

# PROGRESS OF THE STRUGGLE

## *let's have more propaganda*

**NORMAN ANGELL**

**T**HE second world war came because the Allies who had managed to agree and to hang together for the purposes of war, could not do the same for the purposes of peace.

And now the happenings in London, at the Council of Foreign Ministers, warns us that the same deadly cycle may be beginning all over again: having had effective, even close and warm cooperation in war, especially among the English-speaking elements of the alliance, we are finding the old inability to agree for the purposes of peace, and may not rediscover the secret of agreement until war does it for us: *da capo*. What, indeed, prevented, not merely a better understanding between Russia and the West, but a better understanding between Britain and France, Britain and America, Britain and the Dominions?

**B**UT here we enter an Alice-in-Wonderland area of international relationship. If a government, fearful that its neighbor may misunderstand its policy or purposes, attempts to explain its policy or purposes to those neighbors, the latter very commonly deem that attempted explanation, not merely an offensive act but almost a criminal one, one in any case to be controlled by inspections, elaborate questionings, regulations, reports, questionnaires. It is not only in Russia that the agents of a foreign government, engaged in explaining their government's policy, must conform to elaborate registrations and regulations imposed by law.

If Molotov or Bevin make a speech of any importance, every word of it is prominently printed in every important newspaper of the world, including every important daily in America. Russia or Britain could not possibly

ask any more extensive propaganda. But suppose Molotov's or Bevin's government said: "We had better give the foreign public a chance to ask questions on that statement. We will therefore have Bevin (or Molotov) resign and go to the chief foreign capitals concerned, where we will set him up in an information office so that he can hold a series of press conferences, and foreign critics really can put him on the spot." From that moment he becomes a "propagandist" suspect, subject to control and inspection.

Words which, pronounced in London or Moscow or Cairo, would be gladly printed by every paper in the United States (America paying the cost) become "propaganda," demanding careful control if issued from a foreign government information office in Washington or New York.

What is it that we fear in the thing commonly called "foreign propaganda?" Do we fear that foreign nations shall present their case to our own public — British or American or French or Russian as the case may be? But if at this moment the world needs anything it is precisely that the people of one nation should understand the case of others. It is not an exaggeration to say that the peace of the world depends upon just that thing.

**W**HEN the British and Russian governments first resumed diplomatic relations shortly after World War I, it was suggested that the British government should secure undertakings from Russia not to carry on "propaganda." The suggested provisions to prevent the Russians from propagandizing the British public were quite elaborate. An Englishman who took

part in these discussions ventured the observation that the British attitude was entirely wrong, in conflict with the best and most vital British traditions, and should be entirely reversed.

Instead of attempting to persuade the new Russian government to desist from preaching its doctrines, the British should have said to the Soviet government, in effect: "We and our public are anxious to hear your case. If you care to establish in London an information department explaining the position which you intend to take in European politics, we will give you every facility to make your views known to the British public. As a gesture of courtesy, we will reserve the Albert Hall for your best speakers, say once a month; and you will be free to present your views as effectively as possible. All that we ask in return is that you shall grant exactly the same privileges to us, so that we can establish in Moscow an information office whose publications shall not be subject to the Russian censorship but shall enjoy the same diplomatic immunity we propose to grant you. Representatives of British opinion—journalists, lecturers, radio commentators—shall enjoy in Russia also the same freedom we propose to grant yours."

The Englishman in question insisted that the British government should fight tooth and nail with the Soviets for that reciprocal principle of relationship between the two countries so that the discussion of the differences between them could be dragged out of the dark cellars of subterranean intrigue and brought into the full light of day. Although he was no fanatical defender of the British system as it then existed, he ventured the opinion that, if every Russian propagandist available was turned onto the British public, there would be extremely little danger of that public being converted to the Soviet system or methods. In any case, if the British institutions, economic or political, were so vulnerable that criticism coming from Russian "propagandists" could endanger them, they might as well be allowed to collapse.

That discussion took place a quarter of a century ago. If the relationship between the Soviets and the West had been placed upon that moral and intellectual foundation, at least some of the problems now bedeviling relations with Russia would be easier to solve.

**T**ODAY'S disturbing parallelism with 1919 and the years which followed is pointed up by stories which come both from Japan and from Germany. Thus Tania Long cables the *New York Times* from Frankfurt-am-Main:

"It comes as something of a shock to hear from an American soldier that Germany had no choice but war, or—the old German version—that Germany was forced into it by one man, Hitler, against the desire of the nation. All the old tales the Germans have been telling about the Russians can be heard repeated by many of our soldiers and officers. . . . Equally disturbing is the growing tendency to chauvinism or intense nationalism on the part of many of our men and officers, an attitude inflamed by their nostalgia for home. . . . This chauvinism expresses itself in the criticism of everything 'foreign', in derogatory and ill-informed remarks about the French, Russians, British, Belgians, Poles and Netherlands, in comparison with whom the Germans seem to come out on top."

This correspondent also notes an aspect of American contact with postwar Germany which was an all but universal observation when American forces occupied German territory after World War I. The correspondent says:

"The superficial aspects of German life, such as their cleanliness, their higher standard of living and their willingness to work hard, are confused in the average soldier's mind with the whole. The basic factors that govern the German people and have made them the world's problem children twice within a generation are forgotten in the face of Germany's modern high-ways, chrome plumbing and well-dressed girls."

Certain commentators dealing with these dispatches from Germany take them merely as evidence of the astuteness of German propaganda, and the tendency of American authorities to be too soft. The remedy the commentators suggest would be to get ever tougher with the Germans, to take ferocious measures to stop the German propaganda, and to punish all softness on the part of occupying authorities, including GI's.

There are not many things that one can be positive about in this era, but one can be quite positive in saying that such a policy will quite certainly completely fail. The occupation difficulties and the drift of Allied policy are not due to the excellence of the German propaganda directed at the Allies, but to the failure of Allied propaganda directed first at their own people, and secondarily at the Germans.

**T**HE general tendency of such political education — propaganda — as we have maintained on the Allied side with its perhaps disproportionate dependence on the atrocities, the condition of the camps and so forth, has been to suggest that the German people are sub-human, biologically and inherently different from others, a race of congenial monsters.

It is important to emphasize the atrocities, to make known, particularly to the Germans themselves, just what did happen in the camps. But

it is even more important to emphasize the fact that those who did these things are people, at bottom, just like ourselves, who have the same kind of blood and glands and grey matter. These people are, moreover, capable of achievement as great and noble as anything which we can show, and the appalling deeds are due to the fact that they have got hold of the wrong ideas, have adopted an utterly impossible scale of values, a scale which turns right and wrong upside down.

If we fail to bring that home to the minds of our own people as well as to the Germans, but instead center our propaganda merely upon indignation at German conduct so fierce and savage that all persons of the German "race" are lumped together as born monsters and sadists, then we shall find that our propaganda defeats itself. For first of all, the GI or Tommy, as the case may be, will find out that our sweeping indictment is simply untrue; that whatever hells may have existed at Belsen or Dachau, the Germans are in many respects superior to some of their neighbors. The "propaganda" most serviceable to the Germans at this moment is not turned out by German authorities or the result of whispering campaigns, but consists, as the dispatches quoted above testify, of the excellence of their roads, their chromium plumbing, the fact that their civilization is on the material side modern and efficient, not unlike the American, while the "inherent monster" theory is disproved by every German child who strikes the lonely exiled American or British soldier as having the same irresistible appeal as childhood at home does.

In England, "German propaganda" works somewhat differently: farmers who have employed German prisoners side by side with other prisoners have found that the Germans come out on top for industry, sobriety, discipline: a fact which should be no news to Americans familiar with the achievements of German farmers in various parts of this country.

**T**RUE, great masses of the German people are to be held responsible for inertly tolerating infamy. But the German with whom the American or British may talk will have a word on that: several generations of Americans have tolerated the burning alive of Negroes unconvicted of any crime; dictatorships have existed

in most of the twenty-one American republics (to say nothing of Louisiana); the British have Amritsar, the closing of Palestine to dying Jewish refugees; Petain, Laval, Peyrouton, Darlan were Frenchmen; and the Russian camps in the Arctic area for deportees from Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Poland, are not precisely luxury camps. Nor are the crimes of aggression solely German. Nor are Germans the only people who have precipitated world wars. Napoleon, too, dreamed of world conquest, and his dream carried war over the world a hundred years before Germany began to launch her aggressions. In the century which followed the defeat of Napoleon the world as a whole suspected Britain far more than it did Germany. (There were plenty of historians and commentators prepared to prove in the decade that followed 1914 that Britain was more responsible for that first world war than was Germany.) Moreover, fascism was not invented by the Germans. It was invented by an Italian, whom the Italian people either supported or did not know how to resist effectively. So little, indeed, is it true that aggression, fascism, totalitarianism, militarism, is peculiar to the Germans that an Asiatic race on the other side of the world, the Japanese, have proved themselves capable of all the crimes of which the Germans have been guilty.

If we are to help GI Joe and Tommy from falling victim to "German propaganda" we must have a propaganda of our own which is not afraid to face these truths and help the common man to understand them.

Nor will it explain them simply by saying that we must "destroy fascism" and liquidate all fascists. Fascism is as ill-defined as terms like "democracy," which many, for instance, honestly believe is possessed almost alone by Russia but which others, equally honest, believe is most threatened by Russia.

Can we be said to know what the war is about, or to have fortified the minds of our peoples against error and fallacy, when questions of that order are left in the air unanswered, unresolved? Have we any basis at all for agreement at our conferences until we have faced these questions? Yet we are afraid of them; so often afraid of the other fellow's "propaganda"—when we ought to seek it, absorb it, learn what is false in it, and what true.



# *unity among humans*

By PIERRE SAUVAGEOT

*—can man still consider himself to belong to one nation,  
one caste, one race?*

**T**HE boundless energy hitherto locked within what we call "matter" has revealed itself in a frightful explosion; has revealed itself as being from now on, for better or for worse, at the service of man. We have burst, by means of an incredible upheaval, into the Year I, Atomic Age.

If we do not wish to plunge into total destruction, we must now set free upon this still young and savage world the love that until now has been imprisoned in the cruel heart of earthly man. For the peace that we are trying to set up will only be worth what the heart of man is worth. In the last six thousand years of its history the world has seen a total of scarcely one hundred years of peace.

Is this collective human heart at peace with itself? Listen to the thousand despairing voices already clamoring from the wreckage: class-hatred between the worker and the capitalist, race-hatred against Negroes and Jews, the hatred of those in need and the hatred of those who are clinging to what they have seized. Three centuries before Christ the Buddhist Emperor Ashoka said: "If hate alone replies to hate, when will hating cease?" Will we have to admit that greed above all guides the human race? Will we have to admit that through the symbolic heart of man, alloyed of gold and steel, only oil has so far pulsed and that it beats, now more than ever, in order pitilessly to exploit the weak?

Each of us would protest and defend himself. "Certainly I love my children and my family. I would fight and sacrifice for them and for my country." And we know that this is true. We have seen in the younger generation thousands of adolescents fired by an indomitable courage, working for a shining ideal yet immune to the temptations of glory, power, or money. But in the last analysis, since all religions enjoin us to love our worst enemy—do we not obey them in a strange manner, by pampering to

excess our worst enemy—ourselves? Or by undertaking to develop our illusory and transitory personality, which distorts our true individuality and our identity with all others of the human race, or rather with all other forms of life? All of us, even the best, are responsible for a war that tortures us and distorts our compassion. There is in the whole universe no room for injustice. We never have been, nor ever will be, harmed by chance, but by ourselves. To the extent that we fail to keep a constant peace on our own hearth, with our friends and our children, we must share responsibility for the war. To the extent that we fail to keep peace with the being we love most in the world—our own spirit, torn as it is by unrest, by distrust, by desire and resentment—so we take part in aggravating the terrible abscess that man lances every so often with iron and flame. Let us stop shifting the blame onto others!

Therefore it is now, in a time of obsolete dogmas, of identical messages from rival churches, of contradictory or incoherent dicta from the various sciences, that we must formulate the essential statement concerning the absolute and profound unity of the human race and the reality of the spirit alone. The confines that we have established in time and space for the history of man must be extended to infinity. As the rose one day old said to the rose only one hour old, in the Persian legend: "Don't worry—within the memory of the rose, a gardener has never been known to die." Let us evolve a memory longer than that of a rose.

In order to establish peace upon a solid basis it is time now to define the goal of this hard ascent toward unity. We have evolved from consideration of the earth as center of the world, to that of the sun as center of the universe, and on to that of the Milky Way as it spirals in infinity, itself a galaxy lost in space