

● PSF: France - Leon Blum

PSF France

Box 5

Leon Blum

English Translation of For All Tankards

and correspondence

concerning the book

including Blum's autograph letter,

Bonnassol, 30 avril.

Cher Monsieur Roosevelt,

Je ne veux pas laisser partir Monsieur L'Amiral Leahy sans le charger pour vous de ce message d'amitié et de reconnaissance. J'ai su, par des témoignages certains et répétés, quel intérêt vous aviez pris à ma condition personnelle; et je tiens à ce que vous sachiez combien ces marques de votre sympathie m'ont été et me sont précieuses. C'est de propos délibéré que j'étais resté en France après l'armistice, parce que c'est en France que je croyais me rendre le plus utile à la cause que je ne cesserai jamais de servir. William Dulitt a pu vous le dire, car notre dernière conversation, à la veille même de son départ, a porté sur ce sujet. Je n'ai jamais regretté le parti que j'avais pris et je crois que les événements ont vérifié mes prévisions. Ni mon emprisonnement, ni le procès entrepris contre moi n'auront été vains. Ils ont contribué, sans contredit possible, à ranimer en France l'esprit public, et tout spécialement la conscience ouvrière. Le sentiment d'une solidarité avec ma personne, et avec la persécution que je subissais pour eux - sentiment le plus en plus puissant dans la masse de travailleurs français - a fourni l'un des éléments les plus efficaces de leur regroupement. Je me demande toutefois depuis la suspension des débats de Rome, bien significative à elle seule, si je n'ai pas touché la limite des résultats qu'il m'était possible d'atteindre du fond d'une prison, et je suis porté à croire, pour ma part, que dèsormais ma tâche se poursuivrait mieux par le moyen d'une activité libre.

Voici déjà une quinzaine de jours que j'ai fait remettre pour vous à votre Ambassade de Vichy la copie habituellement établie d'un travail que j'ai longuement médité, mais auquel je n'ai pas pris le temps de mettre la dernière main. Vous y trouverez, sur les problèmes de la politique française,

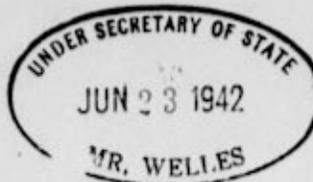
et sur les modes de l'organisation matérielle et morale de l'Europe, les réflexions qui n'auront pour vous rien de neuf, mais qui ne vous seront peut-être pas inutiles. Elles n'ont pas seulement la valeur d'une opinion individuelle. J'ai la certitude, et je puis dire l'assurance, d'avoir recouru auprès de mes amis et vis à vis les masses populaires, l'autorité suffisante pour les ramener dans cette voie qui a été si longtemps la leur. C'est l'effort auquel je suis le plus propre, et celui qui me paraît aussi le plus nécessaire.

Quant à l'état actuel de l'opinion en France, je ne sais si les informations qui me parviennent ajouteront grand chose à celles que vous possédez. La France s'est transformée depuis Juin 40. La défaite militaire et l'armistice l'avaient plongée dans une stupeur pareille à celle de l'anesthésie opératoire; elle est redevenue un être vivant et conscient. La métamorphose est complète en zone occupée, encore incomplète en zone libre. Les hommes y sont redevenus capables d'espérer, de comprendre, de juger. Ils ne sont pas redevenus entièrement capables d'agir. Les ressorts qui commandent aux conditions physiques de l'action n'ont pas encore recouvré toute leur tension, et toute leur élasticité. Mais de jour en jour l'amelioration est sensible; le moindre changement gouvernemental, à lui seul, a déterminé un progrès peut-être décisif. Si la liberté de la presse, la liberté de réunion et de discussion étaient rétablies pendant seulement quarante-huit heures, ou si... l'espoir prenait une forme tangible... la nation se redresserait d'un coup tout entière. Je ne crois pas me tromper en affirmant que cette crise aura, non pas aboli ni même affaibli, mais au contraire régénérée en elle le sens démocratique et l'amour de la liberté.

Je me permets de vous charger pour Madame Roosevelt de mon respectueux hommage et je vous prie de croire à mes sentiments d'admiration et d'attachement.

Le Colonel

Monseur le President Roosevelt



DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

June 22. 1942

My dear Mr. President:

Admiral Leahy brought with him from France the attached letter which M. Léon Blum wishes delivered to you. He also brought a manuscript consisting of 183 pages which represents a study M. Blum has been working on since his imprisonment dealing with the political situation in France before and during the outbreak of the war, together with his observations regarding the trend of possible future social and political developments in France.

Admiral Leahy asks that in transmitting the letter and manuscript to you I inform you that, after reading these documents, should you care to make any comments or suggestions, M. Blum would be happy to receive them.

Faithfully yours,

Enclosure:

From M. Blum

The President,

The White House.

France folder

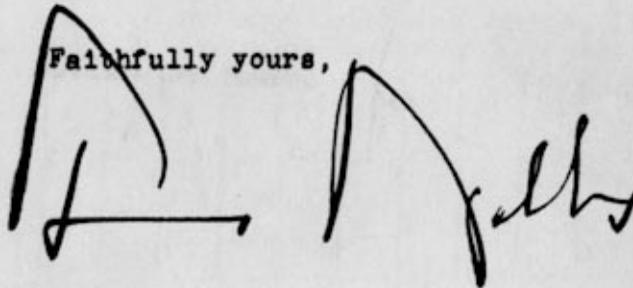
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

January 28. 1943

My dear Mr. President:

I am returning for your files the document written by Leon Blum which Admiral Leahy brought with him when he returned from France last year. A summary and an English translation of the document have been made and are attached. Copies have been retained for the Department's files.

Faithfully yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A. M. Kelly". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "A" and "M".

Enclosures:

1. Original document
in French;
2. English translation;
3. Summary

The President,
The White House.

Summary of the Reflections of Leon Blum Written While
Imprisoned at Bourassol France 1940-1941.

In introducing his composition M. Blum states that its purpose is to establish a guide for the youth of France, reaching adolescence during the present period of uncertainty. It is for those "who search in vain among ruins of the past for *** a rule of conduct and faith" and for those "who vainly peer into the shadows of the future to find a guiding light". France is faced with an interregnum, he says - not annihilation. Her defeat marked the collapse of a military machine; the bankruptcy of a directing class; disqualification, in the public mind, of the political system; and destruction of lives and wealth. The defeat did not destroy France, its people, its soil, its character or that mass of traditions, convictions and aspirations called the spirit of France. One is permitted to hope that France will emerge independent, intact and spiritually great.

The dissertation itself treats of the various factors which caused the collapse of France in 1940 and then presents the author's views of the necessary world order of tomorrow. In referring to the 1940 debacle M. Blum says that since the beginning of history national calamities have been bound to the idea of expiation of a national sin; that it is instinctive to search for the cause. The writer considers it absurd that history obeys elementary rules of distributive justice. Was France more moral and pious in 1914 than in 1939, he asks. Did Belgium, Holland, Norway deserve their fates? Will the winner of the German-Russian war necessarily be the just? When a nation is severely stricken, its first impulse, because it is simple, is to accuse whatever it finds at hand, - its leaders, its political regime, its institutions. This is often just. However, in the present calamity accusation has gone beyond the leaders and has seized upon the entire complex structure of public life. The responsibility for the debacle has been carried even to the democratic institutions of France.

M. Blum is not astonished that a national revolution appeals to youth. Youth - enthusiastic, systematic, uncompromising - is always tempted to throw everything away and begin anew. In an appeal to retain the good

characteristics

characteristics of the former government he submits that France as a republic had adapted herself to peace; that if all the European states had had a similar form of government such as the now "despised" regime of pre-war France, a general war in Europe would have been avoided in 1939. Dictatorship and war, democracy and peace - no one can deny the affinity of these words.

The writer compares the second French Empire and its defeats at Sedan and Metz with the Third Republic and its second Armistice at Compiègne. The regime of Napoleon III was totalitarian which by its very nature made for war. The Third Republic wanted peace as clearly shown by its pre-war policy. When the Empire went to war it had alienated most of the nations of the world. When the French Republic went to war in 1939 it had practically only allies and friends because of the peaceful policy, based on democratic principles, which it had followed. M. Blum believes that France was defeated in 1940 because, among other things the war effort was begun too late (1936) and because old soldiers were in charge who did not understand the original character of German re-armament. Reasons for the military defeat exist but they cannot be traced to the principle of democracy on which the Third Republic was based. To prove his point M. Blum cites the Anglo-Saxon countries as the living example that authority and strength can exist in a democracy.

In enumerating the faults of the French regime just prior to the outbreak of war, the writer holds that the parliamentary regime is not the democratic form of government best adapted to France. The same success which democracy has enjoyed in England had not been attained in France. This has been due to the lack of a strong party system and certain peculiarities of French temperament such as intolerance of discipline, a tendency to scoff and to criticize in a destructive sense, a lack of faith and a lack of loyalty to the leaders of the state. Not only are French politicians great individualists but private interests in France had made an unholy alliance with the governing body and had their own representatives in Parliament.

In contemplating the collapse of the French state M. Blum makes a case against what he calls its former bourgeois government. The middle class of France had

governed

governed for 150 years and had refused to share the power of government. On the eve of the second World War they were still at the wheel but no longer able to steer the craft of state. They refused to cooperate with the "Front Populaire" in 1936 and hindered the rearmament program undertaken at that time. No great "captains of industry" came to the assistance of France during that period. The employer class of France was unable either to dominate or to agree with labor. When the time came to meet the challenge of Hitlerism, the bourgeoisie were unable to fulfill their great duty. Blinded by their interests as the possessing class and their fear of Communism, they sought everywhere for a compromise with Hitler. The decadence of the ruling class of France in 1940 was exposed not only by its failure to govern but by the selfish belief that its ruin meant the ruin of France. They embraced the so-called "national revolution" without realising its implications. The writer feels that if the bourgeoisie were sincerely ready to sacrifice for the sake of national rejuvenation the privileges inherent in the system of capitalistic property, the working people would not miss the appeal. The bourgeoisie once had great virtues. They were sober, upright, patient, prudent, modest, economical and reasonable and there are still fine characters among them. The great need of the class now is a moral revolution.

Who will succeed to the sovereign power which the bourgeois ruling class has abdicated M. Blum asks. He designates the people of France as the rightful heirs, - the French people of the laboring class. But why didn't the people, through Socialism, take over the reigns of government at the time of the defeat of France? It was, he admits with regret, because the Socialist Party was found wanting. In the first place there was no definite stand for or against Hitler; for or against war with him, should that prove necessary. Furthermore the Socialist Party was compromised in the public mind by its association with the Communists in the "Front Populaire" Government of 1936. The French Communist Party by remaining loyal to Stalin when he signed the mutual assistance pact with Hitler in August 1939 deserved the wrath of the French people who considered that the party, always violently anti-Nazi, had betrayed France. It was obvious that the Communist Party in France no longer had any independence of its own and that it took orders only from Moscow.

Unfortunately

Unfortunately the distrust in the public mind extended to and included the French Socialist Party which was the originator of collaboration with the Communists in the French domestic scene. At the present time Communist activities in France coincide with national patriotism. This, however, will not solve the problem. Unless, after the war, French Communism breaks away from Russia, or the Soviet Government gives certain necessary pledges France will still have the unbearable anomaly of a foreign nationalist party inserted into her political life.

Returning to the failure of Socialism to claim its rightful heritage of sovereignty, M. Blum says that sovereignty implies superiority and that, while the morality of the laboring class was "negative innocence", it was not superior. It lacked the generosity, the magnanimity, the ideal deportment, and the evidence of sacrifice for the collective interests necessary to overwhelm the nation. When his Government appealed to the workers at the beginning of the rearmament program to meet the threat of Hitlerism, the latter replied that they would not be the only ones to make sacrifices, that they wished to see similar gestures from their employers. While M. Blum believes that the denunciation of their employers' selfish attitude was justified, in effect the working classes by maintaining a narrow selfish outlook prevented themselves from rising above the other classes to make the sacrifice required by the nation. Had they risen to the occasion they would have won national acclaim and would have crushed bourgeois mediocrity by the sheer nobility of their action. Since Versailles the Socialist party had preached peace for the individual but it had preached peace without emphasis on the self-sacrifice which was necessary to preserve peace collectively. Experience teaches that at the terrible moments of life a man saves his life by risking it. Socialism should have taught that facing a dangerous Europe, France could preserve peace only by courageously risking war. What Socialism demanded of its militant members it did not understand was demanded of it in the national crisis. Then it should have shown itself the worthiest, the noblest, the best. It should have been a model and an example. The leaders of the party had failed to preach ideals. When the time came, no great voice came from the ranks.

The writer draws the following conclusions from his observations:

1. The

1. The first task after the defeat of Hitlerism will be the construction of a true democracy for France.

2. A popular democracy can only be a social democracy. In elaborating on this point he says that one cannot conceive that men tomorrow should lack subsistence, a healthy dwelling, protection against want and vice. The power of the state must be engaged to define, protect and guarantee the workers' conditions, while the maximum production will require the selection of the best individuals. The necessities of production will inaugurate the rule of true equality which in no way will fail to recognize natural inequalities. Thus exact utilization of each human unit will be made and all jobs will be considered equally noble. Social democracy, the hope of yesterday, becomes the necessity of tomorrow.

3. French social democracy must be integrated into a European order - or better, into a world-wide order. M. Blum devotes the greater portion of his conclusion to the necessity for and probabilities of achieving an international body of authority.

He believes that Socialism must be practiced in all countries to be successful in one for the reason that national economy is sensitive to the world economy which surrounds it. A nation must choose between shutting itself up in the framework of despotic autarchy - such as Soviet Russia and Nazi Germany have done - or become part of a whole through action of a world-wide character. Therefore, social democracy in France must rest on a sufficiently firm international structure. Unless an effective international power results from this war, democracy will again be exposed to ruin and possibly for the last time.

We must admit, to be honest, that the 1919 formula resulting in the League of Nations was good. Tomorrow we must turn again to its basic principles. It failed because of the absence of great powers like Russia and the United States; because it did not possess sovereignty superior to national sovereignties; and because it lacked political authority or material force. If these errors are corrected, the world will gain a living and efficacious international body. In elaborating on this point M. Blum says that the international body must be given authority

over

over problems of labor which are not susceptible to solution within the frame of one nation alone; and over questions of raw materials, of migrations, of customs and currency. It should undertake works of international utility to raise all nations gradually to the same level of civilization. This would require financial contributions to maintain a budget possibly by small taxes levied on goods of universal consumption or monopolies of international services.

M. Blum recognizes the problems created by Germany and Russia in any peace plan requiring a strong international basis. With respect to Germany it is natural and just that the world insist on protecting itself against future attacks of German barbarism. However, there will exist a universal sentiment against the German people of hatred and revenge, which, unless courageously overcome, will inevitably lead to a system of partitioning, annexation and tribute. If the men who make the peace have their eyes securely fixed on the future, they will know that hatred does not extinguish hatred; that one does not annihilate a people, a language, a tradition; that the abuse of force creates will for revenge which time does not extinguish. The writer proposes that Germany, to be made harmless in a peaceful Europe, must be incorporated into an international community powerful enough to re-educate, discipline and, if necessary, subdue it.

With respect to Russia, the writer maintains that a secure peace is impossible if each nation of the world is constantly harassed by the risk of domestic revolution prepared and directed by the Soviet Government. While M. Blum does not believe that Russia will change its system of government or its system of property, he does believe that it will emerge from the present conflict free from its growing pains, confident of its strength, and, consequently, reassured concerning the necessity of an harmonious international life. He believes that a concordat should and could regulate the relationship between the Soviet Union and the other nations in the international body, of which Russia will be a member. As concordats are now used to regulate the relations between the states and a temporal church, they can also regulate a compromise delimiting the respective domains of hierarchic faith and national sovereignty. The writer advances the

following

following reasons for Russia's cooperation in the coming international order: (1) Soviet Russia will be unable to detach itself from the Anglo-Saxon countries which assisted in its victory and will assist in its economic reconstruction. (2) Integration into the international body will represent for the Soviet state at last that full and equal recognition, without reservation, to which its leaders have so long aspired. (3) As the champion of peace in the eyes of the proletariat world Russia cannot afford to be surpassed in a search for a permanent basis of peace.

M. Blum discusses the probabilities of the Holy See being represented in an international body. He concludes that the present policy of the Papacy is that of a spiritual power which refuses to become involved in disputes of a purely temporal nature. For that reason he does not expect its association in the international body though he does anticipate its cooperation with the organization's peaceful aims.

The obstacles to the formation of an effective international society are next considered. The honorable and legitimate sentiment of patriotism, he foresees, will have the tendency to place France first in the minds and hearts of Frenchmen; to place the healing, reconstruction, and salvation of France above all. In its narrow sense this is pure chauvinism which engenders pride, hatred and war. True patriotism and true internationalism will convince men that at the present stage liberty and prosperity of one nation are no longer separable from the liberty and prosperity of other nations, and that love of country is no longer separable from the love of all humanity.

The writer continues his contemplation of the world order of tomorrow. He believes that the Atlantic Charter can be interpreted only in the sense that the entire group of national democracies will support an international order. He realizes that many minds envisage a far different future. Extreme poverty and suffering have aroused passions and sown the undoubted seeds of revolution for tomorrow, they believe. The writer does not agree. He believes that victory does not create the occasion for revolution. (That Hitler will be defeated he does not doubt.) Parents will have been separated from their

children,

children, men will have been driven from their homes, will have been hungry, will have been bound and gagged by various forms of violence. The only revolutionary passion that will be aroused will be one for peace.

It is the author's opinion that in Europe the bourgeois framework is in ruins and even in the Anglo-Saxon countries the bourgeoisie are abdicating. The period for the establishment of social democracies throughout the world will be favorable. This is the task to be undertaken by the people the moment victory is achieved. M. Blum wonders if they will be worthy of this destiny. The rules of the game must be good faith, probity and honor. There can never be any justification for untruthfulness, trickery, abuse of force, or betrayal of obligations. Life in society would be impossible if the individual did not bow before the general and permanent interests of the community. The problem will be to obtain from the nations what one demands of the individual.

The writer asks himself if these rules for the new social order are consistent with socialism. He answers in the affirmative by saying that the hope of socialism is the establishment of a universal society founded on justice and peace. In addition to striving for a better standard of life it teaches the individual that he must share his life and liberties with all; that benefits can be acquired only through a common effort for the collective whole. In the past socialism has had to fight desperately to survive. Now that its enemies are falling in ruins the period for battles is no longer in season. Socialism must now apply itself to spiritual conquest and return, as did the Church in its early days, from the temporal to its original aspirations. Its purpose is to prove man and society; to arouse in man the best of virtues.

M. Blum exhorts his readers to look beyond the present to the future. The present European dictators will pass. Eternal ideas do exist. There is a destiny bound to universal law. In this sense he states that he has often quoted Nietzsche at Socialist gatherings: "Let the future and the most remote things be the rule for your present duties. It is not the love of the near, it is the love of the more distant that I commend to you". The human race has created wisdom, science and art. Why should it not create justice, fraternity and peace, the writer asks. It has given birth to Plato, Homer, Shakespeare, Hugo,

Michelangelo,

Michelangelo, Pascal, and Newton. Why should it not also beget guides capable of leading it to the collective life most nearly approaching the universal laws of harmony? Man's soul is capable of understanding both beauty and brotherly love.

With the following sentences M. Blum concludes his reflections: "Let him (man) contemplate the goal. Let him trust to his destiny. Let him fear not to use his strength. When he becomes troubled and discouraged, he has only to think of humanity."

TRANSLATION

INTRODUCTION

At the end of the other war, I wrote a little book which I intended for young people and I dedicated it particularly to my son. My son is now nearly forty. He is a prisoner in Germany. I know his uprightness of spirit and firmness of heart; neither he nor, I am sure, his companions in captivity have need of counsel or consolation. But what of all the young people who are now at the age that he then was, all the adolescents who are growing up far from their prisoner fathers, far from the family home? All those who search in vain among the ruins of the past for a certainty, a rule, a faith; all those who vainly peer into the shadows of the future in order to find therein a consoling light, a guiding star? Do they not need for us to turn to them and help them? Is it not the duty of men whom life has forced to amass a certain amount of experience to reflect carefully for them, without any of the elder's presumption but with a tender solicitude, to define for them the first precepts of wisdom, the first principles of action? That is the purpose I have set for myself above all others in writing the pages which you are going to read. I have written them in a prison, where I still am. I do not know how they will reach the unknown readers who inspire me to write them and whose attentive faces I seem to see around me. But I know that they will reach them some day. One can write and talk from the depths of a prison: in a country with the generous instinct of ours, that gives even greater prestige to the thought, greater resonance to the voice. The bolt to my door and the bars at the window have not separated me from France. I inhale all its hopes like the air I breathe; I bathe in all its miseries. I feel my pulse beating every moment in unison with it, although the solitude gives more weight and, unquestionably, more independence to my reflections.

The generation to which I belong has not succeeded in its task. I know it as well as anyone, but I do not rise to make its defense. From its faults, its illusions, its misfortunes, I try to draw a lesson for coming generations, for those who, tomorrow, will bear the burden. Our experience can profit others more than ourselves. It is in that hope that I have gathered together these reflections in the course of my solitary study. My chief

purpose

purpose has been to put young people- and also men - on guard, against a sentiment into which, perhaps, as much presumption as discouragement enters.

France is, today, faced with an interregnum; it is not faced with annihilation. Everything has not been swept away; everything does not have to be done over. The defeat marked the collapse of our military machine; it declared the bankruptcy of the directing class; it disqualified in the public mind the political system which that class had fashioned in its own image; it destroyed human lives and wealth. It did not destroy France, its people, its soil, its character, that whole mass of traditions, convictions and aspirations which is today called its "spirit". From the point of view of our military power, the war is perhaps over; from the point of view of our national existence, it is not. France is not yet vanquished; its destiny has not been halted, since the war continues, without it, but for it. It is still permitted to hope, I think, that it will come out of it independent, intact, perhaps spiritually greater in a freed and pacified Europe.

TRANSLATION

No crisis in history leaves a people in its previous state of equilibrium and it is particularly on that account that any crisis, independently of its material results, is a revolutionary fact. At the end of a long national war victory is as upsetting as defeat.

France experienced this fact twenty years ago. All normal family relations of affection, habit, interest, are interrupted and often broken. Families are broken up or scattered; populations uprooted or transplanted. Brusque changes affect conditions, neighborhoods, occupations, fortunes. Alarms, sufferings, anxieties of every kind reopen the way to sentiments of form or of religious content, to disquiet as to the destiny of the individual, the nation, humanity. The worth of personal life, subject to little variation in tranquil periods, is subjected to sharp differences, depreciated by some, overestimated by others, according to whether the shock has engendered the spirit of sacrifice or developed egoism and fear. Lastly, all the great crises of history seem to invite a withdrawal or even the premature exhaustion of the human generations, already decimated, which had a direct part in them. With the exception of a few old men, kept as fetishes or idols - such as Thiers or Clémenceau - and, moreover, soon thrown on the scrap heap, the storm has cleared the road for youth. Advancing the regular course of transmission and inheritance, youth does not merely feel the future promised to it, but is unexpectedly charged with this anticipated task. It is proud of the fact, but it does not know the work; it hesitates. Those who can go back twenty years in their memories, will confirm this brief sketch line by line.

But when the war has ended in a defeat, when the defeat - brutal and total - has left humiliation and despondency in its wake, then one sees another collective sentiment arise. It is doubtless as old as human societies; one would find its original elements in ancient religion and particularly in the Jewish prophecies. After a battle had been lost, the Greek people wondered by what neglect of the rites they had alienated the protection of the god of the city; the Jewish people accused themselves, in the voice of their prophets, of having violated the pact of alliance which united them to the Lord of Hosts. The instinct of nations is justice. When they have been

stricken

stricken, they need to believe that they have not been wrongly stricken. They seek in themselves what they have been guilty of or else they seek the guilty ones among them. Thus, from the beginning of time, a national calamity has been bound to the idea of a sin or a fault, with its natural developments: contrition, expiation, redemption.

Peoples, like men, are always tempted to believe that event which affects their existence never happened except to them. It is true that there are few examples in history of the idea of sin and the necessary redemption having been cultivated so willingly as we see it under our eyes, where it has been vitiated to such a point by an almost perverse fervor for voluntary flagellation; on the other hand, it has never been exploited with more astuteness and perfidy. However, the world scarcely knows any older belief and this belief is the oldest of illusions. For it is absurd to suppose that history obeys this elementary rule of distributive justice. A national catastrophe is necessarily explained by causes, but it is not necessarily justified by faults. If defeat had to be the merited punishment of error, ignorance or vice, one would have to admit that victory is the legitimate reward of wisdom, merit and virtue. Even those who believe in a providential design regulating human affairs do not translate it into so simple a law; the ways of God seem more indirect to them, more distant, less penetrable. What nation is there to which one could reasonably connect the changing destinies to alternate turns of recompense and punishment? The France of 1914 carried off the victory; was it then more worthy, more moral, more pious than the France of 1939? By what virtues have Hitler and Mussolini deserved their victories? By what faults have Belgium, Holland, and Norway deserved their fate? At the time I write, war is going on between the Reich and Soviet Russia; either Hitler or Stalin will necessarily be a victor: must we conclude therefrom that one of the two will necessarily be a just man?

Let us then stop beating the breast so noisily. Let us make a truce of these mortifications, these denunciations of ourselves, or rather of these denunciations of others, for this cruel severity of judgment is most often accompanied by a strange complaisance, not

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to say voluntary blindness. A collective condemnation has as its basis and should have as a condition the most rigorous personal examination of conscience, and we see quite well that those who most arrogantly make use of general vituperation and malediction carefully refrain from beginning by their own confession, their own mea culpa. No, let us have done with that. What is true, what is natural, is that, after a great defeat, a nation, like a man after a great failure or a great disappointment, should reflect in its own conscience, make a scrupulous check, try to see clearly in it. It is understood that the examination should be severe and that it may lead to hard conclusions; but it should not be governed in advance by an avowal of failure and indignity. We are wrong when we have recognized, when we have understood our wrong, and not because events have made us wrong. It is thus that we must examine ourselves and judge ourselves. The duty of equity exists even toward ourselves.

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When a people is severely stricken in its national life, its first impulse, because it is the simplest, is to accuse what it finds directly under its hand: its responsible chiefs, its political régime, its institutions. This instinctive reflex is often just. In the course of the 19th century France had two great defeats. After the taking of Paris and Waterloo, the guilty one was the Emperor; after Sedan and Metz, the guilty one was the Empire. Just as, in the last century, a unanimous instinct spontaneously accused the Emperor and the Empire, so, after our present disaster, a part of public opinion denounced the republican régime and the leaders of the Republic. The movement, this time, was neither general nor by any means spontaneous, but no matter; what is certain is that it is being propagated, that it has taken on scope and extent simply because it fell into the sense of the century-old tendency. It has not been limited to throwing the responsibility for the catastrophe on the form of the State or upon its recent leaders; it has not been only the Constitution of the Republic and the republican personnel which have been called into question; it has gone much beyond that; the whole complex structure of public life, its content as well as its form, has been seized upon. There has been an attempt to gather

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in, as in a great sweep of a net, everything which, for a century and a half, had inspired doctrines and customs, as well as institutions. Let us speak plainly: in addition to a political revolution, a civic and social counter-revolution has been undertaken. The responsibility of the defeat is not limited to the republic, it is extended to democracy, to the dogma of personal liberty, to the principle of the natural equality between citizens. All the parent ideas, all the many ideas which, since the French Revolution, have seemed to be the foundation and the force of society, those ideas which the monarchial Charter of 1814 or the imperial constitutions had themselves recognized and proclaimed, have, it seems, been reduced to powder by the shock of Hitler's armies. To deny them or to scoff at them would be little; we are told that they have been destroyed; that a sort of proof by evidence, or by absurdity, has annihilated them and we are derisively taken to walk among their ruins.

I know quite well that people pride themselves on building anew on this annihilation. But I shall not dwell on this attempt at reconstruction, even though it is dressed up with the name of national revolution. Its first defect is precariousness, since it is condemned to non-survival, either with the more and more probable defeat of Hitler or with his definitive victory. Its second defect is contradiction. The unsure workers who have charge of it vacillate between grossly contradictory notions: return to the ancient traditions and customs of France; imitation of totalitarian régimes created out of whole cloth by German nazism and Italian fascism. The sentiments which inspire these two notions, although they equally attest to lack of invention, routine thought, poverty of spirit, are self-contradictory since the return to the ancient French tradition indicates a certain proud infatuation with whatever is or was national, and imitation of the totalitarian régimes means abasement, submission to the conqueror, servility. These notions may even converge, in so far as it is a question of demolishing republican France, but beyond that there is no possibility of conciliation or compromise between them as soon as it is a question of building up. Our old monarchial state, all impregnated with abstract and sentimental beliefs, in which the royal power incarnated a regular hierarchy of classes, corps and privileges, has nothing compatible with those somber autocracies in which

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idolatrous adoration of a man is substituted for religious faith in a principle, in which the sanguinary caprices of brutality replace the ordered majesty of force, in which the scale of groups and individuals is levelled to a fanatic servitude. The totalitarian dictatorships which retain from modern civilization only the material acquisition of progress, would take European societies far behind the monarchic development; they go beyond it for centuries in history to the legend of barbarous kingdoms and elementary tribal rites. Furthermore, while these two ideas refuse to mix, they are at the same time but the vainest aberration of the mind. Ancient France will not be restored. One should honor the dead, one can draw inspiration from their example; but one does not resurrect them. A tradition can be prolonged in the mind, but no one will ever succeed in pouring present reality into its abolished forms. To repeat an expression of Jaurès, one can keep the fire going, but one will not thereby give new life to the ashes. Furthermore, who would venture to assume that what Hitler or Mussolini builds will last longer than Napoleon's work? How could be it solidly established on Europe when, even in the countries of its founders, it is bound to their lives? A few separate elements may subsist; the ensemble, the essential will not continue. One does not wipe out twenty centuries of history at a single blow; human progress possesses an irresistible force. Nothing established by violence and maintained by pressure, nothing which degrades humanity and rests on contempt for the human person can endure.

It is idle to insist on these too evident truths. The constructive work, the spectacle or promise of which is offered us, is ruined in advance. What is most important at the present moment is to consider and judge the work of destruction. I have recalled the fact that it responds to an atavistic instinct; I shall not be astonished if it has been able to seduce and win over a large part of the youth. I still remember having been young. Youth is enthusiastic, systematic and uncompromising; it can admire and it can condemn. To throw everything out, to send even good material or material which only the tearing down has hurt, to the dump heap, to make a clean place for an entirely new world which it conceives in its image

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and to its measure, that is a program which cannot but tempt youth. Was then everything in yesterday's society false, mediocre or evil? On moment, young people, I beg of you! Before taking the pick in your hands, answer a question, just one. Do you want peace? do you hate war? If war is not the worst misfortune for a people - for a people like a man sometimes only saves its life by risking it and for a people, no more than for a man, is life the supreme good - do you agree that it is the worse scourge for humanity? Do you recognize that, without the certitude of peace, there is no security in work and in personal happiness for men, there is no continuity in progress, no satisfaction for the highest needs of the human soul? Do you accept as the most noble of tasks the extirpation from the world of even the possibility of recreating war? You do, don't you? But then not everything in the France of yesterday, in democratic France, in the France of the Third Republic is indiscriminately to be condemned, and you will do well to hesitate a little before overturning pell-mell all the conditions of its political, moral, social life. The France of yesterday had at least the merit of generally, and even unanimously wanting peace, of being ready and adapted to peace.

Push your reflection a little farther. Do you, in good faith, think that, if all the nations of Europe had practiced the political and social régime of France - this despised régime - a general war would have been possible? Suppose that the German State, the Italian State, the Russian State, had been modelled on our unhappy democracy, today denounced with such arrogant contempt, would not the peace of Europe have been sure and lasting? Certainly the European situation included many absurdities, many iniquities, although, after all, the Europe reshaped by the Treaty of Versailles was less absurd and less iniquitous than at any other known moment of history. But if all the States of Europe had shared our wretched régime, the difficulties would little by little have been solved by friendly compromises or, rather, they would have been slowly effaced under the quiet action of time. Look, oh young people, for the moment when and the action from which the possibility of war was reintroduced into Europe. It is not obvious that it is the moment when Hitler seized the power and from the action of Hitlerian racism? Right on the eve thereof, Europe, under

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the impulse of the democratic spirit, was organizing for peace; right on the eve, general disarmament was a hope, not a chimera. The risk of war increased in Europe in proportion as Hitler's despotic power grew in Germany. It could not be otherwise; tyrannies are conquerors in essence, as democracy is pacific. At the time when I write, President Roosevelt and Mr. Winston Churchill are publishing the eight points of the peace which the Anglo-Saxon democracies intend to establish after Hitler's defeat and semi-official interpreters of the French Government reply with bantering contempt: "We know that old song. The eight points of Roosevelt and Churchill are the fourteen points of Wilson. One might have had illusions as to such noble ingenuousness twenty-five years ago; today we have put them to the hard test and we know that they do not guarantee justice and peace." But, on the contrary, what we know is that the failure of the League of Nations after the other war had as the causes thereof, first of all, the sour and suspicious mistrust with which the work was conceived and undertaken, then the abstention of the United States, lastly and most of all the appearance in Europe of dictatorial parties and régimes. An honest and bold second attempt, with the thorough-going participation of the United States, in a Europe purged of dictatorships - who dares predict its frustration? Who, above all, would dare wish for it?

Dictatorship and war, democracy and peace, will you dare to deny these necessary connections? No. Then you have not the right to toss democracy out with a gesture. You have not the right to condemn forthwith, as stained by error or fraud, the work of men who, for one hundred and fifty years, have tried to establish it in the world. You have only one right, and one duty: that is to find out why our effort did not succeed in order to take it up more effectively after us.

You will doubtless reply to me that youth no longer intends, like us, to lose itself in these chimerical projects to which you impute a part of your misfortune, and I perceive in fact what was, for a good many of you, the first of the reflexes provoked by the defeat. Along with a general distaste of all present reality, you felt a need of withdrawal and turning in upon yourselves which you extended from your person to your country. You wished to isolate France as one isolates a penitent or a patient.

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You envisaged a deep and prolonged solitary treatment for the country, the cure of a cloister or sanatorium. In the war which continues, you thought, France no longer has any duty, hardly any interest. It should no longer mix in Europe except in the degree indispensable to its material existence; above all, it should meditate, be infused with new strength; when it has become strong again, they will see.... You were not the first to advise this conduct for a conquered nation. Fichte talked like that, Stein acted thus in Prussia after Jena and Tilsit; in particular, such were the themes of Hitlerian propaganda in Germany after Versailles, the attitude of Thiers and especially of Gambetta after the treaty of Frankfurt. But what do you intend to do with the France made strong again in its solitude? What purpose do you assign to its recovered strength? Revenge, of which one never speaks, and of which one always thinks? Do you want a strong France that it may fully profit by the opportunities which the "immanent justice" of history might later offer, or that it may, perhaps, bring them about? Revenge will then call for revenge and, from war to war, from generation to generation, peoples will never cease passing from one to the other, as Jaurès, used to say, the poisoned cup of the Atridae. No, it is not thus that you think of the future. You wish to establish peace? But then French strength must not be amassed, superheated like steam compressed in a closed boiler; it must, on the contrary, expand; it must be employed in the free cooperation of nations; in their equal and fraternal organization. Liberty, equality, fraternity will become your international slogan! Proclaim it then immediately after the defeat, as we did twenty years ago, a little more deservedly, immediately after the victory. Then, whether you are skeptical of it or not, you will still rejoin the path of those republicans, of those democrats whom, a short time ago, you were overwhelming with your repudiation.

I have not wished to make use of more than one argument to show how absurd, how impossible even, were these blind condemnations and indiscriminate rejections. I could have furnished many others; I have chosen the one which, it seemed to me, had irresistible weight. I hope that there will be no astonishment at my showing such partisanship for the idea and even the name of peace at the very time when we are witnessing the most atrocious phase of the war when - what can I say? - willingly or

not

not, we are participating in its atrocity. A good German enjoys the recital of a night-bombing of London; on our side, we applaud when our papers tell us of the tragic end of the Bismarck, going to the bottom with its whole crew. When we read in a communiqué from the German-Soviet campaign that "a division was destroyed", we make no effort to bring home to ourselves the reality which these words conceal and the picture of which would rend the heart; we utter a cry of joy or distress according to whether it is a friendly or an enemy division. Like the spectators at the Roman circus, passion has suspended all sensibility. But will we, after the war, remain as the war has made us, in spite of ourselves? If the war should not leave in us at least the determination to suffer its dreadfulness for the last time, we would have to despair forever of human destiny. This resolution may doubtless be weakened by the event; it has already been; but it would be horrible for it not to be formed in us; it is, if I may say so, obligatory. If we do not agree to it in all sincerity, in all honesty of conscience, if we should, on the contrary, give our acquiescence to the old adage, as old as war itself, which claims that it is eternal, then we must no longer talk of building a new world. There would be no future as well as no present.

I cannot refrain from here pointing out one of the singularities of the moment, which is perhaps singular only in appearance. Individuals, newspapers, groups which, in France, are of the chauvinistic school and profession, those who besmirch the good word "national" to their taste, all worked for the armistice and applauded the capitulation. All today advocate collaboration with the conqueror or, to be more accurate, with the enemy. Nevertheless, during the first months of the war, when almost all France expected a slow but certain victory, these same men set the conditions therefor in advance with an unbending severity. They wished to finish once for all not only with Hitler and his bands, but with the millions of living beings whom the name Germany covers. They demanded, not merely that it be placed under guardianship, but that it be dismembered, that broad territories be annexed to France. They treated as enemies the country of the democrats and socialists who, themselves, expected no other fruit from the victory than a "new order" in which the joint cooperation of nations would constitute the material guarantee of peace. Today prostrated before

might,

might, they were yesterday ready to abuse might, and they will be the same tomorrow. In a France again become free and strong, they will again be "nationalists" and chauvinists. They will resume their attacks on "pacifist" traitors who do not give up the idea of losing peace on men's freedom and on the fraternal equality of States. And the very men whom they were denouncing yesterday, whom they will denounce tomorrow as "pacifists", they today call by the name of "war mongers". For here is the other face of the apparent paradox: the pacifists of yesterday and tomorrow, just because they conceive of peace as a free agreement between free peoples, have demanded a fight without reservation and without respite for national independence. They disavowed the armistice which delivered France and threatened to deliver Europe to the domination of Hitler. They repudiate a "collaboration" which, for Germany, means solely the exploitation to its advantage and for its war needs of all French resources, and which, for France, necessarily means servility, abdication, hypocritical treason after the cynical treason of a separate capitulation and which would not even guarantee, from a conqueror who has made perjury into a system, the slightest lessening of severity at the time of a definitive peace. Even when they hurriedly tried to rearm the France whose military structure the nationalist chauvinists had allowed to fall into ruins, even when they exhorted the French people, driven to battle by Hitler's despotic ambition, to persevere therein to the limit of their strength, they remained, in actuality, true to and consistent with themselves. They remained men of peace. They entered into war only to preserve the necessary conditions of any peace worthy of that name and peace remained their sole "war aim." Young people, ask your conscience: are not they the ones who were doubly right?

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A short time ago I mentioned briefly an historical "precedent" which it would be profitable to consider more closely: in the succession of our military catastrophes, the disaster in 1870 is the immediate antecedent of the disaster of 1940. It fell upon a nation still more sure and, it may be said, still more infatuated with its strength, for the Napoleonic legend still covered France with its splendor, and rare indeed were those - even among the

adversaries

adversaries of the Empire, - who did not consider the French army to be invincible by nature. The downfall was all the more brutal, for one month after taking the field, the Emperor capitulated at Sedan with the next to the last of our regular armies, the last being surrounded at Metz and soon surrendering. As in 1940, the military collapse brought about a political change. The difference is that that this revolution occurred in the open, by a sovereign manifestation of the popular will, and that the new republican government was not set up to beg for an armistice, but to continue the war, cost what it might, despite the annihilation of the imperial army, making an appeal to a mass rising of French patriotism. As in 1940, however, there were then secret partisans of an immediate peace, and peace at any price: Gambetta, who inspired and who was the hero of national resistance, was termed by them a "violent madman."

The political régime which the Prussian victory had overthrown was, quite naturally, held guilty of the French defeat. I have said that it was justly so held, and I believe that. Over a period of five or six years, an almost incredible succession of mistakes - Poland, Denmark, Mexico, Prussian-Italian alliance, Luxembourg, Rome expedition - had enclosed France in a tighter and tighter circle from which it could not logically have broken except by defeat or chance. At the last moment, however, an unforeseeable stroke of luck would have allowed the Empire to get out of the matter honorably and peacefully. It had thrown away the chance; a sort of fascination, which is the fatality of autocracies, hurled it headfirst against an adversary whose strength, since Sadowa, it had, however, no longer any right to despise. The first incidents of the campaign showed up with scandalous clearness, not only the inadequacy of our armament, but the total absence of competence, order, technical preparation of any kind. To what internal weakness of the régime were these fatal errors related? Since before Sadowa the reply of contemporaries had been unanimous. The weaknesses of the imperial régime were personal power, junction of all sorts of authority in the hands of a single man, to whom all were responsible in principle and who in fact was responsible to no one, the elimination of all control in the Parliament, of all free

discussion

discussion in the press and in public opinion, the secret conduct of foreign and internal affairs, likewise reduced to cabinet intrigues. Such seemed generally to be the evil and, after an unfortunate peace, which however left untouched the honor of a nation in mourning, everyone was also in agreement as to the remedy. Royalists, even those who attached to the "legitimate" branch did not differ in this from the Republicans. More than anything else it was necessary to give back to France liberty, a public government responsible to the elected representatives of the country, an independent press and public opinion. That means that what today is a remedy was the disease and what is the disease was the remedy.

Some thinkers, however, did not hold to this immediate conclusion and tried to go more deeply into the national reality. Their examination was anxious since the defeat, scarcely accomplished, had been followed by a more dreadful shock, the Revolutionary Commune of Paris. Going beyond the political institutions of the State, their sounding then reached the moral constitution of society. Had not the mind and will of individuals and groups been corrupted in their principles at the same time as the organs of the government had been vitiated? Renan, Taine and a number of others formed the élite of the group which taught thus: the book published by Renan after the war and the Commune is entitled: "Intellectual and Moral Reform". France had been allowed to slip into an intellectual and moral breakdown of which the military defeat and the revolutionary movement which had followed it were both the expression and the punishment. This breakdown could itself, in a sense, be well taken for a consequence of the autocratic régime, but it had developed its own effects, and it required a distinct cure, for lack of which the "national renovation" would remain a superficial or vain work. It was manifested under many aspects: levity of mind - which must not be confused with gaiety, an authentic attribute of the French temperament - presumption, lack of serious application to serious purposes, a falling off in honesty and scrupulousness in business, a greed for money and for enjoyment, the contagion of luxury, ostentation and, consequently, of corruption and venality, a loosening of family bonds and ostentations contempt of domestic dignity. The collapse of the Empire had thus been like the biblical

climax

climax of a great orgy involving practically all bourgeois society in its infernal whirlpool. Royalty had already offered the spectacle of these periods of public profligacy, under the Regency, at the end of the reign of Louis XV. But then the general corruption had not touched either intellectual culture or the respect due it in society, and that was what Renan, Taine and their friends were, perhaps, most aware of. The France of the Empire had allowed general culture to decline; it had endured the abandonment of the great, disinterested studies. Entirely given over to the two perilous tendencies which it had been able to discipline in the splendid periods, the taste for the "boulevardier" spirit and the custom of oratorical amplification, it had allowed Germany to take possession little by little of its primacy in all the higher occupations of the mind: pure thought, pure science, erudition. At the other extremity of the chain, it had shown itself incapable of organizing, as Prussia had previously done, the solid instruction of its people. A "slogan" was then current which, among the factors of the Prussian victory, placed the schoolmaster on the same plane as the needle gun or the Krupp canon. The practical conclusion was naturally seen. It was not enough to resurface or point with new colors a building attacked in its foundations; the work had to be done over from the beginning; the systems of education revised from top to bottom, relations of family and society reestablished on sound principles, in short, all the elements renewed which have influence on the formation of the individual and, thence, on collective opinion, thence - in a democracy - on the government.

Here then, are the repercussions and lessons of 70 years ago from a national catastrophe. Nothing would be more legitimate than to apply them today to a similar work. We would all agree in searching among institutions and customs for the organic or functional weaknesses to which the defeat can be related, in order to trace for the conquered people a practical plan of reflection and restoration, in order to prescribe for it the internal effort and the external hygiene which would return to it both its modesty and its pride, its wisdom and its love of work. But it is not permitted to push the analogy farther. France in 1871 had the right and the duty of making the constitutional régime responsible

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for the misfortune which had struck it; it does not have the right today. The Empire had been guilty; the Republic was only unfortunate. The Empire was bad and evil in its principle, which was personal autocracy; the Republic is just and fruitful in its principle, which is the government of the people by the people. It erred only in weaknesses of organization and operation, the origin of which it is easy to show and the remedy for which it is easy to find. We have still less the right to accuse this ideology, which so many heroic sacrifices have made almost sacred, which the two Empires themselves proclaimed at their start, and which found its dogma in the Declaration of the Rights of Man, its rite in universal suffrage. As in 1871, an intellectual and moral reform is necessary today, but the most cursory examination will show that the weaknesses which it must repair are entirely independent of the constitutional régime and of the ideology on which it rests. As a single, but imposing, example, I have already shown the temerity that exists in making a capital and summary condemnation of democratic principles. Let us examine more in detail the reproaches made against this régime - a régime which, yesterday, had only partisans and courtiers and which, today, it requires courage to defend.

The Empire wanted war, as all known autocracies have ended by doing, even when they had promised or sworn to peace. It wanted war, for need of prestige and for dynastic interests, to compensate at one blow for a long succession of aberrations which, themselves, had their origin in the autocratic power, but which left to a humiliated and disaffected France the feeling of failure. Republican and democratic France did not want war. From the victory of 1918 it sought to draw no other conquest than that of lasting peace, an organic peace. It is in this direction that its collective will was pointed; it is on this goal that all its aspirations converged and, unquestionably, there has never been an example in history of a people so generally and so deliberately pacific. It did not have to lift itself from a downfall, since it had come triumphant out of the last European crisis, since it believed itself and others believed it to be the stronger. It did not have to reestablish the strength

or popularity of an internal régime which, at the time of Hitler's advent, was disputed by no one, with the sole reservation of a few negligible groups of theoreticians or conspirators, and, furthermore, as this régime itself was pacific in essence, it was not war which could have obtained this result. It may be asserted as an indisputable fact that at the time when Hitler seized the power in Germany, there existed in Europe no risk, no reasonable possibility of war, and history will undoubtedly verify this truth which, two years ago, every Frenchman considered dazingly obvious, that is, that war was, reintroduced into the European scene by Hitler, that it was imposed upon republican France by Hitler. That, dating from that moment, faults may have been committed, I would never deny. But what was the greatest? It was the fault of not having had consciousness or prescience of the danger, of not having promptly and clearly enough discerned the Hitlerian plan of rearmament, revenge and conquest, of not having perceived the fatal and inexorable character of its development. Because it was pacific in essence, France wanted to believe in the possibility of a "peaceful coexistence" between the democracies installed in Europe and the war-like autocracy which was being implanted there. Because of this possibility it made more and more costly sacrifices which had no other result than to weaken its prestige abroad, to compromise its cohesion within, and, consequently, to aggravate the danger; the four-power pact, the relaxation and abandonment of the sanctions against Italy, March 7, 1936, Munich. Today I ask myself whether, in 1933, France should not by force have forbidden a still disarmed Germany from giving the power to Hitler and his party. No one in France then envisaged this brutal intrusion into German affairs; it would, nevertheless, have saved Germany and preserved Europe.

I recognize this class of errors, from which French people have worked out only little by little, one after the other, and in which many of them remained enmeshed even to the fatal hour. I confess them, but I do not blush for them, for they are noble in kind. Rather than errors they are illusions, witnesses of a premature faith in the coming of peace, in the very virtue of

peace.

peace. France, almost as a whole, professed the idealistic belief that the will of nations is hostile to war, which is true, and that that common will would finally ward off war by imposing agreements on governments, which are always possible as a matter of fact, and even easy, but on condition that they are sought in good faith. At any event, if Republican France can be reproached for not having foreseen the war soon enough and clearly enough, it is at least a sign and proof that it did not seek war, as did the Second Empire. However, the war found the Empire entirely isolated in Europe and in the world, without an alliance, without one friend, without sympathy, one nation after the other having been alienated by the incoherence of its caprices, which, step by step, had aroused all sorts of suspicions concerning ambitions scarcely more consistent than dreams. The French Republic, when Hitler came into power, had practically only allies and friends in Europe and in the world. Unquestionably previous weaknesses had had their effect. March 7 had detached Yugoslavia and disturbed the other States of the Little Entente; Munich had made possible the elimination of Czechoslovakia and prepared the sudden change of the U.S.S.R.; the civil war had thrown Spain into the camp of the autocracies; the alliance of Hitler and Mussolini, long uncertain, became fixed just after March 7 and the Ethiopian war. The irrevocable vow had been broken and Mussolini had immolated a victim - Austria - on the altar. On the other hand, never had the English alliance been so sincere or so close, or American friendship, particularly before Munich, so cordial or so warm. It is around France that, in fact or in spirit, the small States of Europe were grouped; it is around the allies that international opinion gathered. In short, a revered and preferred France, instead of an envied and suspected France, a France bound by close ties to all the democratic and peaceful powers in the world, because it itself had remained or again become the champion of militant democracy.

Perhaps it is from the point of view of military technical accomplishments that the comparison would bring out an analogy. It is certainly not true that the Republic's army was surprised in the state of internal confusion which paralyzed all the services of

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the imperial army from the first moment: everything was in order and in its place. It is not true that it went into combat with that crushing inequality of arms which it has been sought to prove with figures which are false to the point of buffoonery; the truth will be reestablished in this regard; it will stupify honest people and shame detractors. But it is true that, like the Empire, the Republic was late in undertaking its effort, that it was slow in taking account of the strength which was growing alongside it and against it. The Empire had rearmed only from 1867, the morrow of Sadowa. The Republic rearmed only from the end of 1936, while Hitler had been master of Germany since March 1933 and had not lost a day. In 1934, Gaston Doumergue's cabinet had given up seeking, on the basis of a contractual limitation of armament, a "possibility of peaceful coexistence" with Hitler and, on the contrary, it had inaugurated an active diplomacy of closed or negotiated alliances which Germany could quite legitimately take for an attempt at encirclement. The obvious counterpart had to be an immediate start on French rearmament. The Doumergue-Pétain cabinet, however, deferred it like its predecessors and its immediate successors, even though it posed as a strong government, as a government of public safety and even of "national renovation". It is equally true that, like the imperial army, the army of the Republic suffered from a "complex" of presumption and routine. Just after the victory in '18, as on the eve of the defeat in '70, it was proclaimed the first army in the world; for 15 years, moreover, it had been almost the only one. It had lived in the conviction of that superiority; it was an article of faith and I do not want to name the men who, at the time it took to the field, were still professing it. That, without doubt, was the prime reason why the effort, when finally decided upon, was not made with sufficient scope, with sufficient method or in a new enough way. It was not understood that what was necessary was to remake, rather than to add. Aging men continued to work according to superannuated conceptions, since they constituted the personnel and the conceptions of the other war--which had led to victory. The purely original character of German rearmament was not understood, rearmament which had the advantage of starting

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from nothing and being all rebuilt from the bottom in a State organized for that sole purpose. Eyes were closed to the strategic and tactical transformations which should logically follow the progress of modern engines of war. As in 1867, the old army was strengthened, instead of a new army's being boldly made.

I have made this comparison in a spirit of strict equity. It shows the point to which an absolute condemnation, like that with which contemporaries unanimously criticized the imperial régime, would today be an act of ignorance, injustice, ingratitude. It makes obvious, however, serious errors in direction, and it is, moreover, seldom that one arrives at any other result when, after the fact, one examines a succession of human affairs with a little critical severity. I do not conceal these errors, I do not excuse them, but I ask myself to what degree they can fairly be related to the republican institutions and, particularly, to the democratic principles by which those institutions were in great part inspired. Like the men of the generation of Taine and Renan, we ought only proceed to this investigation seriously, without any afterthought of interest, justification or reprisal. I shall presently elucidate my conclusion. If one examines the faults committed in the conduct of general affairs, of foreign affairs, of military affairs, one may legitimately trace them back, as to a plausible cause, to such or such type of republican institutions in France, but not to the essential and universal principles of democracy.

Let us pass over the lack of perspicacity, the deflection or too short foresight: these are common infirmities, which only the greatest spirits escape and which they do not always escape. A whole set of causes may logically determine only a single effect and, nevertheless, when the reason is placed in a given moment of time, it can cause a whole variety of possible effects to follow therefrom. Chance plays a rôle here. The clear-seeing man is the one whom events prove right, that is, in many cases, the one who drew the winning number in the lottery. Let us examine a little closer the reproach which, by dint of repetition, is today admitted as a truism. I

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mean the weakness of the régime, which its detractors characterize by the lack of authority, of continuity, of stability. There is there, so to speak, a residue of truth which analysis should isolate with precision. But first it must be well remembered that the problems of authority are not to be confused with problems of sovereignty. Autocracies have been known in which the authority was changeable, as well as absolute; weak as well as brutal. France had proof of that, the last time, less than three-quarters of a century ago. Democracies have been known where authority was strong and the Anglo-Saxon nations give us proof of that fact today. Authority is not bound to a constitutional form. A representative, parliamentary régime, in which sovereignty, which belongs to the nation, is delegated in fact to elected representatives, is not itself in any way incompatible, in principle, with a powerful, stable and continuous authority. It is enough to cast a glance over the history of England to be convinced of that fact. Let us not lose sight, either, of the fact that between the practically indispensable authority for any government and the freedom legitimately demanded by peoples and individuals, the exact proportion is quite difficult to measure and to keep. This problem is the oldest and the most difficult one in politics. Strength, like weakness, has its excesses. The instinctive reaction of peoples is to throw themselves from one excess into the other; that is why any anarchy runs the danger of engendering a tyranny by a counter-blow, but it is by defending itself against these brutal and absurd reflexes that a nation attests the maturity of its growth. Furthermore, the progress of civilization or, better, the necessities of life in society have little by little eliminated the elementary forms of anarchy; there was reason to hope that they had, in the same movement, eliminated the barbarous forms of tyranny. It would cause stupefaction in history to have them rise again in our times; but to yield to their monstrous attraction on the pretext that the methods or tentative efforts of democracy have proved disillusionment possible would really be the abdication of all reasonable dignity.

I wish

I wish, lastly, to recall that this governmental instability of which so much is made is in no way peculiar to the democratic Republic; that the Republic, today, has lasted four times as long as all the other political establishments for a century and a half, that it has been stable for more than sixty years in the sense that its legal existence was no longer threatened or even contested and that no one any longer seriously dared rise up against it as a public adversary, that it is still stable today, whatever is written or done, for it is so deeply implanted in the habit and affection of the people that any effort to extirpate it will be vain. And if I am now asked why there were in France so many similarly unstable political establishments during a century and a half, including the restored Monarchy and the military Empires, why they collapsed one by one, why the Third Republic itself has had to resist shocks which would have shaken or overturned a less popular régime, I shall quite simply reply what narrow leaders and mediocre polemicists seem not to know or always to lose sight of: no government can remain stable in an unstable society and in an unstable world. One hundred and fifty years ago, France experienced and communicated progressively to the rest of the civilized world the most profound transformation which it had known since the Christian evangelization. How many centuries were required for Europe, transformed in its essential principles by the Christian revolution, to find again a consistency and a beginning of stability? Should it cause astonishment that it required some decades for France? The results of great revolutionary changes are never definitively acquired at a single stroke. Equilibrium is reestablished only little by little: it is thus that nature, after the coup, imposes on revolutions the periods of time which a regular evolution would have required. To draw specifically new characters from them, societies need the revolutionary change but, after all, it does not make them save time. Thus are quite naturally explained the alternate upheavals which, since the French Revolution, have shaken the political order with us. They do not indicate the damages of an evil virus introduced by the democratic revolution into the nation's body, but, on the contrary, the disturbances of growth which the revived body must overcome before attaining its full and stable virility. And if, since the 1914-18 war, these disturbances have again taken on an acute form, the

cause

cause must not be sought in the peculiarities of institutions, since the same phenomenon can be observed in all Europe, and even throughout the world. The explanation is furnished by the war itself, by the entirely new problems which it left behind it in the territorial order, in the economic, financial and monetary order, in the social order. These problems were not, perhaps, new in kind, but they were in volume and they had received only partial, sketchy, obviously provisional solutions, when the new war broke out.

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Obvious as these generalities are to my eyes, I would not, however, want them to seem to evade the core of the discussion. It is no difficulty for me to agree that the governmental régime of France suffered from a surplus of internal weaknesses, that it carried within itself organic elements of instability, discontinuity, ineffectiveness. I shall even agree, if you insist, though the fact seems to me highly disputable, that these weaknesses were aggravated over the twenty-odd years between the two wars. Useless to repeat the clinical description which one finds everywhere today and the lines or colors of which are, moreover, darkened or lightened at will: the idle din of speeches, the slowness of procedures, successive infringements of the Legislative on the Executive and reciprocal usurpations of the Executive on the Legislative, the battles of clans and rivalries of individuals, precariousness and weakness of ministries without established position and term of office, lacking in imagination and boldness, in a word, quite without effectiveness. The engine ran badly, its output was low in proportion to the fuel consumed, the fly-wheel did not turn. I myself sketched the picture almost twenty-five years ago, at the time of my first contacts with the cabinets and the assemblies. But the only legitimate consequence is what I then formulated, that is, that the governmental system of France, i.e., the representative or parliamentary régime as practiced there, must undergo thorough correction and, if it is supposed that it is not susceptible of satisfactory correction, as is claimed, the only conclusion which one is entitled to add is that the

parliamentary

parliamentary or representative régime does not constitute the democratic form of government which is accurately adapted to French society and that, accordingly, a search must be made for the forms which suit it better. But the right that does not exist, is the right to press the consequence and to extend judgment to the essential principles of democracy: sovereignty of the people, government of the nation by itself, control by the nation of the executive authorities, recognition and guarantee of civic rights and of the personal rights of the individual. For what must be the clearest conviction, never to be lost sight of, is that parliamentarianism is not the sole, exclusive and necessary form of democracy. That is one of the essential points of the discussion: democracy and parliamentarianism are by no means equivalent and interchangeable terms. In no country in Europe, to my knowledge, are the historical origins of parliamentarianism connected with a democratic movement or a claim; its ascendance is everywhere aristocratic or oligarchic; it took on democratic character and value only in proportion as two ideas of a quite distinct order were incorporated in it - the responsibility of ministers to elected assemblies, the universality of suffrage. Thus parliamentarianism is not essentially democracy. On the other hand, democracy is not necessarily parliamentarianism, since a very large and a very small democratic Republic, the United States and the Helvetic Confederation, have since their foundation practiced régimes which are not parliamentarianism, the sovereignty of the people not having been embodied therein and, if I may so term it, absorbed by parliamentary assemblies. I note in passing that the American and Swiss constitutions are on a federative basis, that is, they include in a very great degree administrative decentralization and, in particular, deconcentration of powers. They tend to, and they have, in one very large and one very small country, achieved the maintenance in activity of local centers of political life. The excess of centralization and concentration of which everyone complains periodically are thus in no way one of the specific weaknesses of democracy, and we "provincialists" might usefully remember that if the Revolution had vigorously to uphold, against foreign war and civil war, the principle of national unity - as did Lincoln and his friends

during

during the War of the Secession - administrative centralization is the deliberate and tenacious work of the Monarchy of Divine Right.

Thus, even while considering the critics who have raged against parliamentarianism - be these the most exaggerated and the most grossly interested - while even agreeing that these weaknesses of operation are irremediable and cannot be corrected by any work of repairing or recasting, I can more firmly repeat that the one logical and solid position to which we are lead would be that of trying to find out whether a different form of democratic government would not be better adapted to the characteristics of French society and, unquestionably, in such search, one would find the Swiss and American examples useful. I know quite well that during the entire course of the 19th century, political theorists and practitioners, from Royer-Collard and Guizot to Gambetta and Jaurès, were little in agreement in considering the representative régime as the most perfect type of "free governments". For a historian like Guizot, the parliamentary régime embodied the primacy of the middle classes, it is even conceived as the term and the end of civilization which, through the long course of modern history, felt the attraction of that final cause. But it is perfectly legitimate to deny this almost universal opinion, inspired, moreover, by the continuous progress of parliamentarianism in England, and, for my part, I will agree without a pang that the same success has not been obtained in France, provided that, in return, it is granted me that the study of another democratic type is the true lesson coming out of the failure. It is accordingly in this sense, and in this sense only, that the idea of a constitutional change should be welcomed. It goes without saying, moreover, that it is for the country alone to decide on the matter, and that it must decide thereon freely, that is, through an entirely free method of consultation, its consent being won by the elimination of any moral or material obstacle, its decision being enlightened by open and equal discussion. Let us apply ourselves from now on to convincing it, yes - and again on the condition that franchise and equality of speech be also allowed the

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contrary theses - but no one can seek to force it. Above all, no one can seek to replace it, for it did not resign the power which it alone legitimately possesses, and which it has handed to no one.

If it is desired to throw some light upon this controversy, the first care should be to find out why the confidence and hope of the 19th century were so seriously disappointed, for what determining reason the representative régime, which succeeded and progressed in England, failed in France and, in particular, failed under the Third Republic. An historical experience, sufficiently widespread today for it to be possible to discern its laws, establishes with evidence the fact that the correct functioning of any representative or parliamentary régime necessarily implies the existence of political parties. If parliamentarism has succeeded in England and failed in France, it is essentially because an old and strong party organization exists in England and - except for rare exceptions which confirm the rule - it has never been possible to create such in France for a century and a half. It is easy to satirize or indict parties, particularly if one takes the point of view of totalitarian dictatorships for which the very name is a flagrant contradiction. But it is no less certain that the precariousness of ministerial terms, the slackness or vacillations of governmental action, the slowness or disorder of the debates, in short, the stops and starts of the parliamentary machine in France proceed more than anything from the absence of sufficiently homogeneous and disciplined parties. It was thus under the Restoration, under Louis-Philippe, under the Moral Order as it has been for twenty years. Not around Thiers, or around Gambetta, or around Clémenceau was it possible to set up solid, disciplined and lasting governmental parties. The efforts obstinately employed since the beginning of the present century to extract a real political party from the radical "state of mind" resulted in nothing but mere appearances. Is there any need of recalling its history since the war of 1914-18, its divisions, its variations, the public rivalries of its leaders, its permanent inability to maintain real unity of direction and action? The attempt made after the elections in November 1919 to found a great conservative party failed even more rudely since, at the

end

end of one legislative term, not even a trace thereof remained. Mr. T. Tardieu, ten years later, tried to renew it and had to give up almost immediately. Just before the war there was not a single moderate party. The disparate elements of the Center and the Right were incapable of uniting on anything except on voting systematic opposition. Who was the chief - Mr. Paul Reynaud, Mr. Flandin, Mr. Laval, Mr. M. Marin? Their political or personal divergences were still sharper, more crying than those of the radical leaders! Let us not search further for the determining and even adequate reason for the inefficacy of the parliamentary system in our country. Furthermore, it is this congenital impotence to found regular and serious parties which also explains the antipathetic and often offensive aspect of parliamentary battles in France, the persistence of personal competition, the impatient and often unfair harshness in the pursuit of power. Political struggle is not a sport; nevertheless, like all other forms of struggle, it becomes degraded, it becomes repulsive for the spectators if it is not held to a certain number of rules and if these rules do not impose a minimum of correct behavior and decency. Now it is obvious that wrong or unfair behavior in the game cannot be prevented except by the action of parties which are stable and, thus, even concerned with practicing in the opposition respect for the code of usages by which they would benefit in the government. Let this be well pondered, and consideration given just as clearly to the fact that it is the lack of organization of the parties which puts the elected in France at the disposal of the elector and that it is the same cause, again, rather than the certain weakness of electoral legislation, which had reduced the elected to the rôle of representative or manager of local interests.

But do we touch here on a peculiarity of the French temperament or a peculiar characteristic of the present-day French bourgeoisie? What yesterday was opposed to the formation of parties worthy of the name is the intolerance of discipline, the penchant for railing, scoffing, disparaging criticism, the lack of faith in the idea which one claims to serve, the lack of confidence, gratitude and almost of regard for the leader whom one pretends to follow. There was hesitation about recognizing a leader, even and particularly when he takes the lead; his authority

is not thoroughly accepted; to remain faithful to him is unknown. The average parliamentarian was rarely a modest parliamentarian; it was not easy for him to remain "in the ranks", in his place; he was impatient to play a part. The influence of the milieu developed rapidly in him, like an hereditary disease, that is, I will not say individualism, but personism, which means a mixture in variable proportions of vanity, distrust and ambition. It is permissible to consider these eccentricities as inherent in the French temperament, in the sense that a larger or smaller trace of them is found in all ages of our national history. However, any honest observer will be obliged to agree that the working parties and the proletarian organizations of our country had a feeling for discipline which, except among the communists, was not a repression of the person, but subordination and voluntary offering to the collective good, to a conviction, to a cause; that they knew how to obey a rule and a leader; that they were proud, rather than envious of superiorities of talent, culture or character; that throughout the vicissitudes of parliamentary life, they habitually gave a spectacle of coherence at least equal to that of the Anglo-Saxon parties. In speaking thus, I am raising a whole swarm of difficulties which I recognize and which I shall not evade. But I have the right to submit that if, by hypothesis, parties analogous to the Socialist Party in structure and mode of operation had been erected on all the other political and social positions - radicalism, pro-capitalist liberalism, Christian democracy, conservatism with retrograde tendencies - parliamentary government would have been possible in France as it was in England and the ideal of the theorists of the 19th century would have become a reality.

The more completely to make my thought understood, I shall present it under a different aspect. With respect to the working-class parties, the risk of disintegration lies particularly in stagnation, in marking time, in banality; it is through movement, a forward march, creation, that they have most surely held to a compact and ordered group. For the bourgeoisie, the rule is quite the contrary. The parties or the

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embryo parties which they have been able to form fall apart through movement, innovation, and can maintain a chance grouping only in resistance. Since the parliamentary system has been in operation in France, I have seen scarcely three examples of governments whose length of office was founded on homogeneous majorities giving the appearance of solid parties: Villèle with the ultra-royalists under the Restoration, Guizot with the ultra-conservatives under Louis-Philippe, Jules Ferry with the "opportunists" under the Third Republic. In these three cases the permanence of the governments and the majorities was assured much less by the exceptional qualities of the leader - intelligence, experience, moral prestige or strength of character - than by the exceptional character of the situations. In the three cases, the bourgeoisie in power - for Villèle and his friends were property-owners rather than aristocrats - were disturbed by a rising of hostile forces; the disciplined stiffening was effected through fear and maintained by fear. It is with the same feelings that the bourgeoisie, eyes closed, abandoned themselves to the Second Empire by giving it a general mandate for administration and defense. In any one of the situations which I envisage, the bond is not formed by a positive or progressive program, the term is not combined with a faculty of evolution and creation; conservation and resistance are the only words of order around which the French bourgeoisie will assemble. The principle of union, the law of parties, is no more than a purely negative notion of Order, conceived as the means of containing of destroying whatever threatens private and public privileges; the community of fear is the only agent of discipline. The alternative which is thus raised for the political parties of the French bourgeoisie is either to divide or fall apart when, by chance they risk an attempt at movement, or else to confine themselves to resistance, that is, to inertia, in the midst of a society which evolves with frightening rapidity and a political universe which is being transformed at the same rate. The time quickly comes when inert resistance yields to pressure from within and without and the edifice which was thought to be unshakeable collapses amid crashes and shocks of an almost revolutionary character, though it is true that these episodes are, in the end, neither lasting nor glorious. The history of the conservative governments in France over twenty years, that is, the governments of the

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"national bloc" under Poincaré and Doumergue, under Messrs. Millerand, Tardieu and Laval, do not offer very different characteristics.

In our political jargon, which follows fairly vulgar modes, an expression is very much in fashion today. It is facility. By this term it is thought to vilify the reforming work of democracy. But what is facility, if not the tendency to palliate the difficulties of government by precarious expedients requiring little effort, costing little in sacrifice, and to evade thorough-going measures, bold solutions, great concessions, which always require firmness of view, that is, of imagination; then spirit, that is, audacity; courage, that is a certain taste for danger. Taking everything into account, this tendency is a form of bourgeois conservatism; it means today what was called resistance in Guizot's time, opportunism in Ferry's day. A political formation which recoils from the risks of action must also, for the same reasons, recoil from the employment of youth. A timorous, pusillanimous policy, it has faith only in experience and experience has almost always something senile about it. The aristocratic régimes gave themselves to great undertakings and allowed great actions from youth and English democracy has been able to preserve a part of that heritage; popular revolutions have always caused an immense reserve of young strength to rise and pass into action; popular organizations are never afraid of young leaders. On the contrary, bourgeois prudence distrusts the temerity of youth in public life as in private life; it does not want it to blow off its steam in power; with very rare exceptions, it enforces the slowness of hierarchical advancements, it maintains the regular course of ages and honors. There is a study by Balzac, very little read, known only by the strangeness of its title, which the great visionary wrote a few years before the Revolution of July 1830: he foresaw the coming end of the bourgeois monarchy and he attributed it in advance to the suspicious discarding of that youth which, however, had cleared the way for it and made its place. The Third Republic did not give much more credit to young forces and did not find itself much better for it. But the same effects proceed always from the same causes. Everything happened in France more than a century ago, as if the bourgeoisie, as a political body, had little by

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little expended its living sap and its creative virtue. It possessed this sap and this virtue; in the great days of '89, it drew on them, it nourished the new France with them, but it seems that it exhausted them in the revolutionary crisis, then in its struggle against the restored monarchy; since then one finds only intermittent traces, and, finally, nothing. That determines its destiny. Any directing class which cannot maintain its cohesion except on the condition of not changing, which is not capable either of adapting itself to the course of events or of employing the fresh strength of rising generations, is condemned to disappear from history.

We have already recorded a firm conclusion, that is, that the attacks made against our representative system are not valid against the general principles of democracy. We have the right to add this here: the proofs furnished against French parliamentarianism only mean that the French bourgeoisie has lost the character of a directing class. This conclusion would be corroborated if, following the example of Renan, Taine and their friends, we should now push our investigation beyond political phenomena properly so-called to reach the moral condition of society. Certainly the Third Republic, during the period between the two wars, is very far from offering the same picture as the end of the Second Empire or certain periods of the Ancien Régime. There is not the established profligacy, the dissipation, the fever of speculation and monopolization. Something similar was seen arising for two or three years immediately following the victory in 1918; but it was scarcely more than an animal reaction: a people nerve-racked for long months by constraint and suffering relaxed its nerves as best it could, and everyone in his own way. Then, unquestionably, there was something unbridled, a fever of spending, enjoyment and activity, an intolerance of any rule, a need for novelty going so far as aberration, a need of liberty going as far as depravity; what best characterizes this time is, perhaps, the collective craze for dancing. But this time did not last; as soon as nerves were calmed, life resumed its normal gait. Furthermore, the illusion of prosperity which the victory had bequeathed the country quickly was dispelled; repeated and increasingly severe depressions one by one swept away the new, risky enterprises, affected the oldest and soundest,

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set before each home, in more and more serious terms, the problem of daily life. To present the between-wars period as a time of easy enjoyment, when actually it was most often, and for most French people, a time of heavy trial, a travesty amounting to mockery must be made of history. No less partiality is shown when this period of twenty-odd years is denounced as an example of public corruption. On the whole, the Third Republic, like the second and the first, was an honest régime. The life of public men, even their private life, was watched over by a strict and suspicious public opinion. Republican parliamentarians were, in the very great majority, upright men, or at least formed a collectivity of upright habits. The "scandals", even though loudly exploited for party interests, were neither frequent nor extended and, as soon as revealed, they occasioned real moral revolts like that which, on February 6, 1934, went so far as to be transformed into an insurrection.

If, however, we should seek the origin of these scandals, we would find them in the fact that, by the most miscellaneous processes, private interests had obtained for themselves regular representatives in the parliamentary world and if we should look over the series of scandals of the same type in the last century, we would find that this "collusion" of politics and business is one of the characteristic signs of bourgeois capitalism. The corps of officials had been affected by the corruption more deeply than the political world: long reputed, and most justly, for the irreproachable and almost aggressive severity of its professional virtues, it is during the between-wars period that the contamination of business conquered it. But let us recall that, unlike Austria, Germany, England, where the average and higher ranks of public duties were in great part aristocratic, they were and are exclusively bourgeois in France. One cannot without shame think of the picture of the great press in France during the last twenty years and, except in bad faith, one could not fail to agree that its almost general venality, shown simultaneously by a moral decay and a technical deterioration, was not a center of infection for the whole country; but the great press depended solely on circles of big business, that is, it was bourgeois. As to the state of culture, scientific work, education, toward which the Renans and Taines had, after 1871, directed their principal critical effort, it was satisfactory in two extreme sectors: higher learning and research, on the one

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hand, primary instruction on the other, and the Third Republic had erected in these two fields a work which defies its detractors; it was deplorable with respect to the central sector, that is, secondary instruction, to which may be added the studies improperly termed superior, such as law and medicine, in so far as they are limited to professional preparation. Not only has no progress been shown, but the decline has been sharp; secondary instruction in particular, though it was the object of special attention by the public, although the student body in both sexes was constantly increased, from year to year turned out poorer products. Now the lycée and the college in France are bourgeois institutions; medicine, the bar, ministerial offices are almost exclusively bourgeois professions. What in the last century was called the enlightened bourgeoisie has disappeared; we have before our eyes only an ignorant bourgeoisie. It no longer furnished the public with works demanding an acquired sum of knowledge to understand. Reviews which, like those of the last century, would lift popularization to a slightly elevated level, would no longer find readers: we see what type of magazines have taken their place. Wherever one looks, a clinical observation always ends with the same result. In whatever touches the bourgeoisie, in all its own fields of bourgeois life and power, it reveals change, age, decay. If today we have the impression in which all the others are summed up, that of a general enfeeblement of French society, the deep-seated reason is truly that society had a bourgeois frame and that the frame has given way.

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For, despite all appearances to the contrary, it really is the middle class which has been governing France for a century and a half. The exceptions which the between-wars period seems to present are purely illusory. The grouping of forces rather than of parties, known under the name of the Popular Front, was only a defensive coalition, spontaneously formed after February 6, 1934, by a sort of instinct for self-preservation, for the defense of democratic principles. The Socialist Party was called to govern, but it knew perfectly well that it could exercise power only within the framework of bourgeois society, and it is for that very reason that it had avoided

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that as long as the circumstances permitted. Even when the Chamber elected seemed to belong to a popular majority, the bourgeoisie retained means of resistance which yielded only temporarily to fear, and regained their efficacy as soon as fear was overcome. It had at its disposal local assemblies, a machine of office-holders, newspapers, finance, business circles, and, in particular, the Senate, given such attributes as a Second House in no country and at no time had the like, and which the framers of the Constitution of 1875 had purposely inserted into the republican system as an impregnable rampart of Conservatism. In fact, whenever the will of the country, manifested by universal suffrage, has compelled the constitution of an administration with a popular tendency and actively reforming, the controlling bourgeoisie has not been slow in eliminating it and rejecting it as a foreign body. The French bourgeoisie held on to power: it was not willing to give it up or to share it. It kept it in entirety. On the eve of the war of 1939, it was still at the wheel of the national machine. But it was no longer capable of steering it.

I am not drawing up here a doctrinal charge, in the name of one class, against another class. The dual movement which led to this inadaptability, this inadequacy between French society and the controlling class was perhaps not marked by the inevitable character of an unavoidable occurrence. I admit willingly that other regions of the globe and even other countries in Europe do not show the same picture. But such is indeed the truth, the French reality, and it is enough to be convinced of this to look around one or to study very recent history with glances free from prejudice. Is it not evident that for ten years the French bourgeoisie has not been able to find within itself any reserve of energy, any resource of imagination, any capacity for renewal and restoration to overcome the economic atrophy, that it could not do anything, thereby renouncing all its principles, but ask the aid of the government as a suppliant; that wherever it was without help, it let its arms fall in despair, without even attempting to struggle? Is it not evident that in all fields of productive activity, industry, agriculture, commerce, banking, it had fallen behind in its routine

traditions,

traditions, that it had not even been able to save for France, far outstripped with regard to mass production by more powerful nations, the old prestige of "quality"? Wherever initiative and inventiveness had put France in the lead, it had allowed itself to be overtaken and passed. It had allowed the condition of the workers to drop to a wretched level. It had not understood that a continuous change in the relationship between the employer and the employee were dictated to it not only by its own interests but by a vital need of the nation. In 1936, when it should have compensated at one stroke for all the delays accumulated by it, when great reforms became the sole means of avoiding a bloody revolution and when a "Popular Front" administration endeavored to have them accepted by it in concord, it accepted them only through fear, and it exercised its wits, ashamed of and bitter over its own fear, to revoke them by force or guile.

The menace of Hitler, coming ever closer and growing greater, compelled France to rearm at full speed. But some day it will be known in what a state of disorganization the military machine had been left by the purely bourgeois administrations that had succeeded each other since the beginning of 1934, and when it had to be renovated urgently, when an intense effort was required of French industry, that is, of the bosses, that is, of the bourgeoisie, it will also be known to what extent it proved itself incapable thereof. I know what accusations have been brought against the labor organizations, and I shall express myself with regard to them as freely as regarding all other subjects. But, admitting that there was unwillingness on the part of some of their leaders, it is only too true that the behavior of the bosses provided them, if not with reasons, at least with plausible excuses; it is only too true that, from lack of zeal or lack of energy, they did not succeed in reorganizing either production or labor along suitable lines. The carrying out of a program of rearmament, itself planned by the high officers of the General Staff with too little inventiveness and innovating boldness, revealed almost immediately the scantiness of the equipment, the insufficiency or the obsolescence of the tools, the scanty number of specialists whom trade instruction or well planned systems of apprenticeship could have furnished, in profusion in a country such as ours, and the government, called upon as it was during the crisis, had to pledge

billions

billions upon billions to have the buildings spring out of the earth and to have modern machinery imported from abroad. Everything had to be started anew, under the spur of time and necessity, and, in that supreme effort, the French employer showed himself a wretched collaborator. No boldness of view, no great plans, no spirit of enterprise, no sense of risk, no unselfishness; a sort of niggardly accounting, based on the immediate calculation of profit or loss, reducing industrial policy to market-stall calculations; differently from what took place from 1914 to 1918, an almost general mediocrity of the higher personnel among the owners or managers. This time we did not see a choice number of "captains of industry" stand forth, eminent for qualities of character as well as for technical gifts, among whom the taste for taking chances and the wish to succeed came before the desire for the nearest profit, and nothing perhaps allows one better to understand how rapidly the decrepitude of the leaders of the bourgeoisie had progressed between wars. One would try in vain to explain it or to excuse this degeneration by the harshness, more and more annoying, of the claims or even the intrusions of the laborers. The power of the employer was hardly less discussed and less combatted before the war of 1914. The development of the labor power was an inevitable fact with respect to which a decision had to be made. What is an employing class which is unable either to fight or to agree with the labor force, either to dominate it or give it its share, which can base its authority only on the aid of the law or the aid of the police? In our era there is no longer anything but one way for the employing class to maintain its authority; that is to exercise it with a superiority that makes itself felt; it is to establish around it life and prosperity, and that is just what the French employer class was no longer capable of.

Besides, let us consider from a little further back the positions taken within twenty years by the controlling bourgeoisie on the "crucial" problem of war and peace. The present French bourgeoisie is both pacifist and chauvinist; that is, it wants peace - I will not say with honor; one would no longer dare use that phrase, but with pride. It was unable to want peace when peace was possible; it was not able to accept war when war had become inevitable. The "Wilsonian dreams", the League of Nations, mutual aid, collective security, disarmament, European federation, found in it only a sceptical and

scornful

scornful reception, based both on the precepts of an old restricted wisdom and on the intoxication of the very recent victory. France was then mistress of organizing the peace, of dictating peace to Europe; the French bourgeoisie did not deign to do so. It found itself suddenly face to face with the danger which it had not been willing to foresee. In Germany, a military dictatorship had been reconstituted, more dangerous than the one which the Allies had just broken, because it no longer appealed to material force or intellectual method only, but to the savage instincts and fanaticisms of the human animal. Hitler had won power by rekindling a national desire for revenge; having become all powerful, he tended thenceforth toward world domination, and the independence of all Europe, that of France in particular, was in peril. A time came when the intrepid acceptance of war became the sole chance for barring his way, the only means of preserving the integrity and the independence of the country. The bourgeoisie, which had not been able to accept a great hope, could not fulfill its great duty. When facing the one or the other, virility of views and will power were wanting in it. I should be right in contrasting with its conduct that of men who are now defamed and who differed also, but in the opposite direction, who held to peace with all their faith as long as a chance to organize it was left to Europe, but who, on the other hand, as soon as Hitler plainly displayed his designs for conquest and mastery, strove to bring into the free soul of France a current of vital energy.

It can still be understood that, before novel concepts such as those of Wilson and Briand, before prospects such as that of an international democracy, bourgeois prudence should have hesitated. But how can it be conceived that the nation was not unanimous in the face of danger, in the resolve to face it, in consent to the sacrifices which its own defense demanded? Why did not the national unity which came about in England and united in the same ardor all the elements of society burst forth spontaneously in France just after the Anschluss, just after the taking of Prague, just before and just after Munich? It was for the middle class, as the controlling class, to take this movement in hand and lead it; not only did it not lead it, but one can declare that it placed obstacles in its way.

Gross

Gross attachment to what it considered its interests as a possessing class, a need both bitter and fearful of preserving its privileges and its property, had stifled patriotic feeling within it. It did not want war in any case, and it was not afraid of Hitler, because all its capacity for fear had been monopolized by the Popular Front, particularly by communism. With respect to its privileges and its possessions, Nazism appeared to it a danger less to be dreaded than communism; perhaps it even cherished the secret hope that Hitler's strength would come to withhold labor rebellions for a long time. Its egotism as a possessor class thus caused it to turn in all directions in search of an understanding with Hitler, at any price. Do you know the disagreeable but truly striking phrase of the editor of a great purely bourgeois newspaper during the Munich crisis? One of his reporters told him that at the railroad stations in Paris the reservists, called out by precaution, were entraining without a van show of enthusiasm but with serious resoluteness, and he cried out, pounding the table hard with his fist: "Ah, how clear it is that those fellows have nothing to lose!" That is how the French bourgeoisie allowed a people to be assailed by war whom it had not caused to feel either its causes or its meaning; thus it is that it carried on warfare without yet having frankly accepted it, almost without believing in it. History will measure its part in the military defeat, but at present we can blame the want of will on its part if, from the first shock, military defeat was transformed into national disaster.

Undoubtedly we now see appearing strongly the deep reason for the distress which seized almost the entire nation during those accursed days. The bourgeoisie had exercised sovereignty in the name of the nation; the parliamentary regime of 1875 had actually delegated sovereignty to it. But the bourgeoisie had just broken down; a frightful drama had just shown up its decadence and its loss of power; it had shown itself not only incapable, but unworthy of power; its incapacity and its unworthiness appeared not only as the deepest cause, but as the justification for the disaster. By a last fault, less pardonable than all the others, it had considered its own ruin as the general ruin; it had proclaimed and it had convinced perturbed public opinion that as soon as it had foundered, nothing more would remain standing. Bazaine,

accused

accused of having surrendered at Metz, cried out before the War Council: "What could I do? There was nothing else left", and the Chairman, the Duke of Aumale, replied: "France was left". The controlling bourgeoisie had forgotten that France was left, and France herself, swept away on this wind of panic and despair, forgot that she was left. She saw a sort of gaping abyss open under her feet and she was seized by all the alarms of dizziness. We were present at that scene: a people whose body and soul were in pain, under which everyone was fleeing, which did not know any longer to what firm branch to cling during its fall. In 1870, the Republic had emerged, all ready, fully armed, from the ruins of the empire, and it had at once revived France by the recall of the great revolutionary passion: the sacred love of country and liberty. But the bourgeoisie, crumbling, had stifled in its dust this flame always ready to be rekindled; and, except for a few factions without consistence, concealed behind some big name, nothing presented itself to fill the void that was opened. This impression of the suddenly opened abyss, of nothingness, insupportable by peoples as by individuals, still remains, one year after the armistice, the dominant element in the distress of France. Many things and many men have fallen, much property has been lost, many private lives have been overwhelmed by anguish and misery. But it was ever thus in all the vicissitudes of history, and a people is not struck down by the losses suffered when it knows that it can make them good. Today France knows that she has lost - people believe that she has lost - all the directing elements necessary for collective life, and she does not see how she can make good the loss. An immense estate has been opened, to which she does not see any heirs. Such has been, since the armistice, the domestic drama of France, interpolated, if I may say so, in the universal drama. For if France is vainly asking herself what she will be tomorrow, she is wondering still more anxiously what Europe will be, and what she will be in Europe. She does not know what her frontiers will be; she does not know what her condition will be; she does not even know whether she will survive as an independent nation.

This capital phenomenon, that is, the disappearance of the bourgeoisie, taken as a directing class, has not penetrated in its full reality and its full effects. The

enterprise

enterprise designated by the name of the "New Regime" or "National Revolution" amounts, in fact, if we consider it impartially, to a supreme effort to revive or resuscitate the corpse by a sufficient transfusion of "young blood". That young blood would be borrowed, of course, from the regime conquering the French regime, the Nazi ideology considered as a "world donor". But is Nazi blood assimilable by the bourgeois body? It is true that the totalitarian dictators have borrowed part of their directing personnel from the bourgeoisie; if we go back to the origins, their officials are in the majority bourgeois rather than proletarian, although these are bourgeois elements which the succession of economic depressions had "declassed" and "proletarianized". It is likewise true that, by an apparent contradiction, the controlling bourgeoisie, the political expression of modern capitalism, has almost always contracted an alliance with those "national socialisms" which presented themselves, however, as destroyers of capitalistic doctrines. In Italy, that is what invented and created Fascism before installing it in power; in France it applauds or feigns to applaud the "national revolution". When one speaks to it of a régime without classes, the elimination of the wage-earner or the proletarian, a sort of social and professional unification under a collective authority, it applauds vehemently, for it well knows by what acts these "socialistic" formulas will be represented at once, that is, by the destruction of the labor organizations and institutions, by the prohibition of labor unions or the placing of them under guardianship, by the abolition of all the rights, of all the laws, of all the immunities, of all the customs from which the workers drew their weapons in their century-long struggle against capital. What difference does it make to the bourgeoisie that the "National Socialists" or the "national revolutions" declare against capital, but without doing it any substantial harm, provided that they crush the only adversary of which it is afraid? Relieved of labor socialism by Nazism and its various substitutes, it is counting on the movement of history eliminating Nazism in its turn. Then it would again find itself alone, all powerful, rebaptized in an invigorating contact; it would recover, with its economic privilege left intact, the political power of which it might be deprived for the time being.

But will the future justify this egotistical and

naive

naive calculation? No careful observer can believe so. The "National Socialism" and the "national revolutions" can practice with the bourgeoisie only a temporary connivance. It is vain for them to preserve temporarily in substance the social structure of which they are the expression; they are nonetheless obliged to proclaim themselves anti-capitalistic, that is, anti-bourgeois. Political allies of the bourgeoisie, they boldly borrow the phraseology of their "class" enemies; the essential themes of socialist polemics, if not of socialist doctrine, are brought into their set-up. The common artifices by which they endeavor to isolate these accusations to limited objectives, such as the Anglo-Saxon plutocracy, the Jews or Free Masonry, do not make any essential change; if capitalism is not aimed at, it is certainly hit. It is therefore senseless to imagine that the totalitarian governments, when the inevitable movement of history has removed the last vestiges, could leave after them a refreshed and reinvigorated bourgeoisie. No, the pact made with the Nazi demon will not have rejuvenated it like Doctor Faust; it will emerge from the diabolic pact even more discredited than today, more debilitated, more suspected.

Besides, I have argued up to the present by appearing to concede that Nazi blood really was young blood, that the Nazi principle really was a life principle. But we know well that this postulate is only a bold imposture against which reason revolts and cries out. Nazism does not restore its youth to mankind; it takes back to its savage childhood. Its more or less sincere apologists reapeat to us that it has "made men". The Napoleonic Empire too had made men; Bolshevism, before our eyes, has made men. All fanaticisms and all idolatries, in all countries and in all epochs, have made men. But is mankind condemned to return toward barbarism to escape decrepitude? Is there no other power in it than brutality, no other energy than primitive ferocity? Then who would accept this impious choice of it? The problem of civilization, as it has come up ever since mankind has become conscious of itself, is precisely to substitute for animal energies disciplined, harmonized, spiritualized forces, to transform savage fanaticisms and idolatries into certainties based on reason, convictions based on the requirements of the personal conscience. Human progress consists in preserving and even developing vital energy, but

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by applying it to purposes which provide a more and more complete satisfaction of the "imperatives" of reason and the personal conscience and consequently to those collective ideals which we call liberty, fraternity, and justice. Whether people talk about Christian civilization, Greco-Latin humanism or "historic materialism", they designate nothing more than this evolution which is the very law of mankind. Nazism itself ventures to endeavor to turn back this current; it throws out all the results acquired from human progress; it denies and flouts all the ideal principles which have been the inspiring element. It is not a water of youth, but a mortal poison; it can kill living bodies, but not resuscitate corpses.

The French bourgeoisie is today acclaiming publicitarian formulas which, if taken literally, would mean the death sentence of capitalism. Ah, if its calculated recovery could be a generous gift; if it were truly resolved to sacrifice, in the hope of a national rejuvenation, the privileges included in the system of capitalistic property; if, in return for its sacrifice, it would stipulate the maintenance and development of the principles of political, civic and personal liberty which have been its motto and its reason for existing, since 1789! Then, indeed, it would be retempered and revived, not by an injection of Nazi blood, but in a bath of confidence, concord, French human kindness! It would feel itself seized and exalted by a current of creative enthusiasm such as the French Revolution knew on the night of August 4th or the day of Federation. The working people would not miss the appeal: they would receive both justice and liberty; they would have both socialism and democracy; they would see the accomplishment of the "glorious and tested" formula, which was that of the "Social Democrats", that of Marx, and at bottom that of Jaurès. With Social Democracy finally accomplished, or on the way to being accomplished, it would be ready, as it always has been, to give national unity as a framework, certain besides that the common needs of labor and production, as well as the supreme interests of peace, would join together in an international order, by a closer and closer tie, all the peoples jointly. That is a fine dream; it would depend only on the controlling bourgeoisie to make it a reality. If there is still any power of life left in it, let it use this to give the example of

sacrifice

sacrifice, and then it will be reborn from its ashes, like the bird in the story. But it will not do that: it is even far less capable than the aristocracy of '89 of abdicating from privileges which it has, however, ceased to consider legitimate. For it to sacrifice its immediate interests, it would have to have just that clearness of vision, that courage, that spirit of abnegation which it has lost; the disaster and the sufferings of the country would have had to accomplish already within the depths of its collective conscience this moral revolution of which the first symptoms are not perceptible.

A moral revolution: I use these words purposely; they designate the very focus of the evil from which the French bourgeoisie is dying before our eyes. The organ attacked in it without recourse, that from which the trouble has affected all the others little by little, is indeed the moral faculty. We might review its history more closely, indicating it by acts and texts during a century and a half, and all would converge toward the same conclusion. It is just there that the trouble lay; it is from thence that the internal contagion started. To be sure, the French bourgeoisie had great virtues. It was sober and upright, patient and prudent, modest and self-respecting, economical and reasonable. It was perfectly adapted to the conditions of the life of former times; within the narrow circles of the family, the business, urban or rural society, it had prospered, it had accumulated, it had become rich. But it was not made for the life of great intensified capitalism, for the phase of accumulation and overproduction of wealth. The system that suited it was the continued and economical progress of infant capitalism, home operations, a fortune constituted by modest profits, by saving, by time, the regular rounding out of the income, the enterprise or the land, the almost unnoticeable shifting of conditions. In that atmosphere, French bourgeoisie found its own medium of protection and development, but it was not made for repeated shocks, for the rapid ups and downs of the great economic crises. It has been attacked, corroded as if by too powerful acids, in the mixing of conditions and fortunes. Let us look around us: there are two parts which the French bourgeoisie cannot perform without undergoing a change: that of the newly rich person and that of the newly poor person. It has lost its ancient virtues, which the aspect of the times rendered obsolete

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and almost ridiculous. The rigid forms of its old probity have been effaced under the friction of "modern business". In the days of Birotteau, of Père Goriot, and even in the days of Mr. Poirier, each person found it natural that a bankrupt should blow his brains out. Honor lay in the commercial signature, but at least there was honor somewhere. Under the impact of the great capitalistic crises which have succeeded each other for a century at an almost regular rate but with ever increasing intensity, the French bourgeoisie has worn out that honor. It has lost the intimate feeling of its dignity. It has lost the energy, the creative vigor of the intelligence which to some extent honor, dignity, self-satisfaction always presuppose. It lost its public virtue by the deterioration of the private virtues.

Why has the French bourgeoisie shown this incapacity for acclimatization which has caused it to die away, while in other sectors of the bourgeois class, in the Anglo-Saxon countries for example, means were found without too much difficulty of adjusting the moral attitude to the progress of economic evolution? The contrast is due perhaps to the difference in national types, and without doubt also to the importance which certain religious elements have retained in the training and education of the Anglo-Saxon bourgeoisie. However, the fact exists, evident and eloquent. The decay of the French bourgeoisie became more and more plainly pronounced as the industrial transformation of production and the concentration of capital went on, in proportion as the new problems of a domestic or foreign nature were outlined, which this new phase of world economy would necessarily engender. After the downfall of the Empire, after the heroic awakening which the name of Gambetta will always incarnate, after the grave examination of conscience which I have personified by the names of Renan and Taine, but to which many other memories remain attached, after the laborious and serious efforts which ended in the adoption of the ballot and the placing in force of the Constitution of 1875, one could believe that the treatment was putting the patient on the road to recovery, and that the progress of the disease was, at least, checked. Ten years later, there was the Boulanger gang; fifteen years later, the Panama scandal; a relapse was inevitable. For the French bourgeoisie to have recovered its capacity for political direction, it would

have

have had to recover in the first place the only atmosphere propitious to its peculiar temperament, that is, for world economy to be turned backward more than a century. The totalitarian dictatorships themselves would fail in that undertaking, towards which the French "national revolution" does not seem precisely to be drawn by the internal logic of the system. But Nazism and Fascism have been able to efface temporarily the great spiritual principles which guided mankind for centuries; they will not succeed in annulling and causing to be forgotten the great scientific and technical discoveries which have renewed the material universe. They have been able to turn millions of men back to savage brutality, but they will not bring production and business back to the stage of the workshop, the market stall, the family field, the hand tool and family investment.

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Here I am taking the bourgeoisie only as a controlling class, as the political expression of modern capitalism. I shall not pretend not to know that within its bosom a number of individuals have, for more than two years, provided the most precious examples of civic spirit and patriotism. War and defeat, like all the great collective crises, have been a testing block for characters, and among the men who came out of this natural selection unscathed or made greater, there are some bourgeois of all shades whose services will be needed by the France of tomorrow. I do not even hesitate to acknowledge that certain groups belonging to the cultured circles of the old liberal Catholic bourgeoisie have formed the densest centers of national resistance. But those individuals and those groups would doubtless be the first to agree, in the sincerity of their consciences, that the class from which they spring is no longer in a condition to maintain its monopoly of property nor, consequently, to exercise its privilege of governing, and that its historic existence has therefore ceased. France is today at the close of a second revolution, which in reality has been going on for more than a century. The first one had transferred power to a rising class already mistress in large part of property. The second one excludes a fallen class which has not been able to adjust its acquired temperament either to the necessities of industrial production or the needs of democratic government.

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In former times people shouted: "the King is dead; long live the King", and the transmission of royal power took place automatically, without power having been vacated even for an instant, by right. Queen Bourgeoisie is dead in France, but France does not want anyone to be proclaimed in her stead. She is absolutely opposed to the totalitarian dictatorships, which moreover will be brought to nothing where they exist, for they will not survive the war, and mankind will extirpate this cancer which was beginning to gnaw it. To return to the old régime, that of before '89, that of before 1830, or even that of before 1848? A powerful monarchist party, having a majority in the National Assembly, standing on the traditions and fidelities still scarcely interrupted, failed in that undertaking directly after the defeat of 1871. Who could dream of reasonably renewing it, today when the monarchy is no longer anything but the persistent dream of a few theorists, since it not longer represents even a memory for anyone? British and Belgian experience has shown that monarchical sovereignty was not incompatible, in fact, with a real democracy. But in France, it ceased a century ago to incarnate national unity, and it could not be based either on a persisting aristocracy, a consistent bourgeoisie or a "loyal" people. If the monarchy were presented as a representative government with liberal tendencies it would do nothing but renew in all its weakness the parliamentary Republic. If it took the form of a counter-revolutionary restoration, it would be placed in violent opposition to the reality of things and the inevitable tendency of the times. France knows well that all these chimeras arise from a post that is entirely gone. On the other hand, she has never been mistaken as to the hazardous undertaking attempted under cover of disaster and characterized as a "national revolution". She feels in that a gross bargain between the principles of the old monarchy by divine right, which she rejects with all her might, and totalitarian disciplines which she rejects with still more repugnance; she recognizes in its daily hesitations or aberrations the congenital contradictions which infect it. But then who is the heir of the bourgeois republic; who will be its successor?

France feels herself facing an interregnum the length of which she cannot measure and the outcome of which she cannot foresee. There is still a sort of tragic

anxiety

anxiety in these long intervals, and today the yawning void opens before a country two-thirds of which is occupied by the enemy, who is engaged in a war in which she is no longer taking part, but which is being continued, and in which her destiny is one of the stakes! Even if France were free and assured of her material lot, she would feel as a burden upon her the weight connected with this unexpected break in sovereignty; why, in the unheard of situation in which events have now placed her, should she not find herself overwhelmed? To be sure, whenever in the history of a people power changes its nature there is produced what I formerly called, by a misunderstood phrase, a break in legal succession. Even though the succession of the new power is immediate, it is not installed at once with its legality entirely approved; the institutions of the power overthrown have fallen with it; the institutions of the new power can be elaborated only gradually, and the interval is necessarily filled by an interim of a more or less dictatorial character. This phenomenon is normal and does not cause any alarm: a nation which, like France, has known numerous political revolutions is accustomed to it. But at this time what is vacant is not legal power, it is power itself, it is sovereignty, and we cannot see by whom or when the vacancy will be filled.

There is indeed a designated heir of whom we can still say that he is always designated, since he is the natural sovereign, namely the people, which a Catholic publicist called in a recent pamphlet "the multitude". Why then do not the parties and the organizations which most authentically represent the masses of the people present it? Why do they not claim power, as happened on September 4, 1870, at the downfall of the Empire? Why has not French opinion turned and why is it not turning spontaneously toward them to call on them? The people is the sole legitimate successor as the only possible successor: there is left nothing but it, and all the slopes of history converge toward it. The almost unanimous aspiration of the country calls for the suppression of monopolies and privileges (that is to say justice), the substitution of natural and personal hierarchies for factional and hereditary hierarchies, (that is to say equality), the subordination of private interests to the public good (that is to say collective

organization

organization of production and the distribution of wealth), peace (that is to say international order). Socialism and trade unionism incarnated in advance this regenerating will. They are in natural correspondence with the sense of economic evolution, since they have issued from that evolution. They are the rising sap of the nation, and anyone who has lived in familiarity with them has felt an inexhaustible reserve of fresh strength quivering in their depths. They condense within themselves the benefit of this popular education which has not ceased to progress in France for more than half a century, while the bourgeois culture was retrograding. A "militant" socialist or trade unionist surprised one by his avidity for knowledge, by the maturity of his reasoning, by the seriousness of his judgment; the laboring or farm public of a popular gathering would follow the most delicate technical demonstration with an attention, a penetration, an enjoyment of which, for my part, I never grew weary. On that point, I am a chauvinist: the French people of the laboring class is undoubtedly the most intelligent of all peoples. The governmental inconstancy of the Third Republic had as its essential cause the disorder, the lack of discipline, the inability to keep in existence those dense and homogeneous parties on which a representative system of government must necessarily be based. But I have already recalled the fact that the people's parties did not participate in any way in this purely bourgeois incapacity. They appeared in compact blocs, practiced strictly unity of tactics and voting, and conformed in action to the programs publicly debated and defined. Perhaps even the reproach which they incurred would be to have fallen into the opposite extreme, that is, to have agreed to too many sacrifices for the rule of interior unity and unanimity, and for my part I consider that that reproach is in part well grounded. Discipline in a party is the normal state of affairs, and its unity must be strictly preserved against the egotistic defections inspired by interests, ambitions and temptations of all kinds. On the other hand, relaxation of rules or even the breaking of party ties must be fearlessly faced whenever extraordinary crises confer upon the problems raised by public life the value of cases for the individual conscience. The true criterion of morality, in party life as in the majority of the incidents of individual existence, is

unselfishness.

unselfishness. The breaking of party ties is immoral and reprehensible when it is stained to any extent whatever with what I shall call, in the broadest sense of the term, venality. It becomes respectable or even praiseworthy when it meets an imperative demand of the conscience when confronting a "crucial" problem. Besides, it is thanks to these effects of individual discrimination that the British parties, instead of remaining motionless in their programs and unchanging in their officers, have been able in practice to transform themselves and to renew themselves with the progress of the times.

But I leave this digression, to which I would not have indulged if it were not a testimony of sincerity on my part. Responding to the ideal and sentimental needs of the masses, breathing, if I may so speak, in harmony with the laws of economic development of the world, resting upon a strong structure and tried methods of propaganda, recruiting and organization, having, moreover, demonstrated their governing capacity by their participation in public life and by the management of their own interior democracy, Socialism and the trade union movement had all the abilities and all the rights required to seize the pending inheritance in the name of the people, the workers. However, the fact is; the nation has not extended its arms toward them. What I am saying? Sardonic rumors have been heard, spreading almost everywhere, frequently coming from men who have owed all the advantages of their careers to socialism: Socialism has disappeared! It has evaporated in the fire of events! Others recorded with poorly concealed satisfaction "its irremediable political and intellectual decay". As to trade unionism, it is perhaps not entirely dead! But it has been weakened to such an extent that the "national revolution" will absorb it at one stroke into its own corporative organizations! There is undoubtedly much infatuation and imprudence in these opinions. Socialism in a state of bankruptcy? In a state of decomposition? Immediately after the days of June '48! Just after the Commune, it was attacked far more severely: with mass military executions, followed by their train of pseudo-legal repression; people flattered themselves that they had extirpated it forever. In order not to seek references except in our own times, Socialism was much weaker and more fragile just after the Treaty of Versailles, the National Bloc elections, and

particularly

particularly the Communist split which had taken away its liveliest elements. Every time, however, in spite of the prophets of misfortune, we have seen it reborn from its ashes, stronger and more certain of its strength. How could it be otherwise? Socialism is an entirely humane concept, but one which feeds, if I may say so, on the necessity of things. As it was made by the mental synthesis of Marx and Jaurès, who was composing his dogma for some thirty years, it is at the point of intersection of all the forceful ideas of our time. What are the essential problems brought before our country and before all others? To conciliate the right of peoples with peace, the rights of man with order, to combine the collective organization of production and consumption with the development of personal liberties! These problems are those which in our times Socialism has been the first to define, or rather, those are the problems which have created Socialism. They are symbolized by that name of "Social Democracy" that the majority of its political organization chose and the real meaning of which is fully perceived today. Hence we can predict with certainty: it will be reborn once again. What difference does it make if once more the silence of oppression reduces it for the time being to an embryonic existence? The power of events and of ideas will act: its rebirth should not be long delayed and undoubtedly its time is already approaching. However, I acknowledge anew: the French people, the laboring people, have not invoked it in their distress. They have not even felt its presence in the tragic hours of the defeat and the Armistice. The people, which saw the bourgeoisie going to pieces before its eyes, which would have had only to move forward to seize the deserted place, observed that socialism, its natural organ, its normal tool for action, was wanting also. Why? Here we must force ourselves to make a very strict examination of conscience.

At the time at which the political armature of the bourgeoisie was weakened in the military disaster, one single and sole passion might have passed through the French people like an electric current, fused it, re-animating it in living unity: that was patriotic passion, the instinct for national self-preservation. A party could not carry the people after it or serve as an

instrument

instrument in the spontaneous movement of the people unless it embodied that passion. The Jacobins of the Committee of Public Safety had embodied the "sacred love of country" in 1793; Blanqui had embodied it during the siege of Paris; Jaurès, if living, would have embodied it during the war of 1914, and, in his blood-stained place, his teachers and his pupils, Guesde and Renaudel, Vaillant and Albert Thomas, had urged the working people "to the point of combat". It must be admitted that in the month of June 1940 Socialism did not embody it. Not, as its detractors insinuate, that it had "forgotten the nation" in its long propaganda; not that it bore the accumulated weight of its "anti-militaristic and internationalistic campaigns". It had always conceived international order as resting on the basis of free and independent nations. It had fought chauvinism, but remained ardently patriotic. It had worked with all its soul for the establishment of a just peace, equitable and stable, but it had never cultivated the cowardly forms of pacifism; it was ashamed of any base confusion between peace and the abasement of servitude, and it had never ceased to proclaim that it would be the first to rise to defend the soil of the country if attacked. It had mocked, sometimes with poor taste, the routine usages which long kept the sons of workers in barracks, without employment; it had justly denounced the hateful system, still less tolerable since every citizen has become a soldier, which makes of the army in time of peace the guardian of the bourgeois order, that is, the instrument of the class against the immense majority of the nation. But it had constantly applied itself, since the unforgettable efforts of Jaurès, to raising the organization of national defense to the level of scientific, technical and civic progress. The Socialist group in Parliament, out of ritual fidelity to an old symbol, continued to refuse the military appropriations of which it well knew that their fate did not depend on its vote, and in that its action was not free from some hypocrisy, but when summoned in 1936 to the control of the administration it had, first of all, proposed the extraordinary appropriations which were eventually to permit the substitutions of modern equipment for the obsolescent equipment of the war of '14. The first broad and coherent program that was undertaken, after the Hitler revolution, to place France in condition to resist aggression bore its signature. Besides, Jaurès, Guesde, and Vaillant had taken part in the same campaigns and the same balloting; they had even done so with more polemic bitterness, and

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that memory did not prevent, during the other war, patriotic contact with the masses of the people from being established without the least difficulty. What separated socialism from the people, at the time of the defeat, was therefore not its old doctrine and its propaganda of all times; no, it was something simpler and closer; it was the constrained and equivocal attitude that it maintained after Munich toward the problem of war. The working people had vainly awaited from it a clear and winning watchword; it had not been able to take a decided stand and position either on one side or the other. It had not said: "Rather enslavement to Hitler than war", but neither had it said, with revolutionary fire and faith: "Rather war, rather death, than enslavement to Hitler; if war is forced upon us, we shall be the first to throw ourselves into the furnace; we shall dedicate ourselves to the sacrifice for the liberty of the country and the liberation of the human race". It had kept silent, or rather it had allowed only ambiguous and balanced words, shameful in themselves, to be heard. In truth, it was split into two parts basically opposed, the relative strength of which varied with the circumstances, and it was that internal division which neutralized it, which condemned it to silence and impotence. The attacks and calumnies that had always broken before its unity had redoubled in virulence as soon as they found an echo within its breast. It had thus dragged on, for more than two years, a humiliated and suspected existence, so that finally its presence appears no longer to have been noted. To be sure, it would have been better for an open break to have separated the irreconcilable elements when facing a vital problem. The outcome would have given the proof; the masses of the people would at once have rallied round those who had seen clearly. I have already made confession of that, but the cult of unity was strongest.

I add with the same frankness that in the eyes of public opinion the Party was affected, or rather, compromised, by its very recent collaboration with communism. To be sure, it did not have to blush for having concluded, in the turbulence of the insurrection of February 6th and in view of the pressing peril to the Republic, that pact of "unity of action" that was to serve as a basis for the "Popular Front". A spontaneous and irresistible instinct

organization of

of the masses necessitated this rapprochement, which was to be, and was, the salvation of liberty. Today, when we have seen the undertaking, of which February 6th was only a first episode, developed to its full extent, under cover of the national disaster, we can hardly doubt that without the alliance of all the republican and democratic forces France would have been reduced as far back as five or six years ago to the condition of Franco Spain. What was there ill-omened or impious in the principle of this alliance? Would "collaboration" with other Frenchmen be prohibited? Neither could the Socialist Party equitably be blamed for having availed itself, according to popular opinion, of the Franco-Soviet Pact negotiated in 1935 by Messrs. Flandin and Laval, nor for having, during the interval between Munich and the war, supported the plan for a treaty of military assistance with the Soviets. Here again the proof is given: the close rapprochement of the Anglo-Saxon and the French democracies with Soviet Russia, that is, an international "Popular Front", would have been the saving of peace.

But Stalin himself had evaded that rapprochement; he treated with Hitler after all; it was the bargain made by him with Hitler that had permitted the invasion of Poland and had brought about the war. Public indignation was then rightly unchained; Stalin had betrayed peace, and the Communist Party, by remaining obstinately faithful to him, was betraying France. In the light of this tragic vicissitude, the repeated recantations of French Communism during the last few years were very naturally brought up. Until just before the pact of 1935, it had preached and practiced "revolutionary defeatism"; just following that it had become the most ardent champion of the independence and honor to the country. Up to the eve of the Germano-Soviet pact it had set the pitch and even the swing in the campaign against Nazism; immediately following it, it proclaimed its inalterable submission to Stalin, the ally of Hitler against France. These changes of front had been made at one stroke, all at once, without other conceivable explanation than the reversal of orders received from Moscow, which themselves were explained only by the successive shifts of Soviet policy. So it had become evident that the control of the French Communist Party did not belong to itself, but was imposed on it from outside. It blindly obeyed the orders dictated, not by an international organization,

organization, but by a power, a government which itself transformed them according to its national interests. Hence it was not an international party, but a foreign nationalist party. The distinction is of prime importance. Internationalism rests on the postulate that among all the nations which have reached the same period of economic evolution there are a number of undivided interests and common ideals. An internationalist labor party acts in the conviction that the interests of each country, if understood thoroughly enough and conceived under the long-term aspect, cannot be dissociated from the deep and permanent interests of the other countries of Europe and even of all mankind. It expects to serve the French cause by serving the international cause; it is national while being international, and because it is international. The communist party, on the contrary, appeared as a foreign nationalist party, since it rested on the postulate that the cause of the workers in all the other countries depends on the special interests of one single government, the Republic of the Soviets, not on its ideal and permanent interests, but on the changing modalities of its temporary and political interests.

Now, since August 1939 Stalin had decided that it was to the interest of the Soviet Republic to ally itself with Hitler, the enemy of France. It was therefore inevitable that, during the war and just after the defeat, the Communist submission to Stalin should appear like treason toward the country. It was inevitable that the abhorrence provoked by that betrayal should be transferred more or less confusedly to the Socialist Party, considered as the near relative of the Communist Party, as its introducer and guarantor in the "Popular front" coalition, then in the majority resulting from the elections of 1936. The confusion was to be established all the more easily, as a large section of public opinion has never made any very clear distinction between Socialism and Communism - although they are two absolutely separate forms of labor doctrine and action - and as the same expression of "Marxism" currently covers both in the vocabulary of their common detractors. In a situation all the elements of which were transformed, people could hardly remember with calmness that "unity of action" had

been.

been rigorously imposed by circumstances, and that the responsible authors were no other than the authors of the plot which had placed republican liberties in peril. Communists and Socialists were placed "in the same sack"; the ones were stigmatized; an attempt was made to strike the others by a sort of automatic elimination. Today, that is, fifteen months after the armistice, those disastrous errors appear to be cleared up; however, the problem which weighed so heavily during prewar years does not bear down on the future with a formidable weight. What place can and should be made for Communism in French political life? The question remains before us, and we must consider it all the more frankly since a new change has occurred in the Soviet position, and has been immediately echoed, like the preceding ones, by French Communism.

Stalin was attacked unexpectedly by Hitler . Stalin has become the ally of the Anglo-saxon democracies. Soviet Russia is fighting today for a stake which includes in the first place the liberation of the countries oppressed by Hitler's armies, and consequently of France. A Popular Front has been formed again among the peoples. In this conflict, Soviet Russia has stupefied world opinion and forced its admiration. The thinkers who imputed to bolshevism, as an unpardonable crime, the perversion and the degradation of the human individual have now been compelled, if they are honest, to revise their opinion. To be sure, bolshevism has destroyed, to the extent that they existed in Russia, the feeling for personal liberties, critical independence, and intellectual and moral scrupulousness, but it has preserved or even exalted courage and the spirit of self-sacrifice; it has created a faith. Like the French peasant people during the Terror, the Russian people is attached to the régime which it undergoes, because it has kept an abhorrence for the régime which bolshevism overthrew, and it considers as its enemies those who claim to free it. In France, idolatrous submission to Stalin coincides once more, as in 1935, just before Munich, with the tendencies of national patriotism, and this time is no longer manifested by vain words and suspicious exhortations. French Communists are risking their lives; they are in the forefront in repression as in resistance; it is from among them, as from among the Jews, that Hitler selects his hostages and his victims. Just after the victory, it will be recalled that the new national unity was in part cemented by their blood; what

can

can be done to exclude them from it? And yet the problem will not have been solved; we shall always find ourselves face to face with the unbearable anomaly represented by the insertion into French political life of a foreign nationalist party. For French Communism, despite its service record, to be tolerated as an assimilable element in the national organization, for it to resume its integrant place in public life, a radical change absolutely must have taken place either in the nature of the tie which unites it with Soviet Russia or in the natures of the relations which will unite Soviet Russia with the European community. French Communism will have to break away from Soviet Russia or Soviet Russia will have to give pledges toward Europe, perhaps both.

Without this change, France would necessarily again find herself a prey to the internal difficulties from which she has suffered, but is it being too optimistic to foresee this and discount it? Just as French Communism was strictly dependent on Russian bolshevism, there existed among us elements attached to German Nazism or Italian Fascism by an ideological bond almost equally close. Is it chimerical to hope that in the fire of war, common sufferings and final liberation all these wounds will be cauterized at the same time and that there will no longer remain in France anything but free Frenchmen? Is it not probable that, in order to gain ground against Hitler's aggression, Soviet Russia in turn will have to modify little by little the spirit of her domestic régime? As for myself, I am counting on it that after the disappearance of the of the totalitarian dictatorships, after the victory of the Anglo-Saxon democracies, a victory in which she will have participated heroically, but to which she will owe her own salvation, Russia will necessarily form an integral part of a European society or federation. In proportion as the charter of peaceful cooperation and emulation which will be the real treaty of peace is consolidated among the nations, in proportion as the theoretical and practical interests which are common to them are brought out, Soviet Russia will lose the quality of a power foreign to Europe, and French Communism will lose the nature of a sect foreign to the nation.

Equivocal dismay when faced with the problem of war, confusion with Communism, which is stained with treason: these two causes suffice to make it understood how

Socialism

Socialism has been cast down by a succession of events which logically should have carried it into the power which has fallen into escheat. But were there not still other reasons for Socialist abstention, and consequently for popular abstention? Undoubtedly, and the trouble has not yet been probed to the bottom. I have declared that the militant labor people and Socialism, which was their natural expression, had furnished a model of organic discipline, political maturity, propensity and aptitude for rational education. I attest this again. I reject and throw back the accusation partially expressed against both of having developed, side by side with the bourgeois corruption, a popular corruption of another order, of having grossly reduced progress in the conquest of material advantages, of having cultivated laziness and selfishness by unresting search for comfort - in a few words, and to repeat the most commonly believed phrase, of having weakened the sense of duty by the exclusive claiming of rights. People take pleasure in repeating, for example, that the 1936 social laws, by diminishing the weekly period of work and by raising the rate of pay, by introducing the idea and the practice of leisure, had produced a moral perversion of the laboring class. It would be wrong to forget that those laws, of which it is easy to speak ill, after things have occurred, formed the ransom from a civil war, but, at any rate, what perverts labor morality is not leisure, not a shorter working day or a higher wage; it is idleness and poverty. Leisure is not idleness; it is repose after work. The organization of leisure and the increase in purchasing power of wages enable the laboring family to maintain health by exercise and a good disposition by sports, to augment the time left for domestic occupations and affections; they will some day permit the mother to devote herself entirely to her home, that is, they strengthen at the same time all the moral factors of existence. People have made much fun of the two-Sunday week. It was perhaps not an elegant spectacle, that procession of young couples, families and children whose tandems, motorcycles, and small cars that covered the roads during the week-end, within the radius of the large cities, those camps and lunches on the grass at the edge of the woods - less elegant, to be sure, than the golf course at which the bosses met at the same hour, but it was a moral spectacle and also a comforting spectacle. It is thus that a race is restored and rejuvenated, for there is no joy in work without the joy of living. If the problem must be considered from

far

far back, will one venture to deny, even fortifying oneself in the capitalistic concept of society, that regular advancement in the condition of the laborer must necessarily correspond to the continuous advance of science or technical skill? Modern industry permits the creation, within a constantly diminishing time, of a constantly increasing quantity of products. In this collective enrichment can the wage earner be refused his proportionate part, and in what can this part consist, if not in the reduction of the standard working period and the augmentation of the standard rate of pay? That is his mite, and we could not deprive him of it without the most wrongful abuse of power. When the wage earner demands this, the cry is raised that he is deprived by "the gimme spirit". He would not demand this if we had not first thought of offering it to him. The bourgeoisie would indeed be wrong in being astonished and indignant at the "prevalence of the gimme spirit" among wage earners of all sorts. Demanding is what produced in them the first awakening of consciousness; they formed groups in the first place to make demands, to defend themselves against the brazen law which regulated their work and their pay, not by the state of collective enrichment, not from the cost of the necessities of life, but by the law of supply and demand, by the quotation of the human unit on the labor market. Do you know what the budget of a factory worker or a farm laborer is? Can you imagine how much the slightest reduction of an hourly wage is reflected in the life of each of the members of the family? They are accused of not having been sufficiently mindful of their obligations; but had we not begun by forgetting their rights? During a long series of centuries the workers have known, and we have known for them, only duties, imposed by the need for living, the coercing force of society, the persuasive force of religion. What they call their emancipation has consisted in the laborious conquest of their scorned rights, and this conquest has not been completed yet. There are no rights without duties, we say; undoubtedly, but neither are there any duties without rights. How can we be astonished that this synoptic solidarity, so long denied them, is not always present in their minds? Is it always so exactly observed by those who have never been deprived of their rights, and whose rights resemble privileges even today?

Everything

Everything that I have said there is true; everything that I advance is irrefutable - and yet, when I descend to the lowest depths of my being, some internal feeling, I might say almost a secret pain, warns me that I have just touched one of the deepest roots of the evil. From the standpoint of distributive equity, all my arguments, all my citations remain valid. We have no right to speak of popular perversion, alongside the bourgeois demoralization; we have no right to burden with this heavy charge the mass of workers, the corps of militant Socialists and trade union members, nor even their responsible leaders. Supposing that in such and such an area, at such and such a time, we succeed in bringing against them excessive demands or bitterness; they would be pardonable a hundred times. Let us consider that settled. But that is not the real problem; it amounts actually to knowing why, at the time at which the crumbling of the bourgeoisie created a vacancy in power, the laboring people, through their legitimate representatives, did not seize the open inheritance. Now from this standpoint negative innocence was not enough. The fact that the working people were not guilty of the faults attributed to them was not sufficient to render them worthy of the mission of sovereignty that was offered to them. The bourgeoisie crumbled because it had shown itself unworthy of its part; the laboring class should have appeared entirely worthy of its own. Sovereignty implies superiority. The morality of the laboring class might well have remained intact, but it would have needed, in addition, for its moral superiority to be outstanding, and that was what was lacking. It lacked, to carry away the nation, a generosity, a magnanimity, an ideal deportment, evidence of disinterestedness and sacrifice for the collective interest, everything that Nietzsche calls somewhere "the grand style in morals", everything by which morality borders on religion and propaganda on missionary work.

I should like, this time also, to make my idea clear by more exact applications. The "Popular Front" administration, the result of the 1936 elections, had had laws passed which reduced the working period and which, by the operation of collective contracts, consolidated the raise in pay, approved labor union organization, and authorized labor delegates inside plants. At the same time, brought

face

face to face with the menace of Hitler armament, observing that nothing had been done, or even seriously attempted, since the close of the other war, to renew France's military apparatus, it had started a wide and methodical program of manufactures. The two labors were to be conducted simultaneously, without injuring each other, and, besides, when the needs of the national defense came into the matter, the social legislation provided for and permitted all derogations. However, public opinion feared that the execution of the program would be hampered by the operation of the legislation. No doubt this fear was propagated and exaggerated maliciously. The proof of this is that the 1936 program, although expanded as it went along, did not suffer any delay: far from that, at the time that France entered the war, contrary to everything that people incessantly repeat inside the country and outside the country, the accomplishment of the program was considerably ahead of expectations; the French army already had "modern equipment" in large enough quantities to be, with regard to quantity, in a state of "honorable equality" with the German army, and that is, moreover, the explanation why its heads had contemplated entry into the war without more apprehension. But whatever the final and general result may have been, the difficulties encountered in the execution of the program, as far as labor is concerned, were no less real. Longer hours had been disputed or refused by the labor unions, although they should have applied it to urgent manufactures; agitation had persisted in many plants; the hourly output had dropped. When we appealed to the workers, reproaching them with misunderstanding the spirit of the new laws, they would reply: "If we defend the letter with so much stubbornness, it is because we feel that they are menaced; the bosses have not submitted to them in good faith; they are exploiting the needs of national defense in order to strangle them. We are asked to work extra hard, but have the bosses on their side tried to improve methods, organization and investment? Have they built new buildings, installed new machinery, reduced the shifts, or trained specialists? No, they have been afraid to undertake anything, afraid to risk anything, afraid of making less on government contracts than on ordinary market orders. And we are the ones who are asked to stop the gaps or the lags due to this incapacity by sacrifices which tomorrow will be turned against us! Why should we alone pay for the common effort?" And when they used such language, they were largely right;

almost

almost everything that they said was correct. In the field of distributive equity, there was no reproach to be addressed to them. They were in no wise to blame, but did they show themselves worthy of the directing mission which they claimed? They justly denounced the calculation of profits among the bosses, the fear of loss, that feeling which disturbs the human heart more than any other, the fear of being the dupe of a generous impulse; but had not they yielded to the same common motives? In drawing arguments from all this bourgeois pettiness, they were putting themselves on the same plane as the bourgeoisie, whereas they should have risen above it. It was from that pettiness that the bourgeoisie was dying out as the directing class: it should have shown itself fit to replace it. "Yes, we are going to do cheerfully what we are asked. We are not unaware of anything; we see clearly. We know what errors our tardy gift must guard against; we know that it will be vain unless the employers, like us, go beyond their duty. It makes no difference; we will not haggle; we will not quibble; we will set the humiliating example which must be followed. You, bourgeois, set aside your calculations and your intrigues in view of the common need, not us." That is the language which it should have used, to show itself worthy. The national acclaim would have called or accepted the working class, provided that it crushed the bourgeois mediocrity under its nobility and that it gained power by magnanimity.

What I have just said about war manufacturing would apply just as well to other similar things, for example, to the work on the 1937 Exposition, but I prefer to select my second example from a different field. Since the War of 1914-18 and the Treaty of Versailles, the idea of peace had taken a preponderant place in socialist and trade union publicity. It could not be otherwise; the cruel uselessness of war had never appeared with more atrocious plainness; heroism, enormous sacrifices and victory had led to naught but boundless disappointment. But what themes did pacifist publicity employ as it was conducted by the teachers' unions or by important elements of the Socialist Party? It was based particularly on the sacred character of individual life. That is a very pure idea, very lofty, which has served and is still serving as a principle for whole civilizations, but on condition that it is set forth by the precept: "Never voluntarily make

an attempt on any life", and not by the command: "Above everything, save your own skin". Man ought to know the price of life, but he ought to be able to subordinate it to ideal aims, which are collective aims: justice, human liberty, national independence, peace itself, for peace stands among the number of the necessary aims of mankind, and perhaps is the most necessary of all, in the sense that it is the prerequisite for almost all the others. This subordination is called, in practice, self-sacrifice, and a revolutionary propaganda that no longer knows how to teach it is lowered and vulgarized; it can drag on during ordinary times; it is not up to the level of the days of tension, anguish and peril. Experience teaches that at the terrible moments in his life a man saves it only by risking it. Likewise, high-minded publicity would have shown that, facing a Europe that had become dangerous once more, we could preserve peace only by voluntarily and courageously running the risk of war. The Treaty of Versailles had not disarmed Europe; the Hitler revolution had rearmed it. Now in a Europe in arms there was no other means of subjugating war than an armed system of mutual assistance, and assistance pacts could be effective only if each of the peoples which had concluded them showed itself resolved to honor its signature with its blood. People repeated: "We will not die for Dantzig", but to die for Dantzig meant to die for peace, and they could not save peace without being determined to die for it. Thus Socialists and trade unionists had been entirely right in preaching peace, but they had lowered it and themselves by a tone of false good sense and egoism. Courage and a spirit of sacrifice are not survivals of barbarism; what is barbarous is the purpose to which mankind still applies them. These great virile virtues are just what must be cultivated; we shall not construct another future without them; by them a nation, in the crises of its history, will always recognize its leaders.

When a Socialist orator was haranguing a throng of workers, it was seldom that he did not finish with an exhortation of which the following is approximately the theme: "Workmen, we call you to enlist in our ranks, but you ought to know what engagements you enter into when coming to us. You obligate yourself to be the best everywhere, to be a model for all. You must by your conduct

set an example of dignity; you must give the shop the example of skill and conscientiousness. The manner of life and of work of each militant possess publicity value for the whole party. Help us to prove to our adversaries that in striving to make workngmen free, we are making better men". What Socialism had understood with regard to each of its militants, it had not understood clearly enough with regard to itself. It too, in its public action, in its political inspiration, in the spiritual justification for its doctrine, should have shown itself the worthiest, the noblest, the best; it too, for the other parties and for the whole nation, should have been a model and an example. We should have set the example of the pride, the absolute unselfishness, and the greatness of soul that are the attributes of youthful forces. We should have always aimed at the highest objectives and always excluded low or mediocre means, even those which were employed against us. No aggression because we were attacked; no insults because we were insulted; we were not like the others; we were not on the same plane, on the same human footing even, and everything in us should have made that plain. We should not only have persuaded reason, a task that is necessary but not sufficient; we should have touched sentiment and exalted the imagination. I ask myself, after so many years devoted to action, after so many months occupied by careful meditation: is this not the fault of the leaders that the working class had chosen? Did they fully understand their mission? Have they fully performed their duty? Had we gone deep enough into the meaning of the effort by which Jaurès had transformed the Marxian deduction? Marx had provided for the will for labor combat the most tonic and the most powerful of consolations; I mean the conviction that an inevitable tendency of history was working toward this. But what is inevitable is not necessarily just, is not necessarily satisfying to critical reason and the moral conscience. Jaurès then showed that the social revolution is not merely the unavoidable consequence of the economic evolution but that it would be at the same time the end to an eternal demand of the human reason and the human conscience. Hence it is Socialism which would bring full satisfaction and exact justification to the glorious watchwords of the French Revolution: the rights of man and of the citizen; liberty, equality, fraternity. It is through it that that democratic heroism could be exalted and could triumph, the struggles of which have filled Europe

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and the world for a century. The materialistic concept of history would thus have been impregnated with all of republican and humanitarian idealism. In our daily publicity, did we give a large enough part to this preaching of ideals? We have repudiated with sufficient plainness all recourse to the gross instincts of the human animal, brutality, malice; /have we stressed/ the wish to invoke only the noblest sentiments of the human soul, its innate need for justice, sympathy and fraternity? The trite argument: "It is vain to change social institutions unless the mentality of the individual has been changed" is too easy a way of deferring the necessary transformations to an indefinite future. But have we done everything which was our duty to improve the human individual, the human unit, at the same time that we were striving to transform society; have we carried on the two tasks side by side, as we should have done, causing one to enter into the other, by supporting one by the other? I put these questions to myself; although my personal conscience does not address too stern reproaches to me, I do not venture to formulate a categorical answer. The first period of socialist publicity, which was, moreover, only a sort of ferocious and implacable melee, had decidedly more greatness morally. We had fought against danger and amidst daily abnegation; sacrifice exalted faith. Jaurès again had lived under the permanent menace of imprisonment and assassination. The danger had disappeared little by little, and faith had died down. We had become too strong, too cautious; we had flowed little by little into the mould of ordinary life. There was in us somewhat too much of "success". At the time when the nation was awaiting a cry of appeal, a rallying cry, a great voice could not come from our ranks.

An English thinker whose system offers some relationship with that of Marx, has maintained that, in the progress of history, moral forces played only a negligible part. The intellectual forces, precisely those which determine material evolution, according to him represent the only appreciable factor of evolution. Humanity, he says, has been living for thirty years on the same almost permanent fund of moral notions which are found almost identical in all religions and in all philosophies. But as humanity has singularly changed in that interval one would have to conclude, therefore, that its variations do not depend on a practically invariable factor. I do not denounce as

false

false this theory which doubtless contains a measure of truth. It may very well be that the idea of continuous progress is as alien to morals as it is, for example, to art, while for pure intellectuality, for science and in technical matters, it takes on the character of an absolute law. But, if there is not parallel progress, one must agree at least that the constancy and permanency of a certain moral atmosphere remains one of the conditions necessary for intellectual progress. This body of convictions and beliefs, which has indeed since the beginnings of our civilizations constituted the common fund of humanity, is the vital milieu without which intellectual progress and consequently material progress would have been unable to develop. One may easily conceive that the intellectual progress may not correspond to a moral progress, but one has difficulty in imagining that a moral retrogression would not involve the intellectual retrogression of humanity. The Naziism of Hitler offers the example of this. In a society which has as a matter of rule smothered the instincts of justice and charity, broken the ties of the family and of friendship, destroyed respect for human life, imposed as duties fanaticism, cruelty, delation, in such a society the constant milieu which had protected and mothered the progression of intelligence ceases suddenly to exist, and what had been growing up to that point meets an untimely end. The retrogression to a barbarian morality involves gradually the return to a barbarian thought and a barbarian life. We have not been able to profit from the teaching which "the drunken helot" laid before our eyes.

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I shall limit myself now, in conclusion, to collecting and placing in order the conclusions to which the reflections which you have just read have successively led me.

A ruling class and a political system have given way under the revolutionary shock of events. That has happened before without France suffering from it; feudal aristocracy has disappeared; divine right royalty has disappeared. But the immediate task is to set up new institutions, since a nation cannot live without laws. The principle upon which these institutions will rest necessarily has nothing new about it. It is given; it is known. The world war will end, according to the almost

unanimous

unanimous hope of the French, in the world-wide victory of Democracy. The constitutional power therefore presents itself in relatively simple terms. The false and weak bourgeois democracy has fallen down; it is a question of constructing a true democracy, a democracy which will not be a bourgeois democracy but a popular democracy, which will not be a weak democracy, but an energetic and efficient democracy. That is the first point.

I am not a manufacturer of constitutions; I leave that work to the specialists. I have established as I went along two truths which I believe incontestable: first, that parliamentary government is not the sole form, nor even the pure form of democracy; second, that the defects with which French parliamentary government has been so often reproached did not in reality represent anything but the faults or bares of the French bourgeoisie. But I shall not try to find out here what place the parliamentary or representative principle must keep in a popular democracy. I shall only affirm this: whatever may be the part assigned to the Chambers in the general economy of the future Republic, there can be no question of violating either the elective principle or the law of universal suffrage which is the very symbol of democracy. In order to eliminate them, it would be necessary to destroy down to the very roots the public spirit in France. On the other hand, that which will probably not survive of the bourgeois experience which has been continued over more than a century, is the representative régime properly so called, that is to say the integral delegation of the popular sovereignty to the elected Chamber and its concentration in the legislative assemblies.

I am inclined, for my part, to the systems of the American or Swiss type, which are based on the separation of and equilibrium between the powers, consequently on the sharing of sovereignty, and assure to the executive power, in its own sphere of action, an independent and continuous authority. These systems create stable powers and have in addition the great merit of substituting the real notion of checks and balances (contrôle) for the somewhat illusory notion of responsibility, which has always played too large a rôle in our country. I could wish that, as in the United States and in Switzerland, this conception of the central power might be paired with

a powerful

a powerful centrifugal movement going so far as a sort of federalism: I have never been afraid of the term. The American state, or the Swiss canton, retains a share of democratic sovereignty; it maintains a local life; the man of good will can find there employment for a free and useful activity: it is in this sense that it is permissible to recall the provinces of old France. I have always been attracted, moreover, by the ideas formulated by Rathenau on the morrow of the German disaster of 1918: the de-concentration of the State seems to me to be as necessary as its decentralization, which means that one single executive authority, one single legislative power can no longer discharge all the necessary functions of the modern State and that provision should reasonably be made, around the central organs, charged above all with a rôle of orientation and coordination, for the gravitation of small satellite states each one endowed with a certain independence of movement. Totalitarian Germany has partly realized this view: there is a German Fuehrer; but there are local Fuehrers for each region and, for each one of the large parts of the State, special Fuehrers have a large degree of autonomy. The problem would therefore be to re-establish on the democratic plane what the Hitlerian Reich has built on the plane of personal autocracy. But I do not wish to dwell more at length on this order of discussions. There may be arguments on the given data of the problem; there cannot be useful argument on its solutions. France must determine them herself.

My second conclusion is that this popular democracy cannot and will not be other than a social democracy. That is the condition for all future stability. One cannot reasonably conceive of a separation between the political power and the economic power. The bourgeoisie had derived its political power from its economic power. It has lost today its political privilege. If nevertheless it retains the economic privilege, which it has shown itself no less incapable of exploiting for the common good, France would remain exposed to the most perilous vicissitudes. One could predict almost certainly another period of agitation and impotence, another succession of shocks and perhaps of revolutions. The bourgeoisie does not exercise its economic privilege except with a hesitant and unskillful debility, but it still possesses it formally and legally. Harmony must be re-established. We must make an

expropriation,

expropriation, legally, progressively, in a friendly way, but inevitably,- an expropriation which will in fact be only an appropriation. We must today transpose the old formula of the Thiers and Dufaure: the popular Republic will be a social Republic or it will not exist.

Besides, how are we to get rid of the social problem when it is raised by the necessity of things? Will we be able to tolerate tomorrow that men should lack their necessary subsistence, a healthy dwelling, means of protecting their family against hunger, cold, sickness and vice? Is that allowable? Will the new generations agree to live side by side with the social sacrifices, enduring them as a natural fatality? No, of course; they are resolved to meet them face to face, finally to master them: that is the heroic task which they assume. But how are we to think even of eradicating them if we install ourselves on any other plane than that of Social Democracy? Any solution involving the abolition of the wage system - that is, the relationship of authority and dependence created by the purchase and sale of labor - will necessarily lead toward a system in which producers of all kinds, each one according to his useful capacity, will be associated in the creation and consumption of wealth; and thus society, whether it becomes conscious of its journey or not, will transport itself into a full collectivist régime. It is easy to allow formulas such as abolition of the wage system to fall lightly from our lips, but we must clearly see what these words mean. Moreover, any solution conceived within the framework of capitalistic society and, therefore, allowing the wage system to remain, must at least recognize to the worker his absolute right to a wage - I mean the wage which is called a living wage, one which is sufficient not only for the physical preservation of the human animal, but for the life of a free citizen, and even, in my opinion, for the life of his family, for I maintain that the wage of the male who works should assure not only his own subsistence but that of his family and I do not by any means admit that, in order to maintain the home, the contribution furnished by the labor of the wife and "kids" must obligatorily be added, as it is today, to the wages of the man. We see ourselves this time injected into complete state socialism, since from all appearances the power of the State must be engaged to define, protect and guarantee the worker's condition. The problem will be to make a part of the

social

social reality those formulas which, about 1848, sounded like revolutionary slogans: the right to live, the right to work, the right to organize labor. Whether we give way to one or the other of these two trends the political authority will be led just the same to assume the task of ordering and regulating production. In a system in which insufficiency or incoherence of production would be equivalent to civil war, the collective authority, whatever its form, cannot escape the obligation of subjecting it to an "over-all" conception and organization, of "planifying" it.

Other problems arise then which can no more be avoided. The continuous progress of science and technics makes it possible to produce in a constantly shorter time a constantly increasing quantity of wealth. Progress is no one's exclusive property; it is the anonymous heritage and consequently the collective property of humanity, since it contains and presupposes all the accumulated labor of the generations of humanity. Bourgeois Capitalism, inept at spreading this excess of wealth through the mass of the consumers, gets rid of it with the help of periodical crises and "systematic deflations". Progress in its hand had become a cause of excessive profit for a few privileged persons or a few lucky ones ("chançards"), but a cause of unemployment and poverty for the immense majority of men. Progress belongs to all; we will have to end up certainly, willingly or unwillingly, by drawing a benefit from it for all. The masters of the day have talked a great deal about having each worker share in the profits of the enterprise which employs him, which means nothing, but there is a participation from which one will not escape, one which gives the mass of the workers, which is to say the mass of the people, a share in the profits won by society as a whole, each individual worker collecting his share of the dividend through the new extension of his comfort or further reduction of his labor. Furthermore, the increase of production is not only a matter of laboratories, of machine tools and "rationalizing" methods. To attain to the greatest possible production, it is also necessary that each position be filled by the most capable person and consequently that each individual be assigned to the job for which his physical or spiritual vocation most exactly designate him. The organization of the work implies in the largest measure a special equipment

and

and assignment, consequently, an education and a selection. The very necessities of production will thus direct the democracy of tomorrow toward the inauguration of true equality, that is to say toward the kinds of institutions which I hold to be the final purpose and the sufficient reason for all socialism. Real equality in no way fails to recognize natural inequalities. On the contrary it takes account of them; it draws advantage from them. It consists essentially in the exact utilization of each human unit, in the close fitting of each individual into his social assignment, all jobs being considered equally noble, since all, in one sense, are equally useful. In bourgeois Capitalism, the passage from one social class to another was possible, and examples of this were exhibited with complacence. There were exchanges among the classes, but such exchanges represented accidents, not the normal working of a law. For a working man to attain to capitalistic ownership was a miracle; for a bourgeois to fall back on manual wages was a tragedy. The democracy of tomorrow must draw out the best in the possession of each individual by using his natural individual gifts without any class distinction, that is, without any consideration of the caste, clan, race or fortune which characterized him, his parents or his ancestors. The son of a blacksmith, if his talent has destined him for it, may as today become minister of the people or a great chief of industry. But the son of the great chief or the minister, if he is good only for blacksmithing, will be a blacksmith.

These themes have nothing that is new; they are what the socialist or syndicalist propaganda was developing in the country on the eve of the war. In a given stage of material evolution, as in a given stage of scientific research, the same problems do indeed arise before the minds of all. The regime which calls itself the National Revolution itself proclaims the necessity of applying a solution to them just as Fascism or Nazism had done before it. But I cannot too firmly repeat that France intends to look for it at home and by democratic methods. Political Democracy and Social Democracy are, in France at least, inseparable terms. Political Democracy can not live if it does not develop into Social Democracy; Social Democracy would be neither real nor stable if it were not founded on Political Democracy. The French people cannot sacrifice one to the other either the great human

ideals

ideals defined in '89, or the great "musts" which have since then derived from the material reality; it wishes to combine economic order and social equality with political, civic and personal liberty. The task is hard; it intends, nevertheless, to do it itself, applying to it the sovereignty which it has won through high struggle and of which it will not consent to divest itself. It would not receive it ready made from the hands of masters it has not chosen and whose titles it does not recognize. It demands justice, and does not ask for charity. It knows moreover that justice would never be dispensed to it from above as a kindness by a government "of achievements" ("d'oeuvres"). It observes that abroad the Nazi and Fascist autocracies have reduced labor to a machine-like servility without suppressing the privileges of capitalistic ownership. In France, even, it perceives that the formulas with which people try to dazzle it, and the frank application of which would obviously imply the destruction of the whole bourgeois structure, are operated by bourgeois imbued with the primacy of their class, and who, after all, are trying only to preserve it. Political sovereignty of the people and social justice are therefore two ideas and two tasks indissolubly joined. The foundation of a "Social Democracy", in the full sense of the term, the hope of yesterday, becomes the necessary program of tomorrow.

Such is the second article of my conclusions; here is the third. Just as Political Democracy in France would be neither feasible nor stable unless it developed into Social Democracy, so French Social Democracy will be neither feasible nor stable unless it is integrated into a European order, or better said - since the present war will have further reduced Europe's place on the map of the world - in a human order, in a world-wide order. Democracy implies Social Democracy. Social Democracy, in the highest sense of the term, implies internationalism. On this point, again, we shall find ourselves face to face with a necessary deduction, drawn from the compulsory force of the facts (choses). The inauguration of a Social Democracy presupposes by definition a certain number of measures transforming essentially either the juridical nature of property or, at the very least, the condition of the workers and the management of the economy. Now, it is evident that measures of this order cannot be applied without confusion, without loss, nor even without risking failure in the limited framework of one nation

alone.

alone. A national economy, as long as it remains open to the laws of competition and to the current of the exchanges, as long as it retains the character of a market and seeks openings, is subject to the equilibrium of the milieu with which it is surrounded, and which is nothing else than the world economy. A law in common, a common usage is imposed on it, and if it braves this universal code too rashly, each infraction exposes it to hard penalties of a commercial order, of a monetary order and even, by way of consequence, of a political order. To escape this it is inevitably necessary, therefore, either for the reforming nation to cut off its communications with the outside, cut the normal flow of competition and exchange, and shut itself up strictly in the framework of a despotic autarchy, - as Soviet Russia and Nazi Germany have done, - or for it accept becoming a part of a whole and to plant its own action in an action of a world-wide character. France is repugnant to the first solution; it must therefore devote its entire will to making the second prevail. If one will go back a few years one will see that the Popular Front Government under socialist direction set up in France in the middle of 1936 found itself faced with these alternatives, although its program did not involve very profound social transformations: it doubtless came up against a kind of political deception, I mean, that in spite of appearances, it did not possess total legal power, of which a hostile bourgeoisie continued to hold solid and powerful elements. But the essential and almost insoluble difficulty lay precisely in the fact that the changes made by it in the condition of the workers and in the social structure could not easily and surely have been carried through except in the frame work either of an international organization or a totalitarian autarchy. For the first alternative circumstances, alas! had not reached the point of maturity. Ah! if it had been possible to give to the French example, as in the great days of '89, the virtue of a communicative inspiration! If it had been permitted us to light again in all Europe that enthusiastic contagion which Michelet has described with religious lyricism. Far from it, Europe was sceptical or rebellious. Never, since the treaties of Versailles had it been more removed from idealistic enthusiasm, nor, consequently, from union: there no longer existed either coherence or harmony of views or confidence. Subconsciously ready for the new battles, it could not be ready for cooperation and solidary organization. As for the second alternative, that is, the dictatorial taking in hand of a

closed

closed economy, it was barred in advance to a government one of whose objectives was to revive in France, in contrast with the enterprises of the Fascist type, the traditions, passions and practices of Democracy. The Popular Front Government thus found itself faced with an intrinsic contradiction which, moreover, offered absolutely nothing unknown or unforeseen to its chiefs, and to which, if I may say, they sacrificed themselves to preserve the country from a bloody crisis. I recall this past episode only to illuminate my thought and make it possible to presage the future more exactly. Tomorrow, as yesterday, attempts inspired by the same spirit will encounter the same obstacle. Tomorrow, as yesterday, the integration of the national work into an international organization, its fitting into an armature covering all the fractions of the world economy which have reached the same stage of evolution, will furnish the only satisfactory solution, the only one at any rate which remains compatible with the principles and institutions of liberty.

We must therefore accept it as a fact that any Social Democracy in France has for its indispensable basis a sufficiently firm international structure. Without such foundation one would try in vain to build it, and if one should succeed in doing the impossible, one could not make it subsist. For it would remain at the mercy of the first war crisis that might come again to tear Europe apart. It would succumb, almost infallibly, as is proved by the history of the last 25 years, either to the direct blows of the war, or to its antecedents or incidences, victory in this respect would not engender consequences much less pernicious than defeat. Now, in the absence of a sufficiently firm international organization, how ward off enduringly the reality or threat of war, how weld enduringly the spirit of solidarity, how create that body of complex sentiments which are the necessary food thereof and which we group under the name of "security". It is the history of the last 25 years also which teaches us that right after great world wide commotions there comes a moment of reason when such creations are possible but that the opportunity must not at any price be allowed to pass, for it passes quickly; that we must on the contrary seize it, cling to it with an upsurge, a strong effort of hope and faith. Right after a general war all humanity would wish that the scourge, whose wound it carries still

fresh,

fresh, may have appeared for the last time on the earth. We have learned that it is costly not to supply at once this almost unanimous demand with consistency, and consequently, with durability and efficaciousness. If we were again to commit the same mistake posterity would not forgive us for this second offense. We must have our resolution and our will in regard to this all ready. The war will come to an end, perhaps soon. It will end, infallibly, in the defeat, the crushing of the Axis. But this crushing defeat will not suffice to create the conditions of a lasting peace. Any peace is more or less a Diktat (dictated peace). I have never joined in the excessive severity which has been shown to the authors of the Treaty of Versailles, for never, on any occasion in history, did the representatives of the victorious powers make such an effort to base on Right the new status created by force. Nevertheless the treaties of Versailles have left behind them a whole heritage of errors, absurdities, iniquities, which have been paid for in torrents of blood. I do not doubt that the authors of the future peace will be possessed even more intimately than the plenipotentiaries of Versailles by the spirit of equity, by the will to seek the unshakeable foundations of peace in human justice, I will say, even, in human charity. Nevertheless we may be certain in advance that the future peace will not be irrepachable either, that it will not be perfect, that it also will leave behind it a whole class of difficulties unsolved, or bound to rise again, iniquities not corrected, or corrected at the price of new iniquities. One may reflect upon the obligations assumed in the course of the war, for war needs, and which will have been made joint obligations by the victory, of the claims based on the status quo ante, on the strategic needs, on the necessities of access to the sea, of all these inextricable questions of races and ethnic minorities, which Hitler cut so simply by exterminations or forced migrations. If the war spirit subsists, if it is not driven out or subdued by peace institutions, it is inevitable that future treaties will leave behind them occasions, even legitimate occasions, for reparation and revenge. It is inevitable that territorial problems, sooner or later, will be again brought up by force if the frontier idea itself does not gradually step down, is not stripped little by little of its present value by a sufficiently close incorporation of the nations in an international body, capable moreover of correcting too obvious errors or of adapting the legal

status

status to situations of fact too profoundly changed. One may affirm to the world with inflexible, imperturbable conviction: From this war there must come finally, fundamentally sound international institutions, an entirely effective international power, or else it will not be the last war either. Europe and the world will again be delivered to the scourge. As for the edifice of Democracy, political or social, national or international, it will again be exposed to ruin, and this time perhaps for good.

International organization, European order, these formulas are today in every mouth. The totalitarian dictators and their crews do not make a speech, do not send a message, without invoking the European Order. In France, the men of the Armistice, their theorists, their practitioners, their apologists, never worry of showing us again that they betrayed France in order to be faithful to Europe, and thereby to International Socialism. Do I need to repeat with what horror I repudiate the abominable abuse of these formulas stolen from our vocabulary. When Hitler and Goebbels speak of organizing Europe, when the French "collaborationists" echo them, we know what they mean and what they demand. Their European Order is nothing else, in actual reality, than the utilization of all the resources of Europe, that is, their compression and extortion, for the needs of the war which the Axis Powers are waging, and their organization of Europe is nothing else, in the reality of tomorrow, than its absolute subservience to Hitlerian domination. So the same words come to designate ideas which are directly contradictory. When we say "European Order" we think about peace and not war, when we say "European Organization" we do not think of a common subjection under a tyrannical hegemony, but of an equal federation of friendly nations. League of Nations! Let us confess that the 1919 formula was fine. Let us recognize, without yielding to a too commonplace raillery, that we must have recourse today to the same inspiration. The League of Nations, as it had been simultaneously conceived at the close of the other war by all the great democracies of the two worlds, was a magnanimous and magnificent creation. I render this judgment in spite of its failure which I do not try to palliate; I maintain that in spite of that failure, it would of itself suffice to impose respect for the political

societies

societies in whose heart it was conceived, and I add that from that failure, which was an experience, the world must draw a moral tomorrow. The League of Nations, inaugurated by the Treaty of Versailles failed because indispensable great powers like Russia and the United States were absent from it from the beginning, because its founders, in order to disarm certain prejudices or certain fears, had not dared to equip it with the agencies and the vital power which its function demanded, because it was not a great sovereignty, distinct from the national sovereignties and superior to them, because to enforce execution of its decisions it did not possess any political authority or any material force which could prevail over that of the States, because its limited and intermittent attributions did not permit it to embrace all the forms of the national activities. In support of each one of these points, it would be easy to adduce arguments and facts. If we take the reverse of each one of them we shall obtain the principles the application of which will make it possible to obtain this time a living and efficacious international body. It is necessary that all the great powers, the United States and Russia in the first place be parties to the Covenant. The international body must be provided with the agencies in power which will permit it to discharge its functions; I admit that it should be frankly and boldly installed as a supreme state, on a plane dominating the national sovereignty, and that consequently the associated nations should concede in advance, in the full measure in which this superior sovereignty may so require, the limitation or the subordination of their own individual sovereignty. The international body must be placed in a position to impose execution of its decisions on refractory nations which will involve necessarily either a preponderance of arms due to the exclusive possession of certain engines such as war planes, or to the sufficiently accentuated disarmament of each individual state. Instead of being governed by conferences of delegates, each one of whom remains subject to the interests and the instructions of the state they represent, the superstate must possess its special institutions and directing body. The permanency of its action must be assured by the complexity of its attributions, for a real international community is something other than a court of arbitration or a place of diplomatic assembly. It must create an Order if it wishes to maintain

peace,

the conquerors go with Germany? They will find themselves
peace, and the creation of that Order demands a continuous
action and economic conflicts and crises threaten it as
well as political disputes. The founders of the League
of Nations had indeed felt that necessity, since side by
side with it and on the same plane they had build the sup-
plementary institution known as the International Labor
Office; but that Office possessed even less of decisive
and executive power than the League itself. The inter-
national body must this time call up, with an authority
which implies obligation, all these problems of labor
which, as I have shown elsewhere, are not susceptible of
a satisfactory solution within the frame of one nation
alone. It must hear, with the power to legislate and
decide, these grave questions of outlets, of raw materials,
of migrations, which are found so dangerously in contact
with economy and politics. It must settle the problems
of the customs, ward off the general crises in currency,
perhaps by the institution of an international currency.
It must possess the means to undertake the great works
of international utility - drainage, industrial equipment,
means of transportation, colonization, in the broadest
sense of the term - so as to raise all the nations gra-
dually to the same level of civilization, and for this pur-
pose it must be endowed with powers to make loans provided
through a budget which would be fed, not by the voluntary
and ungracious contribution of the associated states,
but by small taxes levied on goods of universal consumption
or the monopoly of some international services. Some
socialists who met at Frankfurt right after the other war
to study together the problems of the Reparations, had
already reached an agreement on a plan of this scope.
They belonged to all the belligerent nations: I shall
name, among those who are dead, only Matteotti, assassinated
by Mussolini, and Hileferding, surrendered to Hitler by
the French Government.

The themes that I have just indicated involve each
of the developments and justifications that it would be
easy to draw from the most recent "world" history. But
if we wish really to lay our finger on the fragility and
precariousness of any peace which does not rest on a strong
international construction it is sufficient to mention the
Russian problem and the German problem. Hitler will be
vanquished and his personal fate matters very little,
but, after his disaster, his disappearance, what will

the

the conquerors do with Germany? They will find themselves face to face with a contradiction which, on the basis of the present Europe, that is, on the basis of national, absolute sovereignties, would not be susceptible of any intelligible conciliation. On the one hand a universal sentiment, poisoned, alas, by hatred and by the need for revenge that Hitler has propagated throughout the whole world demands that Germany be put in a condition, and this time definitively, such that she cannot begin again the atrocious adventure. One will refuse, and I agree that the refusal will be legitimate, to distinguish between the tyrant who has made his people fanatic and the people which has piteously served its tyrant. It will be protested that peace is only a deceitful and murderous pretense if the world is not infallibly protected against any future attack of Germanic barbarism. All that will be natural and just. Now, on the known terrain of history, on the basis of national sovereignties, to what can this natural and just demand lead, if not to a system of partitioning, dismembering, annexation, interdictions, tribute? The imposition of this system beyond a doubt will be demanded, and those who will shout the loudest will be certain of the "collaborationists" of the present. But on the other hand if the men who have charge of making peace retain the courage to reflect and remember, how can they fail to have their eyes fixed on the future perspectives which would be opened up before the world by a status founded on the use and the abuse of force. Hatred is not extinguished by hatred nor violence by violence. One does not annihilate people, a language, a tradition, a legend. The abuse of force creates the will for revenge, time does not extinguish it; the hazards of history offer to it, sooner or later, unexpected opportunities. However hard the conditions imposed on Hitlerian Germany may be they could hardly be more brutal than those which were imposed on Prussia the day after Jena, and Leipzig, only a few decades between Tilsit and Sedan. To solve the contradiction, to obtain German harmlessness in a peaceful and sure status of Europe there is therefore only one method, which is to incorporate the German nation in an international community powerful enough to re-educate it, to discipline it and if necessary to subdue it. If the application of force should become necessary to force Germany into this incorporation then it would be legitimate, and as salutary as a paternal correction. Then force would be in the service of justice and peace. Then time and habit

would

would act in the sense of adaptation and coordination, and consequently of pacification and reconciliation.

What I have just said of Germany is not less evident of Russia, although for reasons of an entirely different nature. The Russian problem, the Russian unknown quantity weighs at the present time with a strange weight on the idea, I will say even on the hope of peace. I have already called attention to the fact that, in a certain number of States, of which France is one of the first, it would be practically impossible to assure the regular operation of the Government if a part of the working class remained subject, by a direct or indirect relation of dependency, to a foreign sovereign. Likewise it will be practically impossible to maintain a secure peace among the whole group of the nations of Europe and of the world, if the risk of a domestic revolution, prepared and engineered and directed from without by that same sovereign continues to trouble each of them. If such a grave difficulty were not removed, to what future would Democracy and peace be destined? I do not believe, for my part, that it is eliminated, thanks to a substantial modification of the Soviet structure; it is chimerical to imagine between Russia and the other States a kind of communication leading them to a common level. Russia will retain, doubtless, all the internal characteristics which give it its essential personality; it will not change, in order to establish a similitude with the rest of the world, either its system of government or its system of property. I believe, however, that its foreign way of living, its "deportment" with respect to the other powers will be penetrated by profound amendments under the two-fold influence of the conflict which will have heroically exalted it, and of the victory which will have consolidated and confirmed its power. It will emerge from the trial freed of the growing pains which had been shaking it for 25 years; confident in its strength, aggrandized at the same time as reassured, capable, consequently, of the effort necessary to offer to international life a participation which will not provoke dangerous disharmonies therein. What may we expect of it? That it will cease to maintain a foreign body in the interior of each nation and that it will cease to pose as a foreign body itself with respect to the rest of the nations by a sort of provocative rupture with the traditional notions of morality and humanity. A Concordat should and can regulate in this connection the conditions

conditions of the common existence, and in order to determine its clauses, to assure respect for it, we must certainly imagine the intercession, the persuasive pressure of the International Body of which Russia will be a member. I use this expression Concordat with some hesitancy, for I should not like to offend any susceptibility by the comparison which it suggests, but if you will reflect on the matter without prejudice, it is surely on the relations of the States and a temporal Church that it is a question of drawing up a compromise delimiting the respective domains of hierarchical faith and of national sovereignty. I believe that Russia, even remaining sovietic, will lend a hand to a compromise of this nature, and I trust to the evidence of its advantage. It will be unable and will not wish to detach itself from the Anglo-Saxon powers, without whose assistance it would have been unable to repulse victoriously the Hitlerian aggression, and whose continued collaboration will still be necessary to it for the reconstruction of its ravaged economy. Integration into the International Body will represent for the Soviet State that full and equal recognition, without reticence and without reservation, to which its leaders have aspired so long and which in fact no power had yet accorded to it, not even those that dealt and treated with it. Finally Russia will not wish to be surpassed by anyone, in the eyes of the proletariat of the world, in that will to peace of which the strong effort toward international organization will be considered as the most visible sign and the most certain testimony. I will add, in one word, that that is for it the only means of balancing the historical responsibility that weighs upon it. If its abstention or intransigence should form an obstacle to the firm building of the Peace, it would annul the immense service rendered to humanity by its heroism; it would place itself again as regards the civilized world in the same position as in September, 1939, following the criminal error whose remembrance, even, must be effaced.

I would be led here, by the logic of reasoning as well as by the association of ideas, to envisage, in the membership of the International Body, the opportuneness of another presence. It is of the Court of Rome that I am thinking, the Holy Apostolic See. Its participation in the same capacity as the States would be in itself the most brilliant sign that, in the world of tomorrow, other powers than the temporal powers will count. Its active

cooperation

cooperation would make it possible to raise to a higher plane and to regulate by general "concordats" all those categories of disputes with the States which, within the national framework, debase political life and lead to insupportable conflicts. This rôle would assuredly suit a Church which is pacifist in its essence, since it incarnates a religion of peace, and which is pacifist also, functionally, if I may say so, since even its constitution is of an international order. The pontifical influence has always been used and is still used in favor of an organic peace, based on justice, on equality of peoples and of men, on the sacredness of contracts. The first public address delivered by Pope Pius XI after the Latran accords, from the top of the loggia of St. Peter's, was a pathetic plea for peace. Peace is necessary to the Church, and it is not less certain that the assistance of the Church would be infinitely profitable to the work of pacific organization. But in the zone of humanity which the International Community would cover, if the Catholic Church is the only one which presents itself under the shape of a centralized and world-wide hierarchy, the Catholic religion is not the only one professed by the multitudes. It would be necessary therefore to recognize a principle of equality among religions as among States and address the same appeal to all. Their form of representation would not be fixed without some difficulty, for the other confessions are not constituted in advance, like the Church of Rome, on the hierarchical type of an empire; but supposing that difficulties of this order can be finally smoothed out, as I believe, one is obliged reasonably to foresee that the insurmountable obstacle would be raised by the Church itself. The Church will doubtless manifest its warmest and most helpful sympathy for the international work; it is probable that it will not participate in it as an associate, that it will not bind itself to it, will not assume obligation toward it. Could it consent to an equality of rights, or even a simple recognition of face with regard to the other confessions, since it holds them to be heretical or infidel? Could it acquiesce in a sort of division of the universal faith when a revealed promise has given to it as its purpose the conquest of all souls; and when by abdicating this mandate it would fall short of its divine election? Could it accept the supremacy of the Super-State, alienate to the profit thereof a portion of its sovereignty when its own supremacy results in its eyes from its institution. Could it, in a word, share the responsibility of an international

order

order other than one the rules of which were furnished by its own directions? If from principles we descend to practice, if we consider that the current task of the International Community will be to decide disputes, to render sentences, to decree and perhaps apply penalties, could the Church, were it as a member of the Community, take the part of one State against another, that is, in favor of some of its faithful against others, when it holds itself to be their common mother? It has not done so during the last war or during this one, how could it do so during the peace? I assumed, while examining the position of the Soviets that the temporal interests of the Russian State would prevail over the strict Communist doctrine, but when the Papacy is involved I can no longer form any such conjecture, because it is no longer charged with any temporal interest. A pope of the XVI century who supported an army, who entered into coalitions, who made war, might have been swayed between some imperious necessity weighing on the Pontifical States and the intransigent severity of the dogma. The Papacy of today no longer knows such hesitations, and no longer needs to bow to such compromises. It is a purely spiritual power. That is why its presence in the International Community would appear to me more ardently desirable, and that is also why it seems to me chimerical to hope for it.

When I thus develop the perspectives of the international society installed above the world of tomorrow, I know well that I do not expose myself merely to that light and in reality credulous scepticism of which no account is to be taken, but that I cause concern also to a perfectly honorable and legitimate sentiment. I mean the sentiment of patriotism, always more alive and more susceptible immediately after a defeat, and consequently more quick to take offense and more jealous. I hear its voice: "What! France has not arisen from her ruins, her wounds are not yet healed and you are already thinking about Europe and the world. You again appeal to that humanitarian sentimentality from which we have suffered so much when the duty to the nation imposes itself upon us with a precise, imperative and exclusive imperiousness. Not France first! France above all! France has only one way of salvation, the selfish love of all her children..."

It is true that in the misfortunes of our country we become more clearly and strongly conscious of the love, at

times

times unrecognized, that we cherished for it. It is true that the history of these recent years ought to teach us to preserve the patriotic sentiment in all its natural vigor, in all its dignity. But in showing that the Europe and the world of tomorrow must necessarily bring themselves to order, or else give themselves over to chaos and war, in a framework larger than the framework of the nation, I mean nothing that may offend, injure or restrict the national sentiment. I do not propose to patriotism that it yield, give place, like an obsolete instinct which has had its day and no longer meets the aspirations of modern intelligence. I do not by any means think that patriotism ought to be absorbed, and consequently disappear in more general and, if you wish, higher affections, like faith in human solidarity, love of humanity. Love of country is eternal, for the same reason as love of family, love for one's native place, and all the ties that bind the soul to the nearest and dearest realities. But what I am fully convinced of is that patriotism and humanism, or if you prefer, love of the national fatherland and the international fatherland, are in their essence compatible sentiments. The attachment to the nation, on the one hand, and on the other hand the "charity for humankind" as a great ancient said, may dwell together in the same consciousness, as naturally as patriotism and love of family, as patriotism and a religious belief. Search for no other witnesses in this connection than the citizens and soldiers of the Revolution of '89. Not only their ideal dream, but their positive and considered will, was to found an immense human society on principles of a universal order; yet patriotism never in any time manifests itself more fiercely. Never was the soil of the fatherland defended with more heroic ruggedness. The explanation is simple: It is that free peoples, independent nations form the inalterable basis for any international construction. Any international community has for its primary purpose to guarantee the liberty and independence of the different nations composing it. The nations will assemble and take their place in the community, but just as their art, just as their history and their traditions of every order have made them, with their own tastes, their preferences, their original temperaments and their singularities. The national peculiarities, necessary elements in the human harmony, will be not merely respected, but cultivated,

within

within the international organization, exactly as are individual peculiarities in the membership of the social organization. Neither in the one case nor in the other does the community presuppose or even allow for a certain official and compulsory uniformity. When I evoke the future League of Nations an image of Hugo's inevitably comes to my mind: I see them seated "like sisters around the hearth", around the common foyer of justice and peace, sisters born of the same blood, but each one distinguished from the others by their dress, by their movements, by the accent of their voice, the expression of their face. Jaurès said once that a little internationalism perhaps drew one away from patriotism but that a great deal of internationalism brought one closer to it, and I think I understand the deep meaning of his expression thus: it is in the atmosphere of equal peace and comfort created by international solidarity that national originality develops with the greatest liberty and fecundity and also that man becomes most precisely conscious of it, by experiencing how it reaches upon the most intimate fibers of his own personality. I add, not without a certain pride, that this harmonizing of patriotism and humanism is more natural and easier for a Frenchman than for any other citizen of the world since the particular temperament of France, as I have already recalled, has always understood and still understands the noble need of thinking and acting for universal accomplishments.

The danger of internal frictions and conflicts doubtless subsists and will never be completely abolished: in the personal life, it is not always easy either to establish order and to determine a hierarchy among the diverse passions which compose a character which is suited to the circumstances. But an effort of good faith and reason must finally bring about the conciliation, and this effort will consist almost always in freeing either patriotism, or humanism, from the natural impurities which had debased it. For there exists an instinct as old as the history of man, of the same essence as the tribal or clan spirit, which impels us to resign, I will say almost to condemn, every faculty of reflection and critical judgment, whenever relations between our country and other countries are at stake. "I do not have to search further; my country cannot be wrong, because it is my country" and:

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"of course it is my country for which world wide primacy is destined....." This instinct is falsely called patriotism and only the pejorative names of Chauvinism or nationalism are proper for it. It engenders pride and hatred, it bears within it the fatality of war, for it is not special to one single country; it reigns in other countries when it burns fiercely in ours and the struggles to which it gives rise among the peoples do not bear of any conciliation nor even, which is more serious, any possible reconciliation. There exists, on the other hand, a sentiment of infinitely more recent formation and it has developed only under the protection of certain revolutionary propaganda, and which tends to assume the reverse of Chauvinism, that is to say, to disavow in advance, by a pre-judgment, the national position and the national interest in every foreign quarrel. "My country is wrong because it is my country". This sentiment separates those who profess it from the national community in which the Chauvinists wall themselves in blindly. But it would improperly be named internationalism; it is in reality only a Chauvinism inside out. Each time that one makes the effort to distinguish true patriotism from Chauvinism and true internationalism from the inverted Chauvinism, one will find between the two authentic ideas not only compatibility but almost coincidence. True patriotism and true internationalism both essentially imply the will to make the relations between nations and all the questions growing out of them subject to the common criteria of reason and conscience, to apply to them not an absolute impartiality, certainly, which would go beyond nature, but an absolute intention of impartiality. Now, this examination promptly convinces men of good faith that, in the present stage of human evolution, on the one hand the liberty and prosperity of a nation is no longer separable in practice from the liberty and prosperity of the other nations, and on the other hand that the love of country is no longer separable, from a point of view of reason and sentiment, from certain beliefs which are valid for all humanity.

In this way, therefore, the walls of the new world must rise. Within the nation Political Democracy is justified and consolidated by Social Democracy. The whole group of the national democracies supports an

international

international order which crowns them and which maintains their equilibrium. When the war shall have delivered humanity from the supreme convulsions of barbarism and despotism - and such will indeed be the meaning and the effect of the victory of the Allies - it is on a plan of this order that it will necessarily have to distribute its effort. I do not understand in any other sense the Atlantic Charter signed by President Roosevelt and Mr. Winston Churchill in the name of the two great Anglo-Saxon powers, and to which all the allied nations have unreservedly given their assent. The triumph of liberty and justice through the war must naturally involve the organization of liberty and justice in the peace. I do not see, moreover, in what other way the world could seek either the satisfaction of its immediate needs or future securities. I have asked myself scrupulously whether this view did not sin through an excess of confidence in the regularity of historical solutions, perhaps also through that misleading inclination of the mind, which is always more marked in men who have been active in great affairs and which renders them incapable of running the present and the future in other moulds than that of the past.

It is true that this projection of the new world is nothing else, basically, than a return to conceptions which are more than 25 years old. All that I demand and all that I announce for the period following the present war reproduces what the men of my age hoped for after the Treaty of Versailles and which they were unable to accomplish. There is nothing new, I know, but the solutions can hardly be essentially modified when the problems have not been essentially changed and a generation does not at will change the problems which history places before it. It is true, moreover, that progress like that whose advance I indicate presupposes a tranquil labor, a friendly accord between peoples, and adherence which is already union, and I realize very well that many minds picture the realities of tomorrow under a very different aspect. This beautiful classical architecture, how could it raise its order from a soil which will be upheaved by popular convulsions? As soon as peace shall have liberated the expansion of forces long repressed? Humanity will some day find its order, doubtless, but after an inevitable phase of tearing asunder and of chaos and by other

instruments

instruments than the tranquil and considered will of the peoples! There has been too much poverty, too much suffering. There will remain too many legitimate angers which will not be calmed by the serene contemplation of an ideal! And then, must we not take account of the Soviet's force of attraction, the natural prestige of the power which, while it will not have conquered alone, will have been the first to have stopped the German military force, the work of propaganda and grouping which the Communist parties, scorning all dangers, are pursuing in each of the occupied nations. Europe will not escape a revolutionary crisis tomorrow, and it is only from that crisis, by methods essentially as revolutionary as itself, that the institutions of justice will be able to arise among men and peace among the nations. That is the historical possibility that my deduction apparently has made the mistake of omitting. I understand this presentiment but I do not share it.

I do not by any means believe that war, and especially a long prolonged war creates the revolutionary occasion, arouses the revolutionary instinct among the victorious peoples. I say "victorious" for the victory of the group of nations to which France continues to belong willingly or unwillingly, is the only hypothesis on which I reason, first because it is the only reasonable one, and especially because, if the universal battle were to terminate in the victory of Hitler, none of the questions which I am studying would arise again for a France reduced to slavery. Twenty-three years ago, in 1918, I already found it difficult to admit this sort of mechanical equivalence between the war which ends and the revolution which begins; today I no longer give it any credence. It is not that the revolutionary faith has been deadened in me by experience or by age. Moreover, how could a revolutionary profession incommode any one in a period when the label of revolution is attached everywhere and to everything, even if it were the most out and out counter-revolution? But I perceive more and more clearly that the essence of every revolution resides in the nature of the aims which it proposes and the results which it obtains, not in the nature of the means used by its action. Any profound change in the political structure, and with still greater reason in the régime of property ownership and production, provided it is accomplished in advance of the regular evolution of things, represents a revolutionary mutation, even though

it were obtained by the most legal and peaceful methods; a violent insurrection, the conquest of power by force, even terror, would on the contrary be only an unsuccessful attempt at revolution if they did not result in a political or social transformation of a definitive character. Now, war may in certain cases create conditions favorable to insurrection and conquest of power, but not to revolutionary transformation. If I followed my thought to the end I would say that this law is verified on the vanquished nations almost as strictly as on the victorious nations: the example of the Commune of '71 is there to prove it, as well as that of Germany after the Armistice of 1918, and the Soviet revolution itself has suffered and still suffers hindrances from the economic difficulties which the other war left to it. This consideration is added to those which I have already formulated and which lead me to doubt whether on the day after the Allied victory Communist propaganda in France might assume the form of an excitation to insurrectional violence. Collective sentiments which will then manifest themselves, throughout Europe, with the greatest strength and imperativeness will doubtless be of a much simpler order than is supposed. Men are everywhere men, and they aspire first of all to satisfaction of those elementary human needs of a material, affective or even intellectual order, which the war interrupts but does not eliminate, and to which the cessation of the war seems to promise a satisfaction. People have been deprived of their children, driven from their home; they want to see them again. They have been hungry. They want to eat until satisfied. They have been bound and gagged by all forms of violence; they wish to live and speak freely. They have suffered, for months and years "the great insomnia of the world"; they wish to find quiet and repose again. Those are the underlying sentiments which emerge quickly from the froth of claims, anger, reprisals. In reality, the only collective need which a long war can excite to the point of filling it with the power of a revolutionary passion is simply the need for peace, that which Communism exploited so effectively in and outside Russia during the last phase of and after the other war, that which the leaders of the "National Revolution" tried hard to exalt and captivate before and after the Armistice. This need exists and will persist a certain time after the victory: Overdone by the war, exhausted by the war, men will wish, as

in 1918, that their sacrifices may be of profit at least to their children, and the essential duty of all who possess any influence over them will be precisely, during the period, perhaps quite short, that is left for useful action, to seize this possibility of enthusiasm, to hold it, to animate it with a creative surge, without its being exhausted in powerless convulsions and before it falls back into human routine. People will be able to convince themselves without too much difficulty that true peace can rest only on the stratified foundations of Political Democracy, Social Democracy and the International Order. It is in this direction, moreover, that the work of world reconstruction will be directed with an almost automatic certainty, since it will take for its starting point the destruction of the autarchic dictatorships, and its guidance will be entrusted to the hands of the two greatest democracies of the world. I do not believe, either, that the peoples will be very slow to take into account, so obvious is the spectacle to the eye, that history has cleared the ground before them; the material obstacles are overthrown, or ready to fall at the first shock. The political power of the bourgeoisie no longer exists, and its economic power will melt likewise as soon as a hand is laid on it. In France and throughout the continent of Europe, the bourgeois framework already lies in ruin; in the great Anglo-Saxon countries we see the bourgeoisie already consenting to a renewal which is nothing but an abdication. History is, then, blowing favorably and everywhere the people feel themselves carried by destiny. But here is where the real difficulty arises: will the people be worthy of this destiny? Will it be equal to playing the part assigned to it already by history? Will it understand or permit itself to be convinced that a favorable, or even destined, combination of circumstances are not sufficient for its acquisition, and especially its enduring possession, that, in order to seize the direction of a society, it, certainly, has need of force, the authority which is conferred by coincidence with the plan and the tendency of economic revolution, but that he also has need of dignity, that is, the ascendancy which is conferred by competence and moral superiority. For a transfer of power to take on the stability of a historical establishment, it must win assent from the conscience and the feelings as well as the reason; every sincere man must be obliged to exclaim at sight of it, not only: "That was to be", but: "It is just, it is good, it is fine that that should be". The French people, like all others, will not

accomplish

accomplish its mission, that is to say, will not build a society in its image, except to the extent that it shall have cultivated and exalted in itself the virtues which justify all human primacy: courage, generosity of heart, integrity of conscience and reason, abnegation of the person in view of the collective good.

Such is the theme of the necessary persuasion. Such is the task which must be undertaken immediately. We shall dispose of only a short period, perhaps, in which to bring it to a conclusion. When human affairs are not started in time and thoroughly in the new direction, it is always to be feared that a sort of automatic elasticity will take them back into their original ruts; therefore there will not be a day to lose. What we must understand first of all is that the effort would remain incomplete and vain if it were confined to a mass of individual catechizations. There is a morality of groups - political, social, national - as there is a morality of persons and it is to the bottom of these organs of the collective life that the work of moralization must be injected. If we contemplate, for example, internal democracy, is it not evident that it would be spoiled in its very essence if the play of forces facing each other therein were not made subject hereafter to the rules of good faith, probity, honor? Every democracy presupposes free activity and consequently possible conflict, but it is not true that everything is permissible in the civic struggle, that all means are good therein and the end justifies them, whether it is a question of parties, of social groups, or of the press, quite as well as individuals, no advantage, not even any necessity, justifies lying, defamation, disloyal trickery, abuse of force, betrayal of the obligations assumed and the word given. If one pictures in his mind the international order the evidence becomes still more striking, for it can rest on no other foundation than the validity, the sacredness of contracts, and if this foundation is lacking, everything is lacking, everything crumbles. Doubtless a violation of the law of contracts will always be possible in international life, like a crime in the civil society, but it must needs be, at least, that against this criminal exception, the nation injured may be able surely to set off all the others, that is to say, that morality will remain the law. Moreover, at all stages of this collective life, the subordination of the

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more individual interests to the more general interests must be recognized and practiced as an absolute obligation. Life in common would be impossible for men if the special and momentary interest of the individual did not bow before the general and permanent interest of a group, but the problem is to obtain from each political or social group what we demand of the individual, that is voluntary subordination to the general and permanent interest of the nation or of the economy, and of each nation what we require of the group, that is, voluntary subordination to the general and permanent interest of humanity. "Partisan" obstinacy, corporative narrowness, chauvinism, are of the same essence as personal selfishness. This renunciation of the rivalries and claims founded on the divergence of immediate interests, this spontaneously accorded sacrifice to a higher will, this consciousness of a constant relation and a dependency toward an order of superior reality which, from step to step, rises to the most extensive idea, that is what Socrates or Plato called wisdom, and what a Christian thinker like Pascal calls humility. But this humility must be a force and man's consciousness of it must be a pride. The past centuries have made of it a reason for believing and submitting oneself, we must make of it a reason for believing and acting.

It is a socialist who speaks so? Of course, and he flatters himself on being perfectly consistent with himself. The object of socialism is the establishment of a universal society founded on equal justice within nations, on equal peace between peoples. Many means must contribute to this end, but no Socialist worthy of that great name has ever thought that it could be obtained without a perfecting, an enriching, a deepening of the human person, without a continued propagation and extension of the spirit of discipline and sacrifice. Socialism has never denied the "moral values" nor the "spiritual values"; it has never repudiated either the sentiment of virtue or the sentiment of honor; it has only given them another meaning, as did Christianity before it. It has often been reproached with drawing to itself the multitude of the unhappy only by mirroring before their eyes the "satisfaction of their purely materialistic wishes", as Renan said in the past century, or, as they say today, the increase of their "enjoyments". To do away with poverty, eradicate scourges like cold, hunger, sickness, that is not a "purely material wish". How is the search

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for social equity a more materialistic sentiment than charity? When a workman demands a higher wage he is not thinking merely of loading his table with more food, he is thinking of a more spacious and healthful home, of better fed and educated children. Living, family, home, the healthy growing up of children, security in old age, those are not "materialistic" interests. Nevertheless, if socialism had confined itself to this order of claims, egoistic although noble, it would not have gathered about it such crowds of humanity. But it teaches the individual that his own selfish needs are solidary with the needs of all other men, his rights with their rights, his liberty with their liberty; that they will not obtain satisfaction except all at once, by their common effort, in a total creation as wide, as coherent, as harmonious as the physical universe. Thus, over the doctrine there hower the broadest human ideas: the universality of order and of fraternity. In the conception of Jaurès, for example, the idea of humanity becomes a principle of progress for civilization as a whole. It may furnish a new foundation for almost invariable moral precepts, for usages and rights which are constantly changing, a new food for art and speculated thought. It may impregnate all the forms of personal life, and all forms of collective existence, as the idea of God did in the Middle Ages. "Integral Socialism" is not at all a religion since it has neither dogma nor rites nor priest, but it calls and may satisfy the religious need, since it teaches a wisdom and virtue, since it accustoms the conscience to scrupulousness, since it teaches one to find in an ideal superior to the individual the motive and the recompense for personal action, since the form of assent that it receives permits sacrifices and resembles a faith.

How have people been able to be mistaken about it? How have honest minds been able to debase to such a degree the doctrine which so many million men in the world have cultivated in themselves as the highest aspiration? I have shown as I went along how we the Socialists were ourselves accountable for the error committed to our harm, but I believe that I can indicate in a word the deep reason for it. The course of great human doctrines, and of religions even, is determined by the nature of the resistences which they encounter as much as and more than by the nature of the initial impulse that they received. Socialism has had to live first of all, to install itself,

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make a place for itself: in order to demonstrate its legitimacy it has had to do a work of critical destruction; in order to protect its first steps, it has had to make a duty of conflict. Capitalistic society, misled by the instinct of conservation, treated it as a savage enemy, with which no accommodation is possible and which must be rejected and destroyed without pity. It has had to attack in order to defend itself. Battle has taken the place of apostleship, and in battle there necessarily intervene the primitive sentiments of man: reciprocal fear, avidity, tolerance; but now the polemic phase has passed; socialism may pass from its militant period to its triumphant period. The social régime which it was fighting and which was fighting it is fallen in ruins: even where it still persists materially it no longer believes in itself, and places itself in contradiction with its own laws. The postulates and axioms of socialism are usurped by the men and the parties who have conducted the most ferocious war on socialist organizations. It is on the basis established by the socialist principles that every society, consciously or not, tends to reform itself today. There is none even to the Roman Church which, through the position taken fifty years ago with regard to problems of property and labor, and without going back, moreover, on a condemnation in principle, does not manifest a parallelism of direction, a possible convergence of efforts, and, at least, a compatibility with socialism. In this stage, polemic has become almost useless and battles are no longer in season. Socialism must now apply itself only to the apostleship, to spiritual conquest. It must return, as the church did precisely in the crisis where the care for temporal interests had too dangerously obscured the object of its mission, to the purity of the original aspiration.

Is that a religious propaganda? If you wish. Spinoza has written: "Every action of which we are ourselves the cause, insofar as we have the idea of God, I attribute it to religion." What Spinoza calls the idea of God, we may call it the idea of the human, the idea of the universal, and the formula still holds. What is sure is that it corresponds to the particular character of France, which all through its history, from the Crusades to the French Revolution, has made human

solidarity

solidarity and the aspiration toward the universal the highest form of its patriotism. It is by this teaching, which I am almost tempted to call a preaching, that individuals and the nations they make up will become worthy of their historic mission. The purpose is to perfect man and society the one through the other, to arouse and animate in man the best that he has of virtue in order that he may make of his personal contribution the element of the best possible solution. The occasion is opportune for these great tasks; the field is favorable. The political crises which shook Europe before the war, the war itself, defeat, have served to prepare the ground. Enclosed in the burdens and the cares of the present we are never optimistic enough, for any optimistic view of the world presupposes a perception, an advance understanding of the duration. Who knows? A century or two from now, when thinkers contemplate with perfect serenity the development of our age, perhaps they will go so far as to judge that Nazism and Facism have themselves played their part in this providential advance of progress. I have recently reread a study, published a very few months before the war of 1870, in which Renan foresaw, and seemed to call for, the irruptions of those barbarous forces of which humanity, according to him, always conceals a sort of latent residue, and which he considered as a reserve of dynamic vitality. On the nations of extreme civilization, he says, whose virility is momentarily tired, the effusion, or rather the dissemination of those barbarous forces may produce an effect of stimulation, of renewal. The wave passes, the barbarous forces are thrown back into their subterranean hell, but the effect of fecundation, of renewal, has nonetheless been obtained and continued. I have already stated the reasons which keep me from recognizing to the totalitarian barbarians this stimulating and fecundating virtue. Renan had in mind the return of historic eventualities of a quite different order. He was thinking of those tidal waves of young and fresh material which have as a matter of fact come and covered over periodically, for thousands of years, the forms of regular civilization, as for example the alluvium of the Germanic tribes during the Roman Empire, as the intrusion of the Slavic peoples and if you wish, of the Oriental races in modern history. But he did not imagine, he could never have imagined that the destruction of these very forms could have been set up as an ideal, and that a

civilized

civilized fraction of humanity should some day come to the point of assigning to itself, as a voluntary purpose, the recall of primitive savagery. It is no longer a question here of the virgin deposits from a river, but rather a wind from the desert which scatters sterilely the layers of humus accumulated during the centuries. Poisons are sometimes remedies, but certain poisons, however, are only poisons. Therefore I brush aside the application of this view of Renan's to the totalitarian dictatorships; I cannot subscribe to it in any manner. But let us for a moment make the effort of assuming, contrary to all reason, that this barbarous fertilizer may have reawakened the productive virtue of an exhausted soil, let us admit that, through those channels of history which are perhaps impenetrable to the contemporaries, Nazism and Fascism have come to loot the old land of Europe in order that Socialist humanity might finally arise from it and flourish. Then, what a reparation, what happy vengeance! In the universal harmony, the *raison d'être* of the totalitarian dictatorships would have been to cause to arise from French soil the Social Democracy which is a living portion and creative element of International Democracy!

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In the essay to which I have just alluded, after having noted the "extraordinary" and "capital" character of the French Revolution, that "glory of France", that "French epic par excellence", after having affirmed that it will be, for centuries to come, "the subject on which the world will divide, which will serve as a ground for loving or hating each other", Renan added these words with a strangely prophetic accent; "Almost always the nations which have in their history an exceptional deed expiate this deed by long sufferings, and often pay for it with their national existence. It was so with Judea, Greece and Italy. For creating unique things from which the world lives and profits, these countries have passed through centuries of humiliation and national death ... The nations which have created religion, art, science, the empire, the papacy, all universal, not national, things, have been more than nations; they have been by that very fact less than nations, in this sense, that they have been the victims of their work..." This term, expiation, has become familiar to us; they show us again on every occasion that our country is today expiating the Revolution of 1789 and the sequel of errors which it has

brought

brought after it for over a century! But that is only a coarse polemic artifice; Renan, who is a historian and philosopher, takes this idea of expiation in an acceptation much higher and much fairer. According to him, France is not making expiation for a false or harmful work, but for a work too beautiful, too vast, and particularly too general for the forces of one nation alone. It is a question, in his thought, less of an expiation than a sacrifice. The nation which was the first to conceive and introduce verities of a universal nature thereby sacrifices itself to humanity. But Renan did not think that the consequences of this holocaust were to be as lasting for France as they have been for Judea, Greece and Italy, and for the very reason that the revolutionary work of France had been "less great and less universal". He thought that the "expiation" of France would fill the XIX century, after which France, having paid for her generous imprudence, would rise again younger and stronger, as Germany rose again after the political abasement which was its manner of expiating the Reformation. Renan had not calculated exactly; the expiation will have lasted half a century more. Today France finds itself again on the level of humanity, it is its turn to receive the deferred recompense for the sacrifice whose benefit humanity already had reaped.

How can all these concordant thoughts fail to bring comfort to our confidence? The just and necessary work will be carried out. If ever the wretchedness and meanness of the present time should throw confusion in our hearts, then let us fix our gaze beyond our circumscribed moment of the present toward the past and the future; let us extend our view beyond our narrow canton of space toward the harmonious whole of the universe. Not that we should forget the task at hand and amuse ourselves with vain contemplations. We are not dreamers, we cannot afford to dream; but the present moment will pass, the dictatorships camped on Europe will pass, and eternal ideas do exist in the world; there is a human destiny which is itself bound to universal laws, in which we must inscribe our future destiny. We work in the present, not for the present. How often, in the meetings, I have repeated and commented on Nietzsche: "Let the future and the most remote things be the rule for your present days. It is not the love of the near, it is the love of the most distant that I commend to you". Why should the human race, or the French nation, show

themselves

themselves unworthy in the future of what they have accomplished in the past? The human race has created wisdom, science and art, why should it be powerless to create justice, fraternity and peace? It has given birth to a Plato and a Homer, a Shakespeare and a Hugo, a Michaelangelo and a Beethoven, a Pascal and a Newton, all these human heroes whose genius is only contact with the essential truths, with the central reality of the universe. Why should not the same race beget the guides capable of leading it toward the forms of collective life which approach most nearly to universal law and universal harmony? The social system undoubtedly has its laws of attraction and gravitation like the stellar systems. Man does not have two different souls, one for singing and research, the other for action; one for feeling beauty and understanding the truth, the other for feeling brotherhood and understanding justice. Whoever contemplates this perspective feels himself animated with an invincible hope. Let man contemplate the goal, let him trust to his destiny, let him fear not to use his strength. When man becomes troubled and discouraged, he has only to think about humanity.

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