and majority-rule, 151-52
 American Revolution, 92
 Antisemitism, 36, 120
 Aristotle, on autarchy, 117-18
 Arnold, T., on democracy, 145-47
 Ascoli, M., 156
 Ashton, E. B., 131
 Austin, J., 154
 Autarchy, as political goal, 21, 24-26, 117-19
 Authority, and liberty, 41 ff.
- Babbitt, I., 88
 Berle, A. A., 109
 Bosanquet, B., 155
 Brady, R. E., 131, 134
 Burke, E., 74, 155
- Capitalism: and democracy, 80 ff.; crucial problems of, 106 ff.
 Censorship, effects of, 50 ff., 59-60, 138-40
 Checks and balances, 92-94
 Citizenship, limits to range of, 71 ff., 156
- Class distinctions: and democracy, 80-81, 161-62; in U.S., 94-95
 Class struggle, in Marxism, 125-26
 Colm, G., 160
 Communism, as related to fascism, 36-37, 127-29
 Community, as distinct from state, 70 ff., 123, 154-55, 156
 Constitutional rights, 76 ff.
 Corporate state, 158, 168
 Cram, R. A., 88
 Crisis: and dictatorship, 7-8, 19-21, 40-41, 47; economic, 10, 43 ff., 107-8
 Culture: as servant of state, 59-60, 138-40; in democracy, 75; as realm of diversity, 139
- Democracy: contrasted with dictatorship, 3-8, 14-15, 37-39, 40, 87; evolution of, 6-7, 8, 17; after the War, 13; historical character of, 16 ff.; spirit of, 18, 19; and crisis, 18; Soviet claims to, 58, 63, 142-43; Nazi claims to, 63; loose ideas of, 64 ff., 145 ff.; and equality, 64-65, 81-82, 88; and majority-rule, 65 ff., 151-52; and parliamentary institutions, 68-69; and public opinion, 68-69, 76 ff., 87-

INDEX

Democracy (*continued*)

88, 148-49, 151-52; criteria of, 70 ff.; as limited state, 74-75; economic problems of, 81 ff., 157-58, 159 ff.; and power, 89-90; in U.S., 91 ff.; and political parties, 154-57; and liberalism, 163 ff.

Dickinson, J., 154

Dictatorship: contrasted with democracy, 5-8, 14-15, 37-39, 40, 87; sudden rise of, 7-8; as product of crisis, 7-8, 13-14, 19-21, 40-41, 47, 54; historical character of, 16 ff.; and liberty, 19-21; and war, 20-21; insecurity of, 20, 54-55; as religion, 22-23, 33, 42-43; spirit of, 22-23, 24 ff., 33-34; international aspects of, 23 ff.; common features of, 31 ff.; kinds of, 40, 62, 104-6; successes of, 40-41; economic interpretation of, 43 ff., 130-31; psycho-sociological explanation of, 43-44, 129-30; ways of, 48 ff.; philosophies of, 57 ff., 140-41; democratic claims of, 63, 142 ff.; and community life, 71 ff.; in Rome, 105; in Central and South America, 106; and equality, 163

Dietrich, O., 144

Eastman, M., 128

Economic crises, and modern state, 10-11, 106-8

Economic democracy, 84-86, 162-65, 168

Economic interests: and dictatorship, 43 ff.; and democracy, 159-60

Economic planning, 79 ff., 157-58, 159-61

Economic system: problems of, 10-12; and democracy, 79 ff.

Education, under dictatorship, 48 ff., 54 ff.

Equality: and democracy, 64-65, 81-82, 88, 161-63; and dictatorship, 163

Extremism, character and consequences of, 31 ff., 96-97

Fascism, 16, 22; relation to communism, 36-37; rise of, 126

Fascist dictatorship, 31 ff., 46; explanations of, 129-31; philosophy of, 140; claim of, to be democratic, 143. *See also* under Dictatorship

Federal Housing Authority, 108

Federalist, The, 93

Force: and international relations, 26 ff.; role of, in history, 27-29

Gasset, O. y, 67, 68

General will, 151

Gentile, G., 16

Goebbels, 43, 53, 132

Government: absolute, 3, 4; modern functions of, 8 ff.; problem of, 19-21; as distinct from state, 37, 70 ff., 153-54; and consent, 87

INDEX

- Hamilton, A., 92
Hegelian philosophy, 118, 122, 155
Hitler, 33, 43, 45, 46, 51, 56, 144; personal philosophy of, 112-13
Hobbes, T., 3, 4, 5, 14, 23, 26, 29, 95, 154, 165
Hobhouse, L. T., 163
Hocking, W. E., 164
Hoover, H., 165
Hughes, Chief Justice, 94
Human nature, and dictatorship, 39, 40 ff.
Ideology: of dictatorship, 52-53, 57; Marxist, 57-58; meaning of, 137-38; and propaganda, 138
Individual: detachment of, 11, 110-11; abasement of, in dictatorship, 33, 38; importance of, in democracy, 163-64
Individualism: American, 94-95; and liberalism, 164-65
Industrialization, 11-12
Institutions: as transient, 17; parliamentary, 68-69; as value-systems, 148
International order, necessity for, 28
International trade, under dictatorship, 118-19
Intolerance: types of, 34 ff.; religious, 34; nationalist, 34 ff.; Marxist, 35
Jefferson, T., 92
Job, Book of, *quoted*, 4
Jordan, E., 165
Justice, under dictatorship, 37-38
Kantorowicz, H., 124
Kolnai, A., 141, 145
Laissez faire, 4; end of, 101 ff.; and democracy, 159-61, 164-65
Laski, H., 84, 85, 161, 168
Lasswell, H. D., 133, 134
Law, and liberty, 165-66
Laws and decrees, 37; and customs, 74; government of, 88; "realism" about, 124
Leadership, and dictatorship, 42-43, 46-47, 144
League of Nations, 25
Lenin, 45
Lennes, N. J., 88
Lerner, M., 79, 151, 152, 153
Leviathan, The, 3-4. *See also under Hobbes*
Lewis, C., 154
Liberalism: and democracy, 163 ff.; traditional, 164-65
Liberty: fascist attitude to, 16-17; and dictatorship, 19-21; and authority, 44 ff.; and cultural achievement, 59-60; and liberalism, 164-66; and law, 165
Lincoln, A., 94
Lippmann, W., 65-66, 79, 149, 151, 158
Llewellyn, K., 124
Locke, J., 92
Lutheran Church, and Nazi dictatorship, 120

INDEX

- Majority-rule, and democracy, 65-66, 78-79, 151-52, 159-60
- Mann, T., 140
- Mannheim, K., 138
- Manuel, F., 127
- Marx, K., 12, 103, 137
- Marxism: intolerance of, 34-36, 124 ff.; ideology of, 57-58, 125-26; and dictatorship, 105; and fascism, 126
- Mass-rule, 67
- Mechanization, growth of, 10
- Megara, G., 113
- Middle class, growth of, 10
- Mill, J. S., 50, 89, 163
- Minority, and majority, 151-52
- Molotov, 143
- Mortality: of culture, 114-16; of empires, 115
- Mowrer, E. R., 110
- Mumford, L., 110, 111
- Mussolini, 16-17, 22, 46, 59, 133, 143; personal philosophy of, 113
- Napoleon, 138
- Nationalism: rise of, 11; as exclusive, 25 ff., 134-35; and autarchy, 118-19
- Nazi philosophy, 61-62, 140-41. *See also under Dictatorship*
- Neutrality, and the scholar, 56
- Opinion. *See* Public Opinion
- Orthodoxy, and dictatorship, 22-23
- Paine, T., 92
- Pareto, V., 138
- Parliament, and democracy, 68-69
- Parties, political: in democracy and dictatorship, 38, 77-78; in relation to democracy, 155-57
- Party line, 50, 58
- Party system, and democracy, 76-77
- Peace treaty, legacies of, 13, 15
- Plato, 118, 122, 161
- Population, growth of, 9
- Power: responsible and irresponsible, 89-90, 168-69; instability of, 115
- Press, under dictatorship, 51-52
- Principles, as enduring, 17, 113 ff.
- Proletariat, rise of, 10
- Propaganda: universality of, 48-49; in dictatorship, 49 ff.; long-run effects of, 54-55, 135-36; as technique, 132-34; and ideology, 138
- Proportional representation, 78
- Public opinion: and democracy, 68-69, 71, 76 ff., 151-52; nature of, 87; role of, 149-50
- Purchasing power, and economic crisis, 107-8
- Rappard, W. E., 163
- Religion, and dictatorship, 22, 23, 42, 43, 120-21
- Robbins, L., 158
- Rocco, A., 16

INDEX

- Roman Catholic Church, and dictatorship, 120-21
 Rome, Affluent, dictatorship in, 105
 Roosevelt, F. D., 51, 53
 Rosenberg, A., 121
 Rousseau, J. J., 66, 92, 122, 150, 151
 Ruggiero, G. de, 163
 Russell, B., 168-69
 Russian Revolution, 13-14, 17

 St. Augustine, *quoted*, 57
 Santayana, G., 167
 Schacht, H., 119
 Shakespeare, 90
 Smith, A., 4-5, 103, 165
 Smith, T. V., *quoted*, 57, 127
 Social movements, explanations of, 129-31
 Social stratification, 163
 Society, and the state, 71 ff.
 Solidarity, urban loss of, 111
 Sorokin, P., 110
 Sovereignty: as absolute, 3-4, 122-23; as limited, 4, 70 ff.; Austrian doctrine of, 154-55
 Soviet dictatorship: and religion, 22, 121; and internationalism, 24-25; and economic interests, 46; and democracy, 58, 63; fascist elements in, 127-29; aims of, 127-29; philosophy of, 140; democratic constitution of, 142-43
 Spain, tragedy of, 36, 126-27
 Soeier, H., 163
 Spengler, O., 26, 111, 114
 Stalin, 63, 143
 State: as unlimited, 3, 5; expansion of, 6, 8, 9-12; delusion regarding, 29-30; reality of, 20-30, 122-24; and government, 37, 70 ff., 153-54; in Marxist theory, 57-58; and culture, 59-60; as organism, 61-62; and community, 70 ff., 123, 154-55, 156
 Strachev, J., 131, 134
 Style, as transient, 116
 Supreme Court, of U.S., 93-94, 165

 Thompson, D., 151
 Totalitarianism: philosophy of, 57 ff., 128, 140-41, 154-55; inadequacy of, 71 ff.; and autarchy, 117-19; and religion, 120-21
 Trotsky, L., 128
 Truth, and dictatorship, 56-57

 Unemployment, 81-83
 United States, contribution of, to democracy, 91 ff.
 Urbanism, effects of, 10, 12, 110-11

Folk, das, 26, 61, 144

 War, modern character of, 27-29
 War, Great, consequences of, 7, 13, 15

INDEX

- Webb, S and B, 142
Weimar Constitution, 105
Williams, R., 91
World's Fair, New York, 64-
65
Youth training of, under dic-
tatorship, 54; and propa-
ganda, 136 •
Zimmerman, C. C., 110

