

toward state control and *laissez faire* was just as much a French as it was a German "characteristic."

The exaltation of the state that flavored German idealism and her economic and political theory also played a great part in French history. "The protective spirit had been deeply planted in the French character," writes R. H. Dabney, "therefore it was not strange that there were writers like Necker, Mably, and Morelly,<sup>49)</sup> who saw the means of improving the conditions of the people, not in *laissez faire*, but in what they considered beneficent regulation by the state."<sup>50)</sup> This attitude never left French thought or, for that matter, the ideas of men anywhere.

Nor was this attitude new; it was always newly revived and adapted to the fashions of the moment, but it could nourish itself on practically the whole of human history. Plato's *Republic*, the "ideal state" of Aristotle, the countless visions of remembered and forgotten utopians expressed dissatisfaction with things as they were, and longed for conditions as they ought to be. They expressed, too, suppression and exploitation, the inability to change conditions at will, the isolation of groups and individuals, social frictions and the impossibility of overcoming them, the escape from the outer disharmony into the inner harmony of the imagination; the hope that some one — the messiah, some force, the state — would straighten things out, would solve the overwhelming problems of mankind in the face of which the greatest humility still looked like utter conceit.

Within the capitalist structure, however, the exaltation of the state was always an expression of the inner contradictions and the historical limitations of capitalism itself. It was a declaration of bankruptcy on the part of those who praised the profit motive as the creator of all thing valuable, who spoke with pride of the self-regulating features of their marvelous market-mechanism, of the liberating democratic forces inherent in commodity production. For them it was a "return" to a previous, more primitive state of affairs, a set-back, a temporary retreat from the new, the better, the limitless, the unsurpassable capitalist society. If they called upon the state for help, they did so shamefacedly, always ready to bite the hand that had just fed them, always attempting to put the state — its servant — in its place. But the state was a feature of capitalism that could never totally be removed because of the existing class and property structure and which could thus, and at times had to, become the dominating feature. The danger was

49) Morelly, for example, published in Paris in 1775 a book called "Code de la Nature" that advocated a sort of state-communism. He said that "nothing in society shall belong as individual property to any person. Private property is detestable, and he who should attempt in the future society to re-establish it will be imprisoned for the rest of his life as a violent madman and enemy of humanity. Each citizen is to be supported, maintained, and employed by the public."

50) *The Causes of the French Revolution*, p. 257.

always there that some day it might destroy the bourgeoisie which supported it most staunchly and at the same time had the greatest contempt for it.

If for the optimistic bourgeoisie the state was rather unnecessary as far as the economic life of the nation was concerned, for the pessimistic bourgeoisie this independent economic life seemed just as unnecessary because of the existence of the state. Though the latter remembered that progress had been described as the emancipation of capital from the state, they could conceive equally well the emancipation of the state from private property. To them the whole bourgeois revolution appeared as a mere intermediary phase in the development from an unsatisfactory state to a better one that really represented and even was identical with society as a whole. Capitalists, full of despair during economic depressions, on the verge of ruin in the tumult of the crisis, unsuccessful in their climbing towards the top, possessed by the fear of being hurled into the proletarian abyss; intellectuals wavering between old and new loyalties, experimenting with the ideas of the day, divorced from the bread-baskets of the aristocracy that had fed them together with jesters, jugglers, and dancing bears, not appreciated by the suspicious, miserly, accumulating bourgeoisie of the founding period, unacknowledged by the beastly exploited and thus "beastly proletarian scum" that found its happiness in cheap whiskies and its salvation in the mumblings of still cheaper priests; politicians conspiring for power and positions; revolutionists looking for "radical" solutions and "shortcuts" to a better society — in brief, all those who opposed the "successful" within the atomized capitalist society based their hopes and programs on that sole feature within the capitalist society that seemed to be the single social element in the anarchic scramble of individual interests and activities.

Hobbes' *Leviathan* of the future was expected to be of a beneficial nature; it would control but also secure a more blessed life. Hegel's "divine idea" of the all-powerful state was no Frankenstein either. And now, after the first experiences with a capitalism quite grown up, a state was envisioned that might preserve its good side, i. e., its productivity and abolish all its bad sides: exploitation, crisis, and possibly even wars. The "true socialists" of Germany who were grouped around the idealist, Moses Hess, thought their way into the future in a direct line from Hegel to the communist state. Fourier's *phalanstère* and all the utopian experiments based on similar ideas, expressed paralleling tendencies in France. The idea of the future state that was to be society appeared in speculations such as Bellamy's *Looking Backward*. The government of the French February Revolution, as well as that of the little Napoleon, emphasized once more the identity of state and society. The earlier German labor movement under Lasalle was equally convinced that state control was the key to all social questions and so was their class enemy and friend-in-arms, Prince Bismarck.

To be for the state was to take a communal as against an egotistical stand; it seemed to be equivalent to a choice between capitalism and social-

ism. Some of the bourgeoisie turned into "socialists"<sup>51)</sup> merely by being good nationalists. This was the counterpart to what in England had been called "Tory-Chartism," and what had turned Napoleon's adventures into "peoples' wars." The temporary "alliances" of opposing classes such as those between Tories and workers, Bonapartists, capitalists, and workers, liberals and socialists, Prussian *Junkers* and the laboring class were time-conditioned opportunistic moves made possible by the continuous shifts of economic fortunes and political power positions of various groups and interests within the general development of the capitalist nations.

Those who bound their hopes to the further development of the capitalist forces of production necessarily favored further centralization of economic control; and thus, in order not to lose the achievements of the bourgeois revolution, they favored a strong "social state" to combat the inevitable result of capital concentration — the dictatorial plutocracy. To make possible the capitalist mode of production with its promised economic abundance and also the liberty that had inspired the revolutionary bourgeoisie, a state was needed which would guarantee these liberties that were progressively destroyed by the process of capital accumulation. But the "return" to the dominance of the state did not need to be demanded. It was one of the results of capitalistic development.

To oppose an increasing control by the state would have been possible only through the stabilization of conditions as they existed prior to and during the French Revolution and the American War for Independence. As pointed out before, the Jacobins had not been the "true" representatives of the French Revolution for their dictatorship had been directed against necessities. Their social vision did not go beyond a democratic peasantry, a decentralized static economy of insignificant enterprisers who had more or less equal competitive strength and were thus able to prevent the rise of monopolies. The Jeffersonian democracy, too, had been defeated long before it celebrated its political successes. The American constitution was designed as an instrument to help the industrial and mercantilist interests in the East to counteract and overcome the pressure of the agricultural majority that constituted Jefferson's followers. To have the kind of democracy that was in the mind of the people during this period, it would have been necessary to call a halt to all further development, to "freeze" society once more as it seemingly had been "frozen" in medieval society. But this was not possible. The *Federalists* won in America and Robespierre died under the guillotine because the future belonged to big business and large industry, to Capital.

The concentration and centralization of capital destroys the socio-economic basis of even that limited kind of democracy that may exist in class

51) In a letter to Marx (1845) describing a "socialist workers meeting" F. Engels wrote: "The whole of Elberfeld and Barmen was present, from the money aristocracy down to the *épicerie*, only the proletarians were missing." (Briefwechsel, Vol. I, p. 16).

and slave societies. Thus it can be pointed out, for instance, against people who adjudge the American South as an essentially fascist regime compared with the industrial East that the opposite would be much nearer the truth. The South was rather, as Donald Davidson remarked, "as complete a realization as we have any right to expect of the kind of society that Jefferson visualized, the society in which democracy could flourish and remain itself without artificial stimulation."<sup>52)</sup>

Indeed, most of the hitherto existing social theories opposing the state have adhered to socio-economic concepts that were in opposition to the real developmental tendencies of capitalism. Not only Proudhon but almost all the anarchist creeds looked backward when constructing their blue-prints of the future. The "individualism" of the bourgeois revolution was retained in the *Bourses du Travail*, in the English "Guild Socialism" and came to light even in the "counter-utopias" opposed to those conceived in the spirit of state control as, for instance, in William Morris' "News from Nowhere." This much was obvious, however, that capital development led either to a plutocracy that made the state the servant of small groups of titans engaged in the exploitation of all, or that the state destroyed the plutocracy by making itself master of society.<sup>53)</sup> In either case there was reason to fear that liberty, fraternity and equality would soon be ended.

(To be continued in the following issues of *New Essays*)

52) Mr. Cash and the Proto-Dorian South. *The Southern Review*. Summer, 1941, p. 15.

53) Before the turn of the century even the socialist program was simply a demand for state ownership of the means of production. In fairness to Marx and Engels, however, it must be said that both sought state power to eliminate the power of the state. The "administration of things that was to follow the government over men, they saw merely as a branch of the production and distribution process of no greater importance than any other. Practical politicians, however, aspired to little more than the replacement of individual capitalists by governmental administration. The post-Marxian theories of socialism resurrected the division of society into controllers and controlled. Georges Sorel observed rightly that the "authors of all inquiries into moderate socialism were forced to acknowledge that the latter implies a division of society into two groups: the first of these a select body, organized as political party; the second is the whole body of producers. This division is so evident that generally no attempt is made to hide it." The first world war led to an extended state control over production and distribution. All socialization theories developed during and after the war leaned heavily on the war-time example as Lenin's for instance. As Elie Halévy has said: "The whole post-war socialism is derived from this war-time organization more than from Marxism."

## BOOK REVIEWS

*And Keep Your Powder Dry!* An Anthropologist looks at America. By Margaret Mead. William Morrow & Co., New York, 1942, X and 274 pp., \$2.50.

There is more in this stimulating book than is revealed by its somewhat martial title. Yes, there is a lot of powder in the "American character", and the author is just the right person to bring out this important asset of the American people in the present war. If we assume, in a preliminary way, that "powder" in a character-study means about the same as "pep", there is no doubt that the author herself has brought a generous share of that vital ingredient to her study of the stuff the American people are made of. Her book reveals, furthermore, a fair amount of that good marksmanship which does not necessarily go with a superabundance of powder. As old Leatherstocking advised his young friend of the Mohican tribe, "I tell you, Uncas, you are wasteful of your powder, and the kick of the rifle disconcerts your aim! Little powder, light lead, and a long arm, seldom fail of bringing the death screech from a Mingo! At least such has been my experience with the creature's."

Without losing sight of the essential connection between the manifold subjects treated from various angles in the different parts of the book, we propose to deal with its main contents under two separate headings, of which the first should read,

### Coming of Age in America

The author does not claim that she, or any other student of primitive societies, can approach modern civilized society with the high degree of detachment achieved in the study of remote and strange societies and still remain a normal, particip-

ant member of that society. The very familiarity of the language, institutions, ideas and mores seems to exclude the "detailed objective recording in human behavior" which is the aim of anthropological research.

Here is, indeed, a very contradictory situation. The greatest praise that Franz Boas could bestow on his gifted pupil in the Foreword to Margaret Mead's best known book, *Coming of Age in Samoa*, was that she had been able "to identify herself so completely with the Samoan youth." For this purpose the anthropologist has to step outside his culture and his century. There is a chance that in face of such different moral standards and theoretical concepts, he may even be able, within certain limits, to forget about the equally accidental and conventional values which are part and parcel of his own culture, deeply ingrained in his and his kin's behaviour. Yet if he turns back, as Margaret Mead has attempted to do in a few important chapters of her recent book, to apply the same methods to his own civilization, the trouble is not that it is difficult for him to identify himself with this particular culture, but that he is already too completely identified with it. Even if he succeeded in the contradictory task of stepping outside and remaining inside the society which is the subject of his study, his readers might miss the essential point since the anthropological record will lack "the whole incidental paraphernalia of strangeness" which in other cases are all the time reminding them of the "otherness" of the described situations. That is, as we may note in parenthesis, ex-

actly the same difficulty which for a long time prevented the true understanding of the Marxian criticism of the fetishist nature of modern capitalist "commodity production".

In spite of such difficulties, Margaret Mead sets out valiantly to solve her self-imposed task. Chapters VI and VII deal with the typical attitudes towards "achievement" and "success" which in American life are derived from the particular relationships between parents and children on the one hand, and the influences exerted on the growing child by his siblings, near relations, nurses on the other hand. A high point of this kind of investigation is reached in the ninth chapter (*The Chip on the Shoulder*), which might indeed have been an excellent section of the author's unwritten book, *Coming of Age in America*.

Before dealing with the conclusions the author derives from her anthropological investigations we point to a certain ambiguity in her own description of the aims of the new anthropological approach. There is no reason to deny that, as the author says in one place, "one way of understanding the typical character structure of a culture" is to follow step by step the way in which it is "mediated" to the child by his parents and his brothers and sisters. Yet there are other statements in which she raises a stronger and more exclusive claim. She contends that just this particular method is the only way to "understand" the regularity of the particular behavior of particular people in a particular period, while all other hitherto accepted scientific approaches lead at best to a mere "description". Since it is probable that the incongruity of this claim does not lie exclusively or primarily in the somewhat spurious use of the two terms which we have put in quotes, we reprint the passage in full:

"To the family we must turn for an understanding of the American character structure. We may describe the adult American, and for descriptive purposes we may refer his behavior to the American

scene, to the European past, to the state of American industry, to any other set of events which we wish; but to understand the regularity of this behavior we must investigate the family in which the child is reared." (37)

From this and many similar passages it seems to follow that for such problems as the war and the ensuing peace the reference to the underlying historical, economic, and other material conditions ("any other set of events"! ) is expressly cut out to make room for the only relevant question "how babies become Americans". The author does not distinguish between the investigation of the dynamic changes of a given historical structure of society, and that of the comparatively static ("timeless") conditions which are commonly supposed to be characteristic of the so-called primitive societies. She expressly excludes any possible attempt to approach the investigation of the origin of the American character by a question which looks towards "a few historical causes" (80-81), or to explain the "betrayal" of the Liberation of Europe after the first World War by "statements about international banking, the big interests, the fear of Communism in the bourgeois mind."

There is no doubt in the reviewer's mind that from a strictly scientific viewpoint we must accept this (or any other) methodological restriction of a given piece of investigation. It is quite possible, e. g., to deal with such events as the World War and the Depression merely in terms of "believing in" and afterwards "betraying" a "Cause", and of an ensuing "punishment". Though the reviewer is not much impressed by this or any other particular form of "phrasing the world", he admits that an anthropological "theory of character structure" on these lines, as opposed to the traditional "theory of history" may serve its purpose. In the author's words, it may help to make this war "make sense to us, as a people, if we are to fight it and win it; and then work to keep all that we have gained."

Unfortunately, the author has not reached her results, even in the more especially "anthropological" chapters, through a strict adherence to those methodological postulates. There are deep insights into the peculiar dynamics of American life and its basic driving force, the craving for success. There are brilliant formulations of the inherent contradictions of the American mind, its ambitions and fears, its incessant efforts to measure up to an unknown and unknowable standard, and the resulting anguish of a desperate uncertainty. Yet it is a delusion that these results have in fact been obtained without connecting those peculiar traits of the American character with definite historical, economic and societal conditions. This becomes unmistakably clear if we turn from the author's analysis of the family relationships as such to her discussion of the particular role which has been and is being played in the development of the American character by the incident of immigration. It is here that "history" creeps back into all the author's descriptions of the particular dynamics of the ever changing American scene. The general trend of this incessant movement is derived from the quasi-historical phenomenon of a permanent influx of newcomers and their gradual adaptation. The "first generation" tries to overcome its European heritage (the author never mentions the analogous processes of the Asiatic immigration!) The "second" and all subsequent generations strive to overcome the various intermediate phases of a never completed process of Americanization, until in a somewhat elusive last phase the whole non-stop movement seems to turn backward in a circular curve since there is nothing left to which one might still adapt oneself. The only way out of this situation is, as the author proceeds to show in the second part of the book, to turn from American isolation to a world-wide extension of the American society, complemented by the valuable elements of other cultures, other peoples, and other civil-

izations. This last and greatest opportunity is offered to the American people, in the author's view, by the present war.

#### Phrasing the World for War

"Winning the War" is written in large letters, as it were, all over the author's book. She dedicates to this purpose not only her great talent of factual investigation but, being the kind of person who must go the whole hog in all she does, throws in a number of most atrocious prejudices—such as the reviewer fondly believes she would not have seriously considered even a few years ago. There is a terrible exaggeration in the manner in which she lumps together, in one foul pool of "miasma", all that the best type of the last generation of Americans thought and felt after the triple shock of the War, the Prosperity, and the Depression. The last twenty-five years are told as the story of "a generation who betrayed their own ideals, whose moral muscles went flaccid", and who exposed the whole succeeding generation to "a moral peril such as no group of Americans had ever been exposed to before". There is only one good point to this whole situation. The bodies and souls of the offspring of that lost generation, the unfortunate children of the "moral debauches of the last twenty years" were saved from incurable moral decay by the fact that their would-be defilers, on top of their other failures, failed also in sufficiently infecting them with their own cynical failure. Any reader who suspects this description of being overdone should read in the chapter **Are Today's Youth Different?**, the humble apology of the generation who committed the horrible crime. This is what, according to the author, they should say if they want to look their children in the eye:

*"We admit that we have done something which might have crippled you. We taught you to believe that everything that we fought for was a mirage and that we were dopes to have fallen for it . . . We did fail in that we withdrew our moral effort from the job, and in that we stopped*

*trying. We had put our hands to the plough and turned back. For that we must ask forgiveness. We failed you because we lied to you, forcing ourselves and you to believe that we had no part in the way in which the world was getting steadily worse. Still we can say with deep thankfulness that we have failed to break you, failed to rob you of your American inheritance . . . In this our final failure, to put upon our children our own weakness, we have failed also, thank God." (pp. 127—128)*

This repentant mood of the author, like a magnifying mirror, reflects a state of mind which of late has become increasingly common among the American intelligentsia. It is for this reason mainly that we have dwelt on it although, if we look at the book as a whole, it does not represent its main tendency.

The true aims of Margaret Mead's work are much better expressed by the fact that it is presented as "one part of the program of the Council of Intercultural Relations which is attempting to develop a series of systematic understandings of the great contemporary cultures so that the special values of each may be orchestrated in a world built new." The anxious question whether this goal can be reached by a conscious effort of the American people as it is today ("There is no time to re-educate us — even to the degree to which re-education is possible") underlies the careful stock-taking of all the strengths and weaknesses of the American character which takes up the greater part of the book. It is highly interesting to observe the manner in which the author marshals the often widely divergent and even conflicting results of her various investigations and reasonings to the one purpose of presenting the American task in this war not as a mere world conquest but as a much more difficult, more daring and, therefore, a much more worthwhile job for the Americans.

"Building a new world" — what a task for God's chosen people! "Americans should make good leaders in such an undertaking" (p.

121). The very contradictions between the American character and the American situation: the all-devouring impetus toward success in every young American and the impossibility for "the fourth-generation American who is the fourth of a line of successful men" to go on succeeding, going places, onwards and upwards (76 ff.); the secret knowledge that this whole need for an everincreasing success which since pioneer times has been an indispensable element of the American way of life, is after all suited only to an ever expanding world (261) — all these contradictions inherent in present-day American democracy lead the author, herself an American, to the ardent conviction that the only worthwhile aim is to blend these contrasting features of the American character "for a New World which lies not in the New World, is not entirely of it, and yet could not have been without it" (79).

Even more revealing is the "precedent" on which the author bases the details of her American plan of "building the world new." As a good American she claims for America the whole credit for the historical process by which during the last two hundred years the old craftsmanship and specialized hereditary skills of Europe were replaced by machinery. It was not the Dutch, the English, the German and, in the last phase, also the American, who together performed that tremendous change of the whole economic structure of society which was described by their historians as the Industrial Revolution. It was the American alone who, by three successive steps of one gigantic effort, moved away from the European system of specialized personal skills and, through the pioneer stage when each man was his own Jack-of-all-trades, moved on to "our present age of machine tools and assembly lines" (220). It was the American who with his characteristic mixture of strengths and weaknesses, imported all those valuable skills from Europe, yet did not learn them himself, but instead set about studying the underlying opera-

tions and made machines to do what till then the European skilled workers had done (222-24).

Of a similar nature, the author continues her argument, is the new particular task that lies ahead of the Americans at the present juncture. Again, the task is not to invent a new culture for the whole world *de novo*. "If we wish to build a world which will use all men's diverse gifts, we must go to school to other cultures, analyze them and rationalize our findings. We must find models and patterns which, orchestrated together on a world scale, will make a world as different from the old as the machine world was from the craft industries of the middle ages" (235).

The whole plan as presented, and the historical "precedent" on which it is based, confirm that this is essentially an international task and not merely or primarily the job of a particular nation. Just as de Tocqueville one hundred years ago dealt with American Democracy as part and phase of a world historical process which he described as the marsh of revolution, so we must recognize today the building of a new society not as the enterprise of one nation but as the outcome of a worldwide movement. The author herself, after having neglected this aspect in the earlier parts of her book, disarms our criticism on the concluding page. After having fully presented the importance of the task from "inside" her own American culture, she adds that "this is not a job for one

nation alone". Though for immediate purposes it is necessary to "see this job as America's", we must see it in a wider aspect if we want to transform the fulfillment of the job at hand into a first step towards a future state of society "where there will be neither war, nor the absence of war, but a world that is not war-oriented at all."

The present reviewer has no quarrel with this lofty ideal. Yet from a methodological point of view it is hard to discover any but the most tenuous link between those ultimate results of the book and the anthropological investigations from which it started. Thus it seems that the book as a whole does not bear out the author's claim that if we want to win this war and to build the world anew after the war, we must know what American mothers are telling the four-year-olds at the breakfast table. This deficiency does not invalidate the author's attempt to apply to the modern American scene those methods and skills which during the last seventeen years she applied in studying the primitive societies of South Sea Islanders and Indians. Many signs point to the increasingly important part that such "unhistorical" approaches as those of anthropology, psychology and technology will play in dealing with what in the receding past of the Euramerican civilization were regarded as purely historical subjects. A detailed discussion of this larger problem is beyond the scope of this review.

K. K.

*ESCAPE FROM FREEDOM.* By Erich Fromm. Farrar & Rinehart. New York. (305 pp.; \$3.00)

This book begins with some extremely dubious statements. When Fromm writes "The familiar picture of man in the last century was one of a rational being" and "One felt confident that the achievements of modern democracy had wiped out all sinister forces," he forgets that up to now civilization has been confined to a few islands in a vast ocean of

barbarism, ignorance and corruption. Even in the more advanced nations, the "enlightened citizen" of the 19th century has always been in a minority; and we now realize that this worthy citizen was tremendously over-confident, largely because of his unconsciousness of the terrible insecurity of his historical position. Today the problems posed by the rela-

tions of white and colored races in the East and by the changes going on inside backward countries require of us a more critical, that is to say a more revolutionary, attitude toward the struggle for freedom.

In general, however, *ESCAPE FROM FREEDOM* is a valuable contribution to what might be called our "intellectual rearmament." Past concepts of freedom have by now lost much of their validity. There was always a good deal of hypocrisy about bourgeois democracy, which corresponded too naively with the interests of a rising capitalist class; and the old socialist and anarchist doctrines were themselves too much colored by the society in which they were born. A revision of our knowledge and our ideals is indicated — or perhaps rather a clarification. This is what Fromm undertakes, in some ways most successfully.

"Nazism is an economic and political problem, but the hold it has over a whole people has to be understood on psychological grounds." The key is furnished by the distinction between "freedom from" and "freedom to." The individual, as the shattering of feudal forms by rising capitalism makes him increasingly independent of the social group, feels himself increasingly helpless in the midst of an organized chaos which threatens to shatter him as a human being. The alienation of man, to use Marx's well-known expression, leads him to give up this terrifying negative "freedom from," which is quite different from that positive "freedom to" which expresses itself in spontaneity, creative work, human solidarity and intelligence. The authoritarian regimes at once invite and require the individual to reject his humanity, exploiting his despair and feeling of insecurity. This humanity, as Fromm well shows, is an embarrassment anyway under capitalist democracy, which debauches the individual and leaves him only the illusion of thinking. His ideological and spiritual nourishment is forced

on him by the same kind of high-powered advertising methods as are used to promote a new tooth-paste. Fromm's analysis brings out the dangerous kinship of the sick democracies and the total dictatorships of our time. The social conformism of the former, induced by the capitalists' control of the press, the radio, the movies, and the educational system, and the state-imposed uniformity of the latter—these are shown to differ quantitatively rather than qualitatively.

Fromm explains the psychology of the masses who accept fascism by the need to escape from a "freedom" that has become intolerable because of the insecurity, both economic and spiritual, which accompanies it under capitalism. This is, of course, quite true; and his analysis of the origin of fascism is extremely valuable. But the totalitarian experience continues, and we can now see it developing a new kind of insecurity even worse than the one that it remedied: the German and Russian masses no longer live simply under the rule of an all-powerful central authority, which has its psychological attractions, but rather in an atmosphere of permanent catastrophe. Will this not force the subjugated human being once more to reassert himself and take his destiny into his own hands? Many years of experience in a totalitarian society with socialist tendencies have taught me, furthermore, that a collective economy requires the initiative and the freely-expressed criticism of the masses of producers, that is to say, freedom of thought based on feeling of human solidarity and on the development of the individual. The suppression of this freedom causes an enormous waste, which seems to me to be one of the chief weaknesses of authoritarian regimes. Here may be found the economic basis for a new liberty in the collective economies of tomorrow.

Victor Serge

*Make This the Last War.* By Michael Straight. Harcourt, Brace and Company, New York. (417 pp.; \$3.00)

The author believes that the United Nations are engaged in a life-and-death struggle with a rebellion against mankind. To forestall an Axis victory and a subsequent destruction of civil society, the United Nations need not only a powerful army under a single command but, most of all, a new vision. This new vision must break away from the prewar concept and practice of segregated power politics and monopoly imperialism. The millions of soldiers and workers engaged in this life-and-death struggle abroad and at home must be told that they are fighting and dying for a new equalitarian society, a society which will really be free from want and fear. Up till now, Mr. Straight charges, none of the war aims released by the United Nations has given us such guarantee. On the contrary, the much heralded Atlantic Charter contains the seeds for further segregation and even fascist development. The most dangerous weakness in the Charter is Article Three because it provides that the signatories of the Charter "respect the right of all people to choose the form of government under which they will live". This guarantee constitutes no guarantee at all. There is no case in modern history where a people have volutarily chosen fascism as a form of government. There is also no case where a dictator has not claimed that he was in fact chosen by the people. Article Three may be the forcing wedge for the return of fascism to the world.

Another major source of frustration Straight sees in Article Four which will endeavor "with due respect for existing obligations to further the enjoyment of all States . . . on equal terms to the trade and raw materials of the world which are needed for their economic prosperity." If we intend to return to the international property relations of 1938, Straight complains, it would be far better to say so now. Further-

more, the Charter does not contain assurances to oppressed peoples that they will be freed, and whenever amplification has been sought we have remained ominously silent.

Mr. Straight makes this lack of clarity in the formulation of our war aims the central theme of his plea for a new vision and for coordinated action towards the realization of his new society. To substantiate his argument that prewar society was bad, he delves into the recent socio-economic and colonial history of Great Britain and the United States, reveals the reasons for the alienation of colonial peoples, shows how we continue to exploit the Chinese even now and why, on account of this policy, fascist tendencies are making rapid headway in China. He charges the government with inefficiency in the execution of decrees converting industry from peace- to war-production, and the blame for these shortcomings he pins on the administration's inability to curb the activity of powerful individual interests which hope to restore, after the war, the economic and social structure of 1935. Equally vehemently Straight attacks the appeasers who cluster around Professor Nicholas Spykman's handy guide of American imperialism. "America's Strategy in World Politics", whose strategy, allegedly inspired by the most permanent factor in the world — geography — calls for a friendly attitude towards Germany and Japan and a hostile attitude towards Russia and China. Fortunately, Mr. Straight rejoices, we are now realizing our mistakes and we are beginning to move in the right direction. We are coordinating our technical and manpower resources, we have set up price ceilings and are rigidly enforcing rationing, we freeze wages and limit salaries to \$25,000 annually, we encourage voluntary savings through increased sale of war bonds, we establish minimum standards of nutrition and enact laws towards greater social secu-

rity; in short, we are moving towards the equalitarian society. But that is not enough; we must now work out in detail the form of society that is to emerge after the war.

The author visualizes a world in chaos. Large parts of Europe will be devastated. Millions of people will be starving. Two thirds of the children may face death or lifelong disfigurement. All former institutions will be destroyed, and "almost no organizations will be in existence capable to provide a government." During these chaotic conditions the European Federation will be born and the United Nations must provide leadership and help. In Mr. Straight's opinion three fundamental problems will have to be solved:

1) **The Provision of Capital** for backward or devastated nations is to be secured by the organization of a United Nations Reconstruction Finance Corporation which is to work in close collaboration with similar government agencies of the affiliated countries;

2) **The Control of the Terms of Trade** will have to be regulated by a United Nations Commodity Corporation which is to fix the price for primary products and the rate of interest on capital loans;

3) **The Planning of World Development** is to be left in the hands

*THE SILENT WAR.* The Underground Movement in Germany. By J. B. Jansen and Stefan Weyl. J. B. Lippincott, New York. (357 pp.; \$2.75).

The authors of this book belong to the group, **New Beginning**, which tried to revive the Social Democratic Party of Germany after its destruction by the Nazis. Exiled members of the group kept in contact with others that remained in Germany. They were able to receive inside information almost up to the beginning of the war because of the continuous stream of immigrants and because they could read German publications which revealed in court and

of a United Nations Resources Commission which is to guide a) a country's national development and b) prevent overdevelopment of certain industries through the uncoordinated rush of industrialization that has self-sufficiency as its objective.

If these problems can be solved, as Mr. Straight believes they can, then society will recover from the wounds of the war. The new society, based upon planned trade on a world-wide scale, will eliminate unemployment and privation, the people will be happy and free again, and thus the present war will go down in history as the last war.

There is no need to discuss in detail the author's particular demands. In spite of his wish to mobilize all progressive democratic movements of our time: the labor movement, the New Deal, Communists, "and all those who are fighting for greater freedom and world conscience in China, in India, in all nations," he does not really cut the link between his **Free World Association** and the forces in control of the United Nations today.

The book contains much valuable information but it does not make good the author's promise to provide a "new vision" for the struggling forces of democracy.

W. B.

police reports that the Nazis were not able to stamp out all opposition. The bulk of the book, however, deals with the history of the opposition of the labor parties before Hitler's ascendancy to power. Most of what it states for the ensuing period are facts, experiences, and observations already publicized by the exiled Social Democratic Party and the **Inside Germany Reports** of the English and American "Friends of German Freedom." Although there is no reason

to doubt the truth of these reports, what they reveal does not justify the spurious title of the book.

The book deals not so much with the **silent war** against the Nazis as with the fact that organizations once established die very hard. It also shows that such organizations will do anything to regain their loss, in this particular case, by subscribing to the war plans of the allied nations which coincide with their own desire to remove a political competitor. The "silent war" is offered part-

ly as their contribution to the common cause and partly to justify their present and future claims to a share of the results of a victory over Hitler. Hitler's fear of a home-front of which the authors speak has, however, really nothing to do with the opposition to which they point nor with one which they would be able to envision. The opposition will come not from political forces of the past but from the contradictions of the present.

M.

*THE PRINCIPLE OF POWER.* The Great Political Crisis of History, By Guglielmo Ferrero. G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York. (333 pp.; \$3.50).

In this — his last book — the late Professor Ferrero elaborates upon his earlier established theory of legitimacy in government and connects it with the present war. According to Ferrero the cause of the frightful disorder to which Europe has succumbed is not the disturbance of international relations among the various states, but the result of the internal crisis that completely upset all the Old World States. Responsible are the revolutions which, since 1917, have convulsed practically the whole of the European continent. Once more a revolutionary government unleashed a general war for the same reason and in exactly the same manner as the French Revolution. What we are witnessing on a world-wide scale are Napoleon's adventures translated into German. If war results from **revolutionary governments**, peace can be established and maintained only with the help of **legitimate government** and thus Ferrero demands a new "Congress of Vienna", which may be able to save the world as it saved Europe in 1815.

This outline, contained in the preface, comprises the whole of his thesis. The rest of the book merely illustrates it. The historical illustrations and anecdotes, however, make the book readable despite its unrealistic propositions. The peculiar state-

ments are based on attributes of "human nature" such as "fear" and on "necessities" such as the "historical constant" that authority comes from above and legitimacy from below. Sovereignty implies superiority but also the consent of the governed. Their consent, the "principle of legitimacy", in Ferrero's view, is always "in harmony with the customs, the culture, the science, the religion, the economic interests of an age." For him the relationship between rulers and ruled is similar to that between father and child. Though "government is condemned to live in terror because... it makes use of physical force and violence; yet, despite its fear, it will always be stronger than all the revolts that will break out against it, because its existence, like its fear, is conformable to human nature."

Unfortunately for humanity men once forgot what is conformable to their nature. "Because toward the end of the eighteenth century," Ferrero writes, "one of the foremost peoples in Europe refused for six weeks, only six weeks, to obey, a sort of revolutionary apocalypse was thereby brought about, which has lasted for a century and a half now, after having devastated Europe, threatens to spread over all the world and destroy everything." Hanging in mid-air between monarchy, which

was no longer possible, and democracy, which was not yet possible, in desperation people turned towards revolutionary government. The Weimar Republic, too, was not a legitimate government because too many Germans refused to accept republican institutions. But a revolutionary government is not sure of its superiority and cannot rely on its people. Possessed of fear it keeps on arming itself the more frightened it becomes, and in the reflecting game of fear the true origin of war may be found.

Aside from all the contradictions in which Ferrero involves himself, his theory amounts to saying that if

there is a revolution there is a revolution, if there is none there is none. A government is legitimate if it is not overthrown, it is revolutionary if it succeeds a previous government. What Ferrero says is that he does not like revolutions and that consequently governments should prevent revolutions and that the ruled should abstain from revolution because they bring about general disorder and solve nothing. He insists on the correctness of his thesis by saying that revolutionary government "did a great deal of harm to me, my family, and my sons."

M.

*CONDITIONS OF PEACE.* By Edward Hallet Carr. The Macmillan Company. New York. (282 pp.; \$2.50).

For Mr. Carr the present war is an episode in a revolution against liberal democracy, national self-determination and *laissez faire* economics. It can be neither explained nor waged in purely national terms. There is also no return to pre-war conditions. "Hitler has consummated the work, which Marx and Lenin had begun, of overthrowing the nineteenth-century capitalist system." What is now under attack, however, is not "democracy as such, but liberal democracy in its specifically nineteenth-century form." That democracy of property owners crumbled away with the rise of organized economic power. In the new democracy to come, "liberty" must be re-interpreted in economic terms. To make this possible, economic power must be brought under government control.

The rights of nations, like the rights of men, are hollow if they fail to lead to economic well-being. Thus national self-determination must also be understood differently because "interdependence has become an inescapable condition of survival." Those concerned with international relations of the future must recognize the need for a larger unit than the present nation and realize

that national self-determination can be valid only within a new framework of mutual military and economic obligations.

The economic crisis underlying the political crisis led to the present retreat from the money economy and to a re-integration of society by way of collectivisation. The solution of the economic problem is planned consumption. Initiated in Germany and Russia by revolutions, it is now fostered everywhere by war, unfortunately only in its simplest form, that is, as armament production. Although the profit motive has failed us, we have not yet discovered a moral substitute for it other than war; nothing but war seems sufficiently worthwhile.

For Carr the economic crisis is in essence a moral crisis. The absence of a moral purpose explains the "popular demand, not for unrestricted liberty, but for more authoritative leadership." The popular demand is met by the shift of power from the popular representative assembly to the popular responsible leader, which does not represent a diminution of democracy as such, but a change in the form and character of contemporary democracy. The transfer of power from the legislative to the ex-

ecutive branches of government is evident also in the United States, where the presidency is likely to become more important than Congress.

Carr's idea of a moral crisis underlying all the problems of today, is a necessary prerequisite to his outline of policies for the coming peace. All his specific recommendations, such as planned consumption, public works, social minimum, control over industry, in order to be carried out and to lead to the results envisioned, presuppose that the ruling class is determined by nothing other than a moral law designed to guarantee the well-being of all humanity. He admits, however, that the two existing moral principles that supersede war, i. e., Christianity and communism, cannot serve to lend purpose and meaning to modern life. A new faith must be found.

Meanwhile one must recognize the changes that have taken place. Britain's balance-of-power policy, for instance, has come to a close. She can no longer stand aloof from Europe. American interests, being bound up with the survival of security of Great Britain, are identical with British interests in maintaining British power in Europe. Both must accept permanent military and economic responsibilities beyond their own borders. As to Germany it is difficult "to imagine any effective policy for

her dismemberment, which would not involve the break-up of the economic unity of Central Europe." Thus we must help to build up the German economic system into a larger unit under different forms of control. Reconciliation will follow by way of co-operation. Carr suggests the setting up of a European Reconstruction and Public Works Corporation and a European Planning Authority. They will be heirs to two going concerns; the centralized economic machinery of Hitler's New Order and the machinery of Allied wartime controls. There is no choice but to build on them, and perhaps recast them in the process of building.

While reading all this and more of the same stuff, one cannot help wondering what the war is all about. Apparently the only difference between Carr's schemes and Hitler's are differences in terminology. Carr goes so far as even to be willing to do for Germany without Hitler what Hitler tries to bring about. He objects to Hitler's ideas because they are based on the "hypothesis of German predominance." His own ideas, however, are based on much less, that is, on the hope that a new moral purpose will arise. Actually both are in full agreement as to what ought to be done; they differ only on the question as to who is going to do it.

M.