

come; the farm, with its boring, sometimes squalid routine, appeared to her as a haven of purity. She was grateful to Gilles in a way, but she would have preferred to remain the least conspicuous figure at this gathering; now she yearned to get home, to plunge once more into her tête-à-tête with her dead husband, to alternatively praise or scold her children, feed the hens, peel the potatoes. . . . Gilles was sitting beside her, dumb with pity; he held out his hand, which she pressed. . . . 'Merci,' was all she found to say.

Order was being restored to the tousled room, chairs were being drawn up, conversations started. Here and there a phrase caught her attention. 'It must be overlooked; remember, he has a weak digestion.' 'Of course, this house was always draughty.' 'I wonder where the jewels are buried?' 'Personally, I always thought it made Hedwige look years older to dye her hair.'

It was freezing hard. A twanging stillness had settled on the countryside. The stupid tramp of the sentry could not impinge on it; taut and creaseless, it awaited select sounds: the needle-like pricks of the carillon.

Tossing on her narrow bed, Marie-Louise was somehow comforted. The carillon was like the soul of France, icily aloof, impregnable, enduring.

CZESLAW POZNANSKI

BACK TO METTERNICH

In the interwar period, especially since the rise of Hitler to power, and still more since the Spanish war, the old Party divisions in the Western democracies lost part of their meaning. The most important division cut across Right and Left, across the Tory and the Labour Party. It was the division between the appeasers and the anti-appeasers.

In France Georges Mandel and Paul Reynaud found themselves on the same side of the barricade as Edouard Herriot and Leon Blum, while Paul Faure, Marcel Déat and the 'pacifist' leaders of the Teachers' Union sided with Laval, Flandin and the Comité des Forges.

Here in Great Britain Winston Churchill and a group of young Tories were prominent among the anti-appeasers, while old leaders of the Labour Party outchamberlained Neville Chamberlain. So George Lansbury guaranteed Hitler's peaceful intentions and J. R. Clynes could say in his *Memoirs*, published in 1938, that in 1936 after the re-occupation of the Rhineland, 'frustrated in what seems to have been a sincere effort towards a peaceful European agreement, Germany immediately began a rearmament programme to compete with ours'.¹

In France this rift was not healed by the war. It is the unholy alliance of 'appeasers' which engineered the French surrender in 1940 and started the collaborationist policy. In this country September 3, 1939, did toll the death knell for the appeasement policy and the unbending will to fight is unanimous.

The *psychology* of appeasement, however, is far from dead. In fact it has affected people who had been immune from it in pre-war days. The new appeasers are not only the *Times* and Professor Carr, but also G. D. H. Cole, President of the Fabian Society, A. J. Cummings, the *News Chronicle*, and so on.

What was in fact the political philosophy underlying the appeasement policy? It was the assumption that the only thing which mattered was to assure an understanding between the Great European Powers (at that moment Great Britain, France, Germany and Italy.) This understanding was considered to be the necessary and sufficient basis of peace, the only guarantee of a harmonious development of Europe. Therefore this understanding had to be arrived at at any cost, *even at the expense of smaller nations*. Appeasement was the extreme form of power-politics.

That was the idea expressed in the first draft of Mussolini's Four Power Pact, which in Article 1 stated that the Four Western Powers 's'engagent d'agir dans le domaine des relations européennes pour que la politique de paix soit adoptée en cas de nécessité par d'autres Etats' and proceeded immediately in Article 2 to speak of the revision of Peace Treaties, a revision which could only have been carried out at the expense of other European nations.

That was the sense of the climax of the appeasement policy when at Munich Neville Chamberlain was sincerely persuaded that he had bought 'peace in our time' at the trifling expense

¹The italics in all the quotations are mine.

of the Sudeten area, which did not belong to Great Britain, but to Czechoslovakia.

The political philosophy of the new adepts of power-politics is exactly the same. To them also peace means peace between the Great Powers, only to day these Great Powers are no longer Great Britain, France, Germany and Italy, but Great Britain, the U.S.A., the U.S.S.R. and China. And they share with the old appeasers the complete disregard of smaller nations.

The essential thesis of the new school is most clearly expressed by G. D. H. Cole in the following words:

‘In the circumstances of today the only Nation State which can in truth possess the attributes of sovereign independence is the great State; and in the case of great States surrounded by smaller neighbours it is inevitable if State sovereignty is to remain the basis of political relationships that the great States should seek to engulf their neighbours, and the small States be kept alive, if at all, only when they are in position of buffers between the great.’

The new power-politicians consider it necessary and sufficient for the world peace that the Great Powers, who, as said above, are generally named Great Britain, U.S.A., U.S.S.R. and China (it will be seen later on why I use the cautious formula ‘generally named’) should arrive at an understanding as to their collaboration.

And to assure this collaboration they propose to divide Europe into a British and a Russian ‘sphere of influence’.

As to details, the conceptions vary. So. for instance, G. D. H. Cole visualizes for Western Europe the possibility of a French leadership if Great Britain would prefer to join hands with America, while Professor Carr definitely considers that France can no longer play any major role. The opinions differ still more widely as to Central and Eastern Europe, i.e. Poland, Czechoslovakia and the Balkan countries. The *Times* and the *News Chronicle* speak simply of these countries as constituting the Russian ‘sphere of influence’ (the *Times* found the striking definition that Russia’s frontiers are on the Oder).

Professor Carr also says only ‘Secondly, just as preponderant weight will properly be given in Western Europe to the views and interests of Great Britain, the same preponderant weight must be given to the views and interests of Russia in Eastern Europe’.

The *New Statesman* goes one better. In the issue of December 26, 1942, we read, 'I do not see Stalin again *allowing* a buffer State between Russia and the West—unless it is within the Russian orbit'.

Others propose an even simpler solution: the outright annexation of these countries by Russia. That is the opinion of Victor Gollancz, that is the opinion of G. D. H. Cole, who writes:

'In that event is it not most likely that the problems of Poland, and of the Balkans and of Hungary will be solved by their inclusion as Soviet Republics within a vastly enlarged State based on the U.S.S.R.'

All these theories are propounded as brand new solutions of the ills of the world, they are supported by a wealth of 'progressive' arguments as to the shrinking of the world, the necessity of large scale planning, the 'obsolescence' of national States and the principle of self-determination, the evils which have resulted from the 'balkanisation' of Europe, which is alleged to have been the main cause of the economic depression in the interwar years and the ultimate cause of the Second World War.

I have written a book to expose the falsity of this last assumption and I do not intend to revert here to this matter. What I want to explode in this article is the assumed 'progressiveness' of all these schemes based on the partition of Europe into the spheres of influence, on the necessity of subordinating the smaller nations to the protection of one Great Power. For in fact it is a reactionary conception, the Carrs and Coles are not apostles of a new creed, but simply disciples not only of Mussolini, the originator of the Four Power Pact, but also of Metternich.

For the most perfect embodiment of the idea that the Great Powers have the right and obligation to exercise a dominating influence on the smaller ones; that an understanding among them means peace for the world, was the Holy Alliance.

The conception of 'spheres of influence' and of maintaining peace by a nice balance of these spheres of influence is not new either. It was the stock-in-trade conception of the imperialist policies. The nineteenth and twentieth century are full of quarrels about and adjustments of spheres of influence between Great Britain and France in North Africa, Great Britain and Russia in Persia and Afghanistan and so on. It is hardly a progressive idea to apply policies used towards colonial and backward peoples fifty or one hundred years ago to the peoples of Europe.

Professor Carr does not hesitate to state what he understands by this conception. He wants that 'preponderant weight' should be given to the 'Views and *interests*' of Great Britain and Russia in their respective spheres of influence. He does not conceal that the interests of Belgians and Dutch, of Poles and Czechs ought to be subordinated to the interests of Britishers and Russians. Is it not pure Metternichism?

The writers of the Left are more cautious. They assure that this solution will be the best for the people of Europe. The *Times* also says that the issue of security in Europe 'will be settled only if those who possess military and economic power on the largest scale and are prepared to exercise it within the confines of Europe organize that power in common for the fulfilment of common purposes and *for the benefit of all*'.

Alas, these beautiful sentiments are reactionary too.

For Professor Carr as well as G. D. H. Cole, the *News Chronicle* as well as the *Times*, know very well, indeed they say it sometimes, that the peoples of Europe do not accept this theory of the dictatorship of Great Britain and Russia, that they object strongly to being considered only as objects of politics. But they simply disregard this fact as completely irrelevant.

They want to make the peoples of Europe happy, even if they object to be made happy on these lines. Is this reasoning not completely analogous to the reasoning of Marshal Pétain, who also believes it to be his obligation to impose on Frenchmen a policy, of which they disapprove, in order to make them happy? Is not the conception of an international 'paternal' government of Great Powers closely akin to the conception which underlay Metternich's Holy Alliance?

In fact, one could say of G. D. H. Cole and the *News Chronicle* what the *Daily Worker* said of some British and American leaders in referring to their attitude to the British Empire:

'They have this in common, that they all see "Europe" as primarily a matter to be settled by the enlightened on behalf of lesser breeds.'

As said above, the basic assumption of the division of spheres of influence is, of course, that this division will be final, that in future the 'spheres of influence' will not clash, that there will be no misunderstanding about them between the leading Powers. Unhappily this assumption is highly questionable.

Louis de Brouckère, who undoubtedly is one of the greatest living statesmen, is sure of the contrary. He said in an article in *France* (March 17), 'If the world is divided in great blocks, necessarily rival blocks, the danger of frontiers will not be diminished, it will be aggravated. There will be less frontiers, but they will be more frightful.'

And James Burnham, in his highly interesting book, *The Managerial Revolution*, who considers that the formation of big units is an ineluctable necessity, warns at the same time that clashes and bloody wars between these units for the domination of the world, are just as inevitable.

* Burnham's book is relevant in another respect to the question we consider. For he is of the opinion that the leading Powers will not be Great Britain, Russia, America and China, but the U.S.A., Japan and Germany.

The British advocates of 'spheres of influence' are too cautious to name brutal Germany as the leading power in Europe, as Burnham does. But they do not exclude the possibility that it might be Germany who will be called to organize Central Europe, or even the whole of Europe.

Professor Carr, who rejects the claims of France to an equality of status with Great Britain, writes:

'The German dilemma can be resolved not by destroying Germany or diminishing her, but by making her a partner in a larger unit in which Great Britain will also have her place. Germany's belated nationalism can be overcome only by *making internationalism worth her while.*'

And G. D. H. Cole states in *Europe, Russia and the future* that 'there does seem to be a possibility of these groupings with the Soviet Union, Germany, and the Western Parliamentary countries as their respective rallying points, and that this triple division offers positive advantages', and in 'Fabian Socialism' he visualizes a possibility of 'a second Soviet Union modelled upon the U.S.S.R., but working under German leadership and with German industrial technique as the main driving force behind them.'

How intoxicated must these people be with the idea of hugeness, of Grossraumwirtschaft, not to realize the profound immorality of a conception which would give to a defeated Germany, a Germany which had looted and murdered on a

scale unprecedented in history, the leadership of the people against whom she had sinned. What a profound, purely Metternichian contempt they must have for the peoples of Europe, for human sentiments not to see that a desperate bloody revolution would be the answer of Europe to any attempt to place it under German leadership.

These phantasies of a Europe ruled by Great Britain and Russia, alone or in partnership with Germany, are, however, not only immoral and reactionary, they are also profoundly dangerous.

For Dr. Goebbels, who knows something about Europe and her sentiments, has already made the most of them.

We assist, in fact, at a curious spectacle. The Germans had started the war with the propaganda of the Herrenvolk doctrine, with the conception of a 'New Order' based on the absolute domination of the German people. Dr. Ley spoke even of the resuscitation of slavery for the Poles.

Great Britain went to war in fulfilment of her pledge to Poland and under the banner of liberty and independence for all nations.

Now, in the fourth year of the war, it is Dr. Goebbels who promises a European Charter based on the independence and equality of all nations, and screams at the top of his voice that Germany is defending this independence, and indeed the elementary rights of the European peoples against Great Britain, who wants to subordinate these people to British and Russian interests.

Of course Dr. Goebbels is too shrewd to suppose that anyone in occupied Europe will take his promises seriously. He does not hope that the hate of the German oppressor will disappear, or that the people of Europe will enrol under the Swastika flag against Great Britain. But by publicizing widely the plans of the new appeasers he hopes to break down the *active* fight against Germany in the occupied countries.

He knows that the people of Europe are so—I suppose the *Times* and Professor Carr would call it 'immature'—that for them independence is the supreme goal, and that it is precisely for their independence that they are fighting. Just as the workers of Great Britain did not believe that their 'betters', squires and employers, knew what was good for them, and did fight for their union rights and their political rights, the peoples of Europe believe that their security will be best assured, not if protecting

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Powers will look after it, but if they will themselves have their share in the common defence, have their say in the organization of Europe.

And that's why Doctor Goebbels hopes that if he can persuade the peoples of Europe by quoting British statements that the best they can hope for in the case of an Allied victory is the status of Manchukuo's in a Russian or German co-prosperity sphere they may ask themselves whether it is worth while to risk their lives for such a future.

One word more.

I do not want to create the impression that the peoples of Europe desire simply a return to the *status quo*, to the pre-war pattern of international life, that they cling to the conceptions of absolute national sovereignty.

On the contrary, the reports we get, the articles of the underground press, everything concurs to prove that the necessity of an efficient world organization, the necessity of the establishing of a real collective security, are today profoundly understood in Europe.

Only Europe does not believe that this aim can be achieved by the surrender of the sovereignty of small Powers to great Powers. The underground workers of Europe want an organization to which *all Powers*, great and small alike, would surrender parts of sovereignty.

They want that *all Powers* should be brought under the rule of law. And they want to play their part in this future supranational organization as free people and not as clients of a Great Power.

Three quotations will give the best interpretation of the mood of Europe today.

The Belgian, Louis de Brouckère, speaking of the plans that security should be assured uniquely by the Great Powers wrote:

'In this case the small nations would no longer be associated equal in dignity and liberty. They would be protected and consequently placed, in fact, under a protectorate. They have too profound a love of their independence to accept such a situation for long with resignation and patience. Their dissatisfaction would grow rapidly, and the experience of recent decades has proved that the dissatisfaction even of small nations may be the cause of dangerous troubles for the international order. The whole world would lose in tranquillity what the small nations lost in dignity.'

The Norwegian, C. J. Hambro, President of the Storting, writes in his book, *How to Win the Peace*:

'It may be inconvenient, it may be cumbrous and bothersome to have to consult representatives of a number of countries. But that is the way of democracy; the road to progress is the resultant of the given composition and of forces.'

And one of the oldest Polish underground papers, *Freedom*, has said:

'International law requires fundamental changes. National sovereignty must be limited by international law, which should provide for supranational regional Federations (Pan-American Union, Central European Federation, etc.) and for a Union of Peoples, a revised League of Nations, but purged of its errors, inadequacies and inertia. A new and broader international law, barring the use of arbitrary force and preferential agreements for the benefit of individual nations must serve as the basis of this reconstruction.

'The principles outlined above are the only foundations on which a stable Western civilization, based on a genuine world outlook, can flourish again. The overthrow of totalitarianism and fascism is the first step towards its rebirth; the repudiation of the pre-war standards in relations between individuals and communities will open the way to a new era, an era that will begin with our victory over the threat of barbarism.'

SHANE LESLIE

A NOTE ON HENRY JAMES

THE Centenary of Henry James crept upon us in the twilight of another war which must vex his watchful ghost as deeply as the first distressed his soul upon earth.

Old friends recall scenes happy or unhappy. Centenaries always produce a spate of such memorial testimonies.

I can only think of the old Sage seated in his garden at Rye, or on memorable occasions watching cricket matches on the saltings at the other end of the town with his back carefully turned on the game while his earnest conversation was addressed to his friends. How happy he was until the crash of 1914!