Next day I pricked baby in his bottom because he was sleeping on his tummy, and Mother told Father that the spider had stung the boy a second time. Father said: 'Of course, now we've stopped up their nest they're furious. We shall have to clean out the whole house.' And so Mother passed the whole week moving furniture about and pouring out petrol, and she's found three big spiders.

In a few days I'll give him another prick. I'll tell you beforehand and you must come and watch. It's great fun to see the baby's face. And perhaps one day—but you mustn't tell anybody—one day, you and I will cut up his whole tummy from one end to the other and see what's inside.

(*Authorized translation from the Spanish original.*)

BRIAN HOWARD

NOTES ON CIVILIANS AT BAY—II

I FOUND myself scrambling into the train at Cannes, on June 21st, without one respectable reason in my head. After the Mayor's speech about the unlikelihood of finding a boat, it looked as if the only result would be to meet the German Army somewhat sooner. I waved a hasty good-bye to a woman friend, Leona R., with whom I had left the two letters to be forwarded should I never reach England, and turned back into a half-empty train, and what seemed the gloomiest railway carriage in the world. I did not know it, but there had been a gloomier one, an hour or two earlier, at Compiègne. In it, there had sat the new Emperor of Europe, so mad with pride, embarrassment, natural rudeness, and lack of the French language, that he could not lift his eyes, or his thick police-spy's hands off his stomach, or speak one word.

Some time before midnight, we edged into Marseille Station, where there were only one or two lights burning, near the exit at the far end: the place was unusually hollow and hushed. The only decision I had been able to make was to go to bed at the *Terminus*, the station hotel, but just as I was getting out of the carriage, off

went the sirens. Instantly, the few lights were extinguished, and a blind, but steady hustle began for the underground passages connecting the platforms. It was the first serious raid of my life, and I was attentive. On the way down, an elderly Englishwoman asked a question, in precisely the tone she would have used in a South Kensington museum: 'Is this the shelter for the English?' In a way, of course, it was. Once jammed in their stuffy passage, and trickling with heat, people became moderately cheerful, only pausing momentarily in their conversation after each explosion. I noticed that the bombardment of a city sounds, from underneath, exactly as if large doors are being firmly shut at the other end of a large house; not slammed, but closed with determination. The station was not hit, and soon I found myself in one of the characterless but melancholy bedrooms of the *Terminus*, just above.

The next morning was heavy and grey. I felt a pressing desire for action, and yet, apparently, not pressing enough; I could think of nothing to do. Looking down between my iron shutters at the station taxi rank, it occurred to me to be relieved that there were no Nazi motor-cycles. I came downstairs to find the terrace, the little perched garden of the hotel, looking quite extraordinary. It resembled an English garden party at which the principal guest had failed to arrive, and everyone has the fidgets. Repeatedly, simultaneously, they stared at one another, and then away, and then at the hotel entrance. Two or three people would get up from one of the little white tables at the same time, and then inexplicably sit down again. It was clear that they were far more frightened—and very reasonably—than they allowed themselves to appear, and the guest who had deserted them was, of course, Britannia, who had never been known to do such a thing before. *Never*. The Consul-General had been ordered home by the Government five days before; the banks were shutting at mid-day; the Germans might arrive from one hour to the next; there was no boat, and what, in Heaven's name, was going to be done?

During the morning, one learned that communication had been established with the astonished American Consul. The proper thing, it was said, was to wait and see, and not to leave the hotel. I decided, nevertheless, to risk abandoning the centre of information for as short a time as it would take to try and get some money. I took a taxi to the Westminster Bank, where I contrived to

extract, after prolonged consultations, £25 in French money. The bank was in a dignified, but furious, agitation, and considering that they had no idea where their head branch, and my money, was, it was kind of them to give me anything. The banking machine had been running down, for foreigners at least, since the middle of May, and no money had reached me for nearly two months. I asked the chief cashier when the Germans were expected, and he reassured me enormously, though only temporarily, by saying: 'Oh, not for two or three days.' During the ensuing hours I spread this piece of news industriously, but by nightfall I had ceased to believe it, and so, as far as I could judge, had everyone else.

Back at the hotel there was no news. There was one friend of mine from Cannes whom I had lost sight of the night before, and I sought him out. C. R. had been through the last war, and he had acquired a kind of ingrained sensitivity which made the present situation particularly horrible to him. One of his reactions was a very eccentric diet, consisting principally of sleeping pills. I pointed out to him that if we were not to escape by boat, it might be as well to move towards Spain, or Italy. Anything was better than the Gestapo. He agreed, and we decided to devote part of the afternoon to filling out those forms without which one could hardly move from one street to another, ally or no ally. It had been like that since the beginning of the war. Remembering it now, I am sure that this craze for obstruction contributed largely to the general collapse. Every kind of movement or communication, and only a little less so in the case of the French themselves, was held up, or forbidden. It was a kind of unconscious, collective protest against the very fact of being at war, and things eventually came to such a pass that the war itself became the excuse, and the reason, for not fighting it. From the beginning, the mood of the big officials had been filtering through to the little ones, like a descending paralysis. The war had been made so boring to everyone; so puzzling; so censored, and so remote from life, that eventually it really did detach itself from reality, and flickered out, like a gas jet on which someone had intended to keep a pot just simmering, but which they had turned too low. When their back was turned, it went out.

At the office where the travel permits were arranged, I was amazed and delighted to find an acquaintance behind the desk, the

English-speaking grocer from Bandol. He helped us write out the interminable questionnaires, and we decided on Monaco as the only feasible place of retreat, since it was impossible to get into Spain; giving as our reason 'to rejoin our families'. It was all we could think of. (I remember asking the ludicrous question: 'Do you think the Italians will respect Monaco's neutrality?') The applications were to come back, stamped, early the next morning (as a matter of fact they were refused on a technical point), and we returned to the hotel in an easier frame of mind, feeling that if it was our fate to become prisoners of war we could at least manœuvre ourselves into the kinder clutches of the Italians.

At the *Terminus* I sat on the terrace and reopened the only book I had with me, the *Brothers Karamazov*. I had begun the book some weeks before, and it was giving me very great pleasure. Not only because I found it as good as any novel ever written, but also because I had just finished my first reading of *David Copperfield*, and it had been like finding an adult to talk to after too long with a serious little girl. (Moreover, *Copperfield* is like a play in which the actors and their understudies are all on the stage at the same time.) I failed utterly, however, to keep my eye on the page, and I fell to brooding, instead, on my last visit to Marseille, in January.

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I went to Marseille in order to see if I could do anything about getting a great friend released from the central concentration camp for South of France aliens at Les Milles, near Aix. Firstly, there was the grotesque difficulty I had in getting from the department of the Var into the Bouches-du-Rhône. The journey from Bandol to Toulon, and then the chasing about all day until, shortly before my train was due to leave, the Commandant of the gendarmerie consented to write out a *Sauf-Conduit Provisoire* for five days with his own hand, remarking as he did so that had I been Russian or Spanish he would have refused it. Next there was the arrival, in the coldest weather for ten—or is it twenty?—years, with the palms going brittle and grey, and a wind in the Cannebière such as I have only met once before, in the Austrian Alps. The tears of cold froze on one's face, and one was blown literally to a standstill. I had a most curious five days. On the second morning at seven o'clock, two *Sûreté* men stumped

into my small bedroom on the top floor of the *Louvre et Paix*, and began asking the usual questions about my papers, *carte d'identité*, etc. They were quite good-natured about it, but decided that, although everything seemed in order, I had better accompany them to their headquarters. I protested that I had spent some time with the Consul-General the preceding evening, but this had no effect. The street outside was covered with ice and snow, so I offered to take them where they wanted to go in a taxi, which they accepted with alacrity. Their headquarters proved to be an old, rickety building just round the far right-hand corner of the *Vieux Port*, beyond the *Fort St. Jean*. Here I waited, in a vast, untidy room, until nearly half-past ten, an object of not the faintest interest to anyone. Innumerable detectives trudged in and out, regarding me with eyes in which speculation always gave way, before they reached the end of the room, to fatigue. At last, someone said I could go. As I rose from my chair, someone else called out, anxiously: 'No, no—the archives.' I sat down again, and during about twenty minutes they searched in their files, behind a closed, distant door; then, without any visible or audible signal, the room was suddenly much more alert, and quiet. Waistcoats were tugged down over stomachs; cigarette ends were ground under boots; glances, in my direction, became at the same time sharp and elaborately veiled. Soon, I was asked to walk over to an improvised, roofless cubicle that I had already noticed in a corner. The *Commissaire* would like to see me. As I shut the door of this little sanctum, I noticed six men shiftily form a semicircle outside, each with one hand in his pocket. I became alarmed. Inside, the *Commissaire* politely pointed at a printed document on the desk at which he sat, and said: 'Your name, you see, *monsieur*.' I looked at the document, and there, sure enough, was my surname, in a list with about twenty others of various nationalities. I thereupon told him that I did not understand what in the world all this was about. He replied:

'I am very sorry, M. Ovah, but there is only one way in which this affair can be settled to our mutual satisfaction. I am afraid I must ask you to give yourself the trouble of baring your left arm.'

I said I would be delighted, and did so. He scrutinized it with the care of a doctor choosing the most advantageous spot for an injection, and then began to apologize. It appeared that these

twenty names, including mine, were all the alibis of a single man whose whereabouts was a source of anxiety to them all, and that he was tattooed on his left arm. The *Commissaire* then rose to his feet, and I was bowed off the premises. On the way down to the street, I was accompanied by the nicer of the two original detectives, a rather thwarted type. He began to complain:

'As a police area,' he said, sadly, 'Marseille is about four times the size of Paris, and yet we, the police, are about ten times fewer. It's quite hopeless. There is nothing to be done. If you, for instance, wish to commit a murder here, you can. Nothing simpler, I assure you.'

'Why?' I asked.

'Because if you will take the precaution of committing it somewhere on the periphery of Marseille, you will have plenty of time to go to the opposite point of the periphery before we can get there. You would be able to go to another town, in fact. Comfortably. We simply can't get anywhere in time. They've made it too big, Marseille.'

Shaking his head solemnly, he wished me good-bye, and began to pick his way back, along the ice-filled gutter, to his aggravating occupation.

On the same day, I went to the Consulate, to ask for an introduction to the General in command of the district, and I recounted my morning's experience. I was then told of an incident which made me thankful that nothing worse had befallen. It shed a fresh light, also, on Marseille's uncontrollability. For various reasons, Marseille had lately become more than usually important as an Allied war centre. One day, there arrived an eminent member of the Egyptian Government, and he went for a walk. On his way, he found it necessary to visit a *pissoir*, and while he was there, some small boys let off a firecracker outside. Instantly, police flew out of a neighbouring building, towed the startled official away, beat him up, broke his nose, and incarcerated him for several days. The Consulate naturally sent for the Chief of the Marseille police, but all that happened was that he became increasingly evasive, and then vaguely impertinent. A large pile of angry correspondence between the French and Egyptian Governments, the fruits of this mishap, was pointed out to me.

The Consul was good enough to give me a letter to the General's Chief of Staff, and I went to call. Marseille is a city of endless

secrets and surprises, and one of them is that it conceals a quantity of very beautiful private houses. This is not immediately apparent from the streets, as at Aix, and when I rang at the address I had been given I was unprepared to walk into a moderately sized eighteenth-century house of the most charming description imaginable. The officer I was seeking was in the hall, just about to go out. I wish, now, that I had arrived a moment later, when he had gone, because the next few minutes were to hold one of the most piercing instances of disappointment and frustration I have known.

The officer was in a hurry, but extremely considerate. I had a letter from the English Consul? Good. The General was out, but perhaps he could arrange matters for me himself? I wanted someone released from the Camp at Les Milles? Did I say that the military tribunal at the Camp had pronounced in favour of this liberation last October? Of course. Oh well, nothing could be simpler. As if it were the most natural thing in the world, he walked across the black and white marble floor of the little hall to a telephone, and said: 'I'll just ring up the Camp, and let them know.' I stood there transfixed, sweating. A quarter of a year's work was about to be rewarded. Justice was going to be done. So lightly, so pleasantly, so quickly—like a wink. As he lifted the receiver, there was a tap on the front door, and an orderly brushed past me to open it. The General came in, massively.

He was large, and very deliberate, with intimidatingly good manners. The officer ushered us both into a shadowy, oval room with gilt *boiseries*, and a few pieces of furniture ranged strictly against the walls. The General seated himself carefully in a frail eighteenth-century chair on one side of the tall window, and I did the same on the other. He was about seventy, I judged, and his face, while intelligent and not unimpressive, had something in it which I felt made it habitually easier for him to say 'No' than 'Yes'. There was something a little too *rusé* about it, too. I explained the situation, and, as I did so, I noticed that the officer (who stood beside him) had begun, almost imperceptibly, to fret. I realized, with a sagging heart, that all was over—that the moment had passed. I concluded my statement quickly, and thanked him for having given me his time.

'Write to me, *cher monsieur*,' said the General, with cold geniality, picking up his glittering oak-leafed hat; 'just write

me a letter with the full facts of the case. I will do all that is possible.'

I was shortly to discover that not only did he do nothing at all, but expressed his intention of doing nothing, very tersely, a day or so after the interview. This, in spite of the fact that my friend had been judged worthy of being given back his freedom by a tribunal consisting of this old creature's own subordinates, and three months before. I saw the document myself. This incident occurred two months before the law of *prestation* was applied to refugees of German origin, and there was no excuse whatsoever. Incidentally, I have heard people put forward a case for *prestation*, but I see none. It had been invented the preceding spring, in flagrant contravention of international usage, for the Spanish Republican refugees, and consisted in extorting labour, on public and military works, in return for sanctuary. France could still offer freedom to refugees from tyranny, but only inside a labour camp. No notice was taken of individual talent or capability, or the fact that a refugee had enough money to live on. The magnificent hundred-year-old tradition of France as the asylum of the persecuted was, in fact, thrown away for the sake of a few extra fences, ditches and stables. But then, the whole treatment of the German political refugees—from the beginning of the war in France, and now, here, miserably enough, although the authorities show signs of returning sanity—is one which might have been personally contrived by Goebbels.

I see that I have wandered some way from my musings on the *Terminus* terrace, during that first day of the flight. Or have I? These matters are hardly ever out of my mind, and no doubt they were there then.

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On the second morning of waiting, Sunday, the 23rd, there was still no news, and the atmosphere began to change. People walked about the lobby faster, and more aimlessly; the buttonholing by old ladies grew more tenacious. During the past week, the tempo of worry and uneasiness had fussed along at an even pace; now it was rising, hourly, towards undisguised desperation. Whereas the day before, for example, hardly anyone had dared leave the *Terminus* for fear of missing the all-important announcement, little groups were now darting off in taxis every few minutes on mysterious, back-to-the-wall missions.

I knew that if the permits for Monaco were not refused, they could be called for at the last moment, and anyway I had decided not to use mine until all hope of a boat had entirely gone. Meanwhile, the necessity for some kind of further, more private, action had become overwhelming. It was time to prepare for the worst. I remembered that I had the address of Kisling, the painter, a man who knew the South of France like the back of his hand, and I suggested to C. R. that we should go and ask his advice. Kisling had been of the greatest assistance to me during the winter, having consented to come forward as the chief French guarantor for my interned friend. He lived in the *Vieux Port*, and on the way we walked past part of the air-raid damage. One block of apartment houses, a few doors away from his studio, had been completely demolished. The studio itself was ravishing—a room on the second floor, stretching the whole length of an old house, with a huge window opening directly on the centre of the waterfront. Two built-in alcoves contained the bed and the bath, and the walls were covered with the kind of odds and ends—advertisements, unfinished drawings, photographs, bits of wood, bits of stuff—which I always find disproportionately moving. Such rooms are associated very strongly in my mind with France, and with happiness. He appeared from the bathroom, beaming like a smooth, perfumed, hospitable bear, and I felt encouraged to put our case, although I suspected that he himself had worries enough with his Jewish-Austrian brother-in-law. As we talked, we all three occasionally sidled over to the open window, and gazed up to the entrance of the Cannebière for any signs of the Germans. About myself, I told him that I had once been warned by the German Embassy in London; that six years ago Unity Mitford had advised me to leave Munich because the Gestapo had come to know of my anti-Hitler sympathies, and that what I was concerned about was less the fact of my being an Englishman of internable age than that the Gestapo might take over Marseille exactly as they had taken over Paris. It seemed highly likely. Kisling thereupon suggested the buying of false papers. He said that Marseille was the ideal city of Europe in which to hide, and that a month or so as Mexicans or South Americans brought up in England would give both myself and C. R. time in which to arrange an escape to Spain, or North Africa. We at once agreed, and an appointment was made to meet him for lunch at the

Restaurant Beauvau, where it was hoped that someone that he knew who could arrange these things could be found.

Walking back towards the *Cintra*, I remembered that I had already met a Monsieur Bori, one of the men who 'arranged things', also at the *Beauvau*, in January. It had been on my way out of the Consulate that G., an old acquaintance, peered warily round a corner at me. I had always associated him with the most elegantly raffish circles in London and Paris, and his gold braid and medals took me somewhat aback. 'Oh, Brian,' he said, 'I saw you yesterday when you came, but I thought you probably wanted *help*—you know, all these appalling English people who come bothering around wanting *help*, too frightful—so I hid. But since I saw you with the Consul himself I gather it's alright?' I asked him to lunch and on the way G. told me about the Marseille gangsters. Nothing, it appeared, could be done without them. Not only was it impossible to live in Marseille unless one got on with them, but the great point was that they were so absolutely delicious. As people, you know. He made their power seem so universal that I began to wonder whether perhaps these Real Rulers of Marseille would care to do anything about getting deserving cases out of concentration camps. At lunch, G. amiably introduced me to M. Bori, a very important Real Ruler. I was told that M. Bori shared the control of Marseille night life with someone named, quite simply, Jesus Christ. M. Christ kept a tiny *pompes funèbres* shop in the daytime, but there were no words to describe the majesty and alarm which attended his nocturnal round of inspection.

Now that I was about to visit the *Beauvau* again, I regretted not having cultivated my Real Rulers with greater assiduity. My last memory of M. Bori was that of sitting beside him in a night-club, tongue-tied, and in a state of quite unreasonable apprehension. I was sure that I couldn't have left a very encouraging impression, and yet here I was about to ask him, or someone he would probably know, to provide me with a false identity.

(*To be continued*)

TERENCE HEYWOOD

SOME NOTES ON ENGLISH BAROQUE

'Exuberant sweets o'erwhelm, as torrents, tongue and pen.'—BENLOWES

BAROQUE is so essentially a Catholic Latin manifestation that the nature of its impingement on the Protestant Teutonic North is curiously instructive. As regards the visual arts there is probably less in England than in Holland or even in Sweden. But if few of our buildings can be labelled as unquestionably baroque, there are many, like St. Paul's, which are partly so or have been infused with something of the spirit. One can see the beginnings in the flourishes of some of the late Elizabethan and Jacobean designs: in gables and chimney-pieces, in elaborate heraldry over doorways, in certain ornate porches, in the formal garden with topiary work and gazebos, in the strange finials found on stone manor-houses in Yorkshire and the Cotswolds, and especially in a structure like the quaint Triangular Lodge at Ruston, Northants, symbolizing the Trinity—a building reminiscent of the patterned poems of Quarles, Herbert and Wither. It flowers most notably in such Inigo Jones' creations as York Stairs on the Embankment and (if it be his) the porch of St. Mary's, Oxford; in much of Wren's work; and in the megalomaniacal Vanburgh of Blenheim and Castle Howard. But in this country there could be no organized reaction against classical authoritarianism, for such had never existed: the broken outline, the unclearness,the lack of frontality were there already; palladianism merely grew up alongside.

Though critics are inclined to strain tendencies and poets are too often hustled into schools, there was undoubtedly an analogous development in literature: from Euphuism, the prose of Wotton, and Petrarchan concettists (including Marlowe, Chapman, Shakespeare, Spenser and a whole host of sonneteers), to the Metaphysicals, the emblematists, and prose-writers like Browne, Burton and Felltham. A distinct school of poets forming a link