

# Winston Churchill

## British Bulldog

His Career in  
War and Peace



**Emrys Hughes**

## **Contents**

Introduction

### **PART ONE**

#### **Background and Early Career**

- I The Great Duke
- II Lord Randolph and His Son
- III Tasting Blood
- IV Into Parliament
- V The Cuckoo in the Tory Nest
- VI "Traitor to His Class"
- VII Tonypandy and Sidney Street
- VIII "The Conservative Conspiracy"
- IX First Lord of the Admiralty

### **PART TWO**

#### **The First World War**

- X Antwerp and the Dardanelles
- XI To the Front and Back
- XII Churchill's Anti-Bolshevik Crusade

### **PART THREE**

#### **Between Two World Wars**

- XIII Out of Parliament
- XIV Tory Chancellor
- XV Salute to Mussolini
- XVI Nightmare Over India
- XVII The Abdication
- XVIII Tribute to Hitler
- XIX Trotsky and Shaw
- XX Churchill and Chamberlain
- XXI Prophecies and Alarms

### **PART FOUR**

#### **The Bulldog in the Second World War**

- XXII Munich—And War
- XXIII The Bulldog in Downing Street
- XXIV Tory Party Leader
- XXV From Mussolini to Stalin
- XXVI Appeasing Our Dictators
- XXVII Churchill-Beaverbrook Axis
- XXVIII Pilgrimage to Moscow
- XXIX The White Flag at Home
- XXX Unconditional Surrender
- XXXI Appeasing Stalin

XXXII Losing the Peace

## PART FIVE

### The Bulldog Hangs On

XXXIII Exploiting Victory  
XXXIV Leader of the Opposition  
XXXV The Decoy  
XXXVI Britain and the Atom Bomb  
XXXVII Partisan or Patriot?  
XXXVIII Prime Minister Again  
XXXIX Statesmanship or Salesmanship?  
XL The Cold War Backfires on Churchill  
XLI Sir Winston and the New Elizabethan Era  
XLII Churchill in Historical Perspective: A  
Concluding Appraisal

## List of Cartoons

Out of office  
"Anti-Sosh" leader, 1924  
Fellow travellers, 1927 (with Mussolini)  
Ye Olde Tory Pub, Under New Management  
Liberation not for India!  
"Democratic" leader  
The old men of the sea  
Sizing it up  
Going to Moscow alone

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Bust of Winston Churchill by Clare Sheridan P.4  
The Harrow Schoolboy, 1889-1890 p13  
The Young Hussar, 1895 p14  
Boer Poster Offering £25 Reward for Churchill p18  
The Candidate for Oldham, 1899 p16  
Winston Churchill, M.P., 1904 p19  
At the Siege of Sidney Street, 1910 p25  
With Lloyd George, 1912 p27  
The First Lord of the Admiralty, 1916 p32  
Churchill's War Cabinet, 1941 p99  
With Roosevelt and Stalin at Teheran, 1943 At Moscow with Stalin, 1944 p124  
The Cabinet on Victory Day P125  
The honorary Doctor of Laws at Fulton, Missouri, with President Truman, March 5, 1946  
p107 Meeting with John Foster Dulles and Benard Baruch New York p153  
February 4, 1953 Meeting President-elect Eisenhower as White House Guest p155  
The Knight of the Garter leaving Westminster Abbey after the crowning of Elizabeth II,  
June 2, 1953 p164  
In the uniform of Warden of the Cinque Ports a p174

## Introduction



**W**INSTON CHURCHILL has been the most colourful and picturesque leader of the British Tory Party since Benjamin Disraeli. For half a century he has been a challenging figure in our public life. After the outbreak of the Second World War he became as well known in Europe and America as at home, and his admirers regard him as the greatest Englishman of our time. During the war it became almost treason or sacrilege to criticize Mr. Churchill. He was regarded as the voice of Britain, the great heaven-sent leader who had emerged in our dire peril to save us and guide not only Britain but the Western and democratic world to victory over the forces of darkness.

No wonder the Tory Party, in its desperation, decided to cash in on his wartime reputation as our deliverer. Indeed, he was about the only asset the discredited post-war Tories had, and they have played him up, with his manifest approval, to the limit of their ability.

So there has grown up a Churchill legend: of Churchill the one and only national leader who is capable of being the head of a British Government in difficult times, of a man who was always right in the years prior to the war and who during the war guided us with supreme wisdom. The Tories have done their best to bask in his reflected glory, forgetting that the harshest and truest things Winston Churchill ever said in his life were about them.

But there is more to be said about Winston Churchill than is to be found in his own many volumes on war and politics, his autobiographical reminiscences, and the adulatory biographies that have been published in recent years.

Mr. Churchill has contributed copiously to the history of our time, and, of course, no man can really be expected to be completely objective about himself. The prima donna is not the most reliable critic of her own performances. Reading Mr. Churchill's memoirs is very much like reading an appreciative drama review written by the actor who has also played the part of hero in the production. Mr. Churchill's war books are, in the main, justifications and apologia for his own performances.

Now, nobody will deny that Winston Churchill has been pugnacious, courageous, an outstanding personality, a champion all-in wrestler in the political conflicts of his day, that his speeches have been eloquent and have stirred the multitudes, that he has a great command of the English language, that he can tell a good story, that he has a gay versatility and a sense of humour and other qualities which appeal to a large number of the British people, even to many who would rather be carried out of the polling booth dead than vote for him or any of his Tory candidates.

But, when we are asked to regard him as the modern Moses, the one and only political leader who can lead us out of the wilderness into the Promised Land, and to look upon that political fairy tale produced under his auspices, called The Right Road for Britain, as the new Ten Commandments, it is time to demur. Although it may be argued that Winston Churchill led us to victory, it is obvious that we are still far from being out of the wilderness. Indeed, it looks as

though all that has happened is that we have been led into another wilderness in which the voice of Winston Churchill is again heard calling upon us to be prepared for yet another world war in which there will still be more blood, sweat, toil and tears, and in which we may all be destroyed by atom bombs.

Two members of Mr. Churchill's wartime Cabinet, Lord Hankey and Mr. Ernest Bevin, have frankly admitted that the slogan of "unconditional surrender" was disastrous and left the successors of Mr. Churchill a shambles in Europe still to be cleared up when the hymns of victorious thanksgiving had been sung. Mr. Churchill's V sign was rather premature. The war, we understood him to say, was to crush dictators, to end totalitarian rule, to end the tyranny of the secret police, and to free people from concentration camps. Yet he is now telling us in his *Triumph and Tragedy* that all these evils, far from being ended as a result of our victories, continue even to a greater degree behind the Iron Curtain which now stretches half over Europe and Asia.

For the most part, all that Winston Churchill can think of, today, is the prospect of a further war of liberation by atomic bombs, and to urge us to be prepared for World War III under the banner of the Atlantic Pact, NATO, E.D.C., etc., which guarantees our safety and security in much the same way as we guaranteed that of Poland in 1939. This prospect seems of late to have offered Mr. Churchill something less than calmness and assurance, and he has proposed to "go to Canossa" and seek a truce with the dictators of Soviet Russia. The stockpile of Russian atom bombs is too close to England for comfort or safety.

Looking out upon Western Europe today, with its ruined cities and towns, its formidable economic problems, its political complexities, its uncertain future—all under the shadow of the Kremlin—we are not so sure that Mr. Churchill is the "conquering hero" he was when the Nazi regime ultimately collapsed. We now know that, if civilization is to survive, pugnacity, like patriotism, is not enough. Certainly it is no substitute for the foresight, wisdom, constructive statesmanship, and a real understanding of the new and more difficult social, economic and international problems of our age that a political leader should possess.

Our Tories are, of course, doing their utmost to perpetuate the Churchill legend, the myth of the inspired leader, because they have a vested interest in it. But, as I have tried to show in this book, if Churchill's political judgment has always been right, theirs has almost always been wrong.

This is not the sort of admiring biography of which we have had so many in recent years. It is rather a corrective and an antidote. Those who want hero worship of Winston Churchill will find any amount of it in the public libraries and in the second-hand bookshops. Mr. Churchill's own case is to be found in great detail in his many books. He has always been a voluminous writer; more volumes are still coming from his pen, each in turn hailed by his admirers as the latest historical and literary masterpiece, and his six volumes of war memoirs have been closely followed by his receiving the Nobel Prize for Literature for 1953. No doubt these will continue to be read and discussed for many years to come as the views and the comments of one of the leading figures in the drama of great events. When some future Gibbon comes to write a monumental classic on *The Decline and Fall of the British Empire* he will find abundant first-hand material for study in the books of Winston Churchill.



Nobody can deny that Churchill has done his utmost to present to the world his side of the story. But there is another, and this book is an attempt to outline some parts of it.

**EMRYS HUGHES House of Commons London**

# Winston Churchill: British bulldog; His Career in War and Peace.

## PART ONE Background and Early Career

### CHAPTER I The Great Duke

**T**HE story of Winston Churchill is, of course, not a tale of ascent "from log cabin to White House." He was born the son of a lord and the grandson of a duke. His father was Lord Randolph Churchill, the famous son of the seventh Duke of Marlborough. Like the Chinese, Winston Churchill is a devout believer in ancestor worship; he has written biographies of his father and of the first Duke of Marlborough in which their greatness is dutifully stressed. The more recent Churchills always seem to have been obsessed with the importance of their ancestors.

The first Winston Churchill of whom there is any record, the father of the first Duke of Marlborough, was described by the famous historian, Macaulay, as "a poor Cavalier baronet who haunted Whitehall and made himself ridiculous by publishing a dull and affected folio, long forgotten, in praise of monarchy and monarchs." But where Macaulay was contemptuous, Winston Churchill was appreciative. In his *Life of Marlborough* he describes this forgotten contribution to our literature of his early namesake as "a substantial and erudite volume."

After reading some of the extracts, one comes to the conclusion that Macaulay was the more objective critic. Winston Churchill I

dedicated his book to Charles II, referred to Cromwell as "the Devil," argued laboriously that Britons got their name from a drink, explained that "the Scots are a branch of the antique Scythian stock," strongly supported the theory of the Divine Right of Kings, and proved to his own satisfaction that he was descended from somebody who came to England with William the Conqueror. All this the Winston of our day relates in much detail and with great pride. He dilates on the "military strain" in the family. "It was in his blood, not his pen, that he carried his message." In a famous speech in 1940 Winston Churchill waxed eloquent over "blood, sweat, toil and tears."

Winston is a great believer in blood. The Churchills were always fighters. But they believed more in blood than in sweat. There is only one mention of an ancestor who, apparently, earned an honest living by his sweat—a blacksmith who was John Churchill's great-grandfather. The rest, it is stressed, were aristocrats, great soldiers. They believed more in the sword than in the plough. The family fortunes were certainly not founded on sweat. Nobody, of course, will deny that the English aristocracy were always ready to fight: their objection was to work.

The life story of John Churchill, the great Duke of Marlborough, has been written by Mr. Churchill in four ponderous volumes. Other historians had not been kind or just to the duke. Swift, Pope, Thackeray, Macaulay, a formidable quartet, had vilified him. Winston Churchill, therefore, regarded it as his duty towards history, his family and himself to clean up this rather tarnished figure. The great Marlborough had come to be regarded by many authorities as rather a bandit and a blackguard, a famous general who not only believed in fighting but in loot.

It may be true that Macaulay, to use an expressive Scottish phrase, "had not missed Marlborough and hit the wall" and had dealt faithfully with the treacheries and the villainies of the great duke. It is not true, however, that Macaulay depicted Marlborough as an unmitigated rascal. He paid ungrudging tribute to his courage, to his coolness and imperturbability in difficult situations, and to his abilities as a general. But, unfortunately, Macaulay died before he had an opportunity to write the history of Marlborough's great battles and butcheries and to pay a conventional tribute to "the military genius which later humbled six marshals of France." "Unhappily the splendid qualities of John Churchill," said Macaulay, "were mingled with alloy of the most sordid kind." Even if it is admitted that Macaulay overdid his attack on Marlborough, there is abundant evidence to indicate that Winston Churchill, for his part, used the whitewash brush and bucket with more determination to rehabilitate the tarnished ancestor than to keep closely to historical objectivity.

One can tell a man by his heroes as well as by the company he keeps. Only Winston Churchill in our generation would have attempted to glorify the Duke of Marlborough, his battles and victories, his wars and his butcheries, in four volumes as if his life and career had been a record of splendid service to mankind. It is only natural that Winston Churchill should wish to rehabilitate in history the ancestor who not only was a great military leader but also provided a vast fortune and a substantial estate which passed from one generation of Churchills to another, gave them a place among the titled aristocracy and the ruling class, and enabled Lord Randolph Churchill to marry the American heiress whose romantic love for the son of an English duke resulted in improving the financial resources of the family and invigorating the stock.

Those who wish to follow in every detail the story of Marlborough's great battles and sieges can do so in Churchill's own volumes. But they would do well, if they wish to know about the life of the common people of the time as well as the intrigues of the countries and the kings and queens and the progress of the wars, to read other writers who looked at Marlborough and his victories from a less romantic point of view.

War appealed to Marlborough more than it did to the soldiers in his armies. He enjoyed it with far greater zest than the men who had to do the actual fighting. The historian Trevelyan tells us how "Marlborough kept high state on his campaigns. At Althorp are to be seen the great pilgrim bottles of silver for carrying wine on pack animals and the vast silver wine cooler all beautifully engraved with his arms and the Imperial Eagle of his German principedom." This was in striking contrast to the plight of the unfortunate soldiers who had to do the fighting and were brought into the army by Marlborough's conscription laws. Trevelyan tells us that—the poor privates were often cheated out of their pay, food and clothing, either by the civilian contractors or by their own officers under a system peculiarly favourable to such frauds.

Criminals were conscripted and the debtors' prisons were emptied into the Army; bounties sometimes amounting to £24 for each recruit tempted the needy to enlist. The soldier's life was popularly regarded as an escape only for the desperate. No wonder that in 1702 the naval press gang was used for the purpose of the land service; that year over a thousand English recruits deserted to the French lines and alleged one and all that they were pressed for the sea service and then, carried to the Tower, were embarked blind-folded and transported to Flanders.

Mr. Churchill, of course, depicts Marlborough's campaigns as a long record of unmitigated glory. These long bloody wars against the French, which made the fortunes of John Churchill and won for him his dukedom, appeal to Winston Churchill as epic struggles in the history of mankind. "With all his faults, right or wrong," he writes, "he was always for fighting; which is something." Marlborough's soldiers were not so enthusiastic about it. "And so the war went on," writes Trevelyan, "even before Malplaquet some of Marlborough's men began to feel what they had never felt before—that their lives were being wasted. In August, Colonel Revett wrote home from before Tournai: 'I am so great a lover of peace and the good of my country, that I, among the majority, wish that there had not been any cause for the loss of so many good men



and officers, that have fallen hi this siege.' The writer was a brave soldier and no politician: he was killed at Malplaquet next month."

Those were the years when the French were regarded as "our natural enemies." Those were the battles of which Thomas Carlyle, who always penetrated the superficialities of romantic history, wrote:

What, speaking in quite unofficial language, is the net purport and upshot of war? To my knowledge, for example, there dwell and toil, in the British village of Dumdrudge, usually some five hundred souls. From these, by certain "Natural Enemies" of the French, there are successively selected during the French war, say thirty able-bodied men: she has, not without difficulty and sorrow, fed them up to manhood, and even trained them to crafts, so that one can weave, another build, another hammer, and the weakest can stand under thirty stone avoirdupois. Nevertheless, amid much weeping and swearing they are selected; all dressed in red; and shipped away, at the public charges, some two thousand miles, or say only to the south of Spain; and fed there till wanted. And now to that same spot, in the south of Spain, are thirty similar French artisans, from a French Dumdrudge, in like manner wending; till at length, after infinite effort, the two parties come into actual juxtaposition; and Thirty stands fronting Thirty, each with a gun in his hand. Straightway the word "Fire!" is given: and they blow the souls out of one another; and in place of sixty brisk, useful craftsmen, the world has sixty dead carcasses, which it must bury, and anew shed tears for.

Had these men any quarrel? Busy as the Devil is, not the smallest! They lived far enough apart; were the entires! strangers; nay, in so wide a Universe, there was even, unconsciously, by Commerce, some mutual helpfulness between them. How then? Simpleton! Their Governors had fallen out; and, instead of shooting one another, had the cunning to make these poor blockheads shoot.—Alas, so is it in Deutschland, and hitherto in all other lands; still as of old, "what devilry so ever Kings do, the Greeks must pay the piper!"—In that fiction of the English Smollett, it is true, the final Cessation of War is perhaps prophetically shadowed forth; where the two Natural Enemies, in person, take each a Tobacco-pipe filled with Brimstone; light the same, and smoke in one another's faces, till the weaker gives in: but from such predicted Peace-Era, what blood-filled trenches, and contentious centuries, may still divide us!

That Marlborough made huge sums out of these long-drawn-out wars is not open to question. When Queen Anne made him a duke he was also given £5,000 a year (a colossal sum in those days) out of the revenue of the Post Office. "After the battle of Blenheim," writes Howard Evans in *Our Old Nobility*, "he was rewarded with the Royal manor of Woodstock and the hundred of Woolton (formerly ancient lands of the crown) and half a million of money was expended on building him a splendid palace and removing the encumbrances on the estate. The park alone consists of 2,700 acres and twelve miles round. After the battle of Ramillies a pension of £4,000 (the original grant was £5,000 according to Coxe) a year was settled upon the Duke's heirs forever; and as it had been paid for 173 years, the gross amount to the present time is £692,000 and has just been redeemed at 26J/2 years' purchase."

When the nation ultimately got tired of the bloodshed and expenditure of the wars, Marlborough lost favour. Evans says:

Loud and deep complaints were made in the House of Commons of Marlborough's greediness and dishonesty. It was alleged by the Commissioners of Public Accounts that the Duke had received in ten years £63,000 from head contractors to the Army, and further that he had received 22 per cent on the pay of the foreign troops, subsidized by England. Against the latter charge he was able to plead a warrant from Queen Anne, in extenuation, but as to the former, even Smollett, who says all he can for the Duke, declares that such practices were mean and mercenary and greatly tarnished his glory.



The House of Commons censured his conduct, and the Queen directed the Attorney General to proceed against him, in order to recover some of his ill-gotten gains. At the time when Marlborough was secretly receiving large sums from Army contractors, he and the Duchess held offices and emoluments to the annual value of £64,325.

Marlborough's explanation of the sums received from contractors and commissions was that it was spent on the secret service. But as these were the days when chartered accountants were not particular about such details, nobody could really say where the money went. The author of the article on Marlborough in the Dictionary of National Biography tells us:

A list of the preferments of the Duke and Duchess has been frequently reputed.

The Duke had £7,000 as plenipotentiary, £10,000 as general of the English forces, £3,000 as Master of the Ordnance, £2,000 as Colonel of the Guards, £10,000 from the States General, £5,000 pension, £1,825 for travelling, and £1,000 for table, or in all £39,825. He received also £15,000 as percentage, which according to him was spent on secret service and handsome presents for foreign powers.

The Duchess had £3,000 as Groom of the Stole, and £1,500 for each of her three offices as Ranger of Windsor Park, Mistress of the Robes, and Keeper of the Privy Purse, or in all £7,500.

The total sums thus amount to £62,325. During the South Sea mania Marlborough, or the duchess in his name, made a timely speculation and cleared £100,000. At another time we find him troubled by having £-150,000 on his hands and not knowing what to do about it.

Such was the great Marlborough. Let us agree with Winston Churchill that his ancestor was a mighty warrior. But what did it all mean to the people of this country? Trevelyan in his history tells us:

The forced recruiting of the unemployed into the Army was unpopular and the proposals of the government for a larger measure of conscription, denounced by all Tories and some Whigs as French militarism, failed to pass into Law.

War taxation was felt as an increasing hardship by the mass of the people. The national expenditure was more than twice what it had been in the years of peace and disarmament at the end of William's reign and was soaring higher and higher as the operations of the war increased each year in magnitude and as each year Britain's share of the burden became proportionally larger than that of her allies.

The Land Tax could not be further increased without such a mutiny of squires as would sweep the Tories back into power. But the attempt to assess all incomes for a general Income Tax had failed for want of a proper civil service machinery and Godolphin had to go on increasing indirect taxation, much of which fell on the poor or on the ordinary middle classes and made the war generally unpopular as a burden leaning heavily on all.

That was how the people paid for the glorious victories. In war-ravaged Europe they meant bloodshed, the burning of towns and villages, devastated fields, hunger, and starvation of the poor. For the masses the victories only meant a change of landlords and masters. No wonder old Kaspar in Robert Southey's poem "After Blenheim" found difficulty in explaining the skull that his grandchildren brought to him:

"It was the English," Kaspar cried,  
"Who put the French to rout;  
But what they fought each other for

I could not well make out.  
But everybody said," quoth he,  
"That t'was a famous victory.

"My father lived at Blenheim then,  
Yon little stream hard by;  
They burned his dwelling to the ground,  
And he was forced to fly;  
So with his wife and child he fled,

Nor had he where to lay his head.  
"With fire and sword the country round  
Was wasted far and wide,  
And many a childing mother then  
And new-born baby died;  
But things like that, you know, must be  
At every famous victory.

"They say it was a shocking sight  
After the field was won;  
For many thousand bodies here  
Lay rotting in the sun;  
But things like that, you know, must be .  
After a famous victory.

"Great praise the Duke of Marlbro' won,  
And our good Prince Eugene."  
"Why, t'was a very wicked thing,"  
Said little Wilhelmine.  
"Nay, nay, my little girl," quoth he,  
"It was a famous victory.

"And everybody praised the Duke  
Who this great fight did win." "  
But what good came of it at last?"  
Quoth little Peterkin. "  
Why, that I cannot tell," said he,  
"But t'was a famous victory."

This poem probably sums up Marlborough's campaigns and victories better than all Winston Churchill's erudite and detailed four volumes.

One great English historian and publicist, Goldwin Smith, was even harsher than Macaulay in summing up Marlborough's career. Wrote Smith: "Marlborough well deserved to be shot, or rather to be hanged. His apologists had better leave his case alone, and let his political infamy be lost, so far as it may, in his military glory."



## CHAPTER II

### Lord Randolph and His Son

**T**HE Duke of Marlborough had no sons and his wealth and estates passed to his daughter, who had married Lord Sutherland, and to their descendants. For seven generations the Marlboroughs continued to draw rents and to live on public assistance from the British taxpayer on the strength of the riches acquired by doubtful means by the Great Duke. The military glory had been transmuted into hard cash. If military genius is hereditary, there was no sign of it reappearing again in the family for nearly two hundred years.

That lapse, however, does not apply to the duke's acquisitive propensities. Howard Evans, in his book *Our Old Nobility* (written in 1905), tells of shady transactions in the acquiring and misuse of crown lands, of a duke who made substantial sums by cutting down and selling timber to which he had no legal right; then he comments that "a poor widow who stole a few dead sticks would have been sent to prison, but for a Duke who robbed the nation of timber worth thousands of pounds there was no punishment whatever." He adds that "the late Duke sold the family jewels and library just in time to leave the proceeds to his younger son. The present Duke wants to sell the family pictures to the nation at an exorbitant price. The ducal motto is 'Faithful but Unfortunate.'

Looking at the career of the founder of the house, I cannot but think that it would be more truthful to say, 'Fortunate but Un-faithful.' "

None of the Churchill family played a conspicuous part in British public life until Lord Randolph Churchill, a younger son of the seventh Duke of Marlborough, became prominent as a leading Tory M.P. in the 1890's. "Lord Randolph Churchill," writes Mr. Esme Wingfield-Stratford, one of Winston Churchill's admiring biographers, "entered Parliament in the year of his marriage and Winston's birth, for no other reason than that of keeping the Woodstock seat and vote intact for Blenheim castle and Toryism." But Lord Randolph soon fell foul of the orthodox Tory oligarchy and became an advocate of Tory democracy. He argued that it was the right political strategy in order to get the Liberals out and the Tories in. In Parliament, we are told, "if there was one word capable of summing up the impression he made on his contemporaries that word would have been 'insolence,' the peculiarly galling insolence of the aristocrat to whom the idea has never so much as occurred of giving a damn for anybody."

When the Tories succeeded in ousting the Liberal Government in 1886, Lord Randolph became the Leader of the House and the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Lord Randolph Churchill's career as Chancellor of the Exchequer was a brief one. He was in favour of measures of taxation which were not palatable to the wealthier Tories. When he complained to the Prime Minister, Lord Salisbury, he was told that "the classes and the dependants of class are the strongest ingredients in our composition, but we have so to conduct our legislation that we shall give some satisfaction to both classes and masses. This is especially difficult with the class— because all legislation is rather unwelcome to them, as tending to disturb a state of things with which they are satisfied."

This frank declaration of the state of mind of the Tory Party is interesting as coming from a Tory prime minister. But it did not commend itself to Lord Randolph, who also came into conflict with the Minister for War, whose estimates he considered excessive and proposed to cut. He had declared himself in favour of economy. "Smith informs me of his inability to make reductions in the Army Estimate," he wrote to the Prime Minister. "I have informed him of my absolute and unalterable inability to consent to any Army Estimates which do not show a marked and considerable reduction." Lord Randolph had secured a reduction of £500,000 in the Navy Estimates, but the War Office was adamant. He was determined to beat the War Office or resign.

In his letter of resignation he expressed views which might well be studied by our politicians today:

I am pledged up to the eyes in large reductions of expenditure, and I cannot alter my mind on the matter. // the foreign policy of this country is conducted with skill and judgment, our present huge and increasing armaments are quite unnecessary, and the taxation which they involve perfectly unjustifiable. The War estimates might be very considerably reduced if the policy of expenditure on the fortifications and guns and garrisons of military ports, mercantile ports and coaling stations was abandoned or modified. But of this I see no chance, and under the circumstances I cannot undertake to be responsible for the finances.

Lord Randolph overestimated his influence with the Tory Party. His resignation was accepted, he left the chancellorship and the Government forever. There is good reason for believing that in many respects he was a more enlightened person than the Tories of his day. In his letters we find him writing acid comments on his Tory colleagues. He refused to be stampeded by the Tories who were alarmed over Mr. Broadhurst's bill on leasehold enfranchisement. "All this outcry," he wrote, "against the supporters of Mr. Broadhurst's Bill—this gabble about Socialism and Communism and Mr. Henry George—is highly inconsistent and ridiculous, and betrays a prevalence of very deplorable and shocking ignorance as to the extent to which the rights of property can be tolerated and the relation of the state thereto."

Asked for his views on temperance by the secretary of the United Kingdom Alliance, he "excluded compensation to the brewers and distillers, as part of any scheme for the regulation of the Drink Traffic, as an impracticable and impossible demand." He concluded: "We shall, however, not effect much against publicans unless we act vigorously in the direction of better houses for the poor. As long as we allow such an immense portion of our population to live in pigsties, the warmth and false cheerfulness of the public-house will be largely sought after. The two questions appear to me to be inseparable."

It is interesting speculation as to what Lord Randolph might have done had he lived longer. But he died at the age of forty-six, a short-lived comet in the political skies of the '90's. He was certainly not an orthodox politician, but a courageous and outstanding man.

Lord Randolph had married an American lady of beauty, a vivacious personality, and money. She was the daughter of Leonard Jerome, a rich, self-made man, a Wall Street broker who had acquired part ownership of The New York Times, made a fortune out of race horses, and was known as "the father of the American turf." Lord Randolph had met her at Cowes. Alliances between American heiresses and British lords were by no means uncommon in those days. They brought wealth to the British aristocracy and improved the stock. Winston, their son, was born in 1874.

In those days the aristocracy saw little of their children; they were put out to a nurse. Winston loved his mother "dearly but at a distance—my nurse was my confidante." He saw his father even less. His parents were too busy with their own affairs, the social round and politics, to be bothered with their offspring.

At seven, Winston was dispatched to a preparatory school for Eton, in the custody of a master whose whole idea of the theory and practice of education was that the way to stimulate the brains of the children of the aristocracy lay in birching their posteriors. The young child was spoiled and intractable, rebelled against the imposed task of memorizing Latin verbs and, at the age of nine, had to be taken away, on doctor's orders, to a school kept by two kindly old ladies at Brighton. This helped him to recover from the stupidities and brutalities of the preparatory school, but he showed no promise and only succeeded in getting into Harrow because the headmaster realized that the son of a lord would be at least a financial asset and was content to call a Latin paper with a blot and several smudges a pass.



At Harrow, Winston was not considered as one of the bright boys. He remained in the lowest form three times as long as anybody else. His strong points were recitation and fencing. He was a failure at Latin and Greek. In recalling these years at Harrow he said that he was "all for the public schools but I do not want to go there again."

Lord Randolph had to solve the problem of the career of this unpromising, truculent, spoiled boy. It was a common saying in those days that "the fool of the family goes into the Church," but the father did not think that any of the traits he had observed in his offspring's character marked him out as a potential archbishop. But he liked playing with tin soldiers; he had an army of them, some fifteen hundred. After watching him deploying his toy armies, Lord Randolph asked him if he would like to be a soldier. He said "yes" at once. Was not his great ancestor the Duke of

Marlborough? One of his hero-worshipping biographers, Mr. Lewis Broad, writes:

How strangely the minor and the major things are linked across the years—the small chances of the individual's life and the turning points in the lives of nations. Had Paul who was called Saul never ridden one day to Damascus, had Hitler never gone as a house-painter to Vienna, how different history would have been.

And had Winston Churchill never played with tin soldiers he would have gone to the Bar and not into the Army; he would not then have found fame in the Boer War, become a figure in public life before he was thirty, and been First Lord before 1914 came.

Even the tin soldiers might not have become the instruments of Fate had Lord Randolph had a higher opinion of his son's abilities. But he had considered that Winston was not clever enough for a career at the Bar—and so tin soldiers and the Army.

Yet, according to this biographer, the young Winston "sighed for something practical." "If only he had had to run errands as a messenger-boy or to toil as a bricklayer's mate that would have been something real." But however much Winston might have yearned for a life of honest toil, the sons of Lords were not encouraged to lower the prestige of the family in such ways. His desire to be a bricklayer was not gratified until later life, when he indulged it as a hobby.

The aristocracy had different ideas of what to do with their sons. They did not have to turn them out to earn their living at the age of twelve in the mine or the factory or to soil their hands with dirty work. That was left to the lower orders, to the working class. Had young Winston been sent to an elementary school it is probable that his academic education would have ended there, for he did not show the abilities that would have won him a scholarship to a secondary school or the University.

So it was Sandhurst for him, the military academy that turned out the officer caste, into which you bought your way by money and where aristocratic influence and social influence counted for more than brains. Winston, from the beginning, was born into the caste which had the money, gave the orders, and assumed that they had the divine right to rule. Young Churchill liked Sandhurst more than Harrow: this was learning about war; it was more like playing with his tin soldiers.

At twenty, Winston's academic education was completed. Not that he had acquired much knowledge of real life. He had been nursed, waited upon, pandered to, mollycoddled, tutored, dragged through examinations, and had become accustomed to the world of wealth, rank, privilege and snobbery. He had been lucky in his parents. He had not had to contemplate earning

his living by the sweat of his brow. The fighting career was easier, more colourful, more adventurous, more in keeping with the traditions of the family. He took it for granted that he was born to be one of the rulers of the world. He would start off as an officer in the cavalry; he would start his conquest of the earth with a commission in the Fourth Hussars.

## CHAPTER III

### Tasting Blood

**A** man of action, says Mr. Lewis Broad in Winston Churchill, "is subject to fulfil his life's purpose." Always he must act, and for Winston Churchill, subaltern in His Majesty's Hussars, action meant fighting. "But alas," he adds, "in the 'nineties it wasn't so easy to find scope for indulging one's taste for battle. The nineteenth century and the Victorian age were drawing peacefully to a close; it looked as if war was about to become extinct. Somehow, somewhere, the young hussar must find the means to gratify his longing." Europe was in a state of comparative quietude. This seemed to Churchill's biographer to be almost a calamity. There was not enough killing in the world.



Here was a young cavalry officer of twenty-one educated for war, and there was nobody to fight. The French were no longer regarded as natural enemies, as they had been in the time of Marlborough. The Germans were not yet believed to be aiming at the domination of the Continent, if not the world, and their innate wickedness had not been discovered. Had they not fought on England's side at Waterloo? Had not Queen Victoria married a German, and were not the heirs to the throne of German blood? Winston had to look to another continent in order to find a war in which to get some excitement. "It was not much of a war, but it was all that offered." He was not greatly concerned with what it was about. The war in Cuba between the guerrillas and the forces of the Spanish Government was not war on a grand scale, but it was a war, and "in the mess, a young man who could say he had been in action would have the advantage of his fellows; none of them had gained so coveted a distinction in the piping times of peace."

To people who were involved in it, the war meant murder, cruelty, and a relapse to barbarism, the smoke of burnt-out homes, and helpless refugee women and children on the roads. But for young Lieutenant Churchill, not trained to take an interest in anything else, it meant adventure and drama.

His father had written a series of articles on his South African tour for the Daily Graphic, and so Winston was given a commission to write a series of dispatches from Cuba. But the fighting here was not spectacular enough; the commanders conducted operations very discreetly from the rear, and there was nothing very sensational in marching through impenetrable jungle and being the occasional target of bullets from an unseen enemy. However, it was war, and Winston Churchill had actually heard the guns going off. He did not seem greatly concerned about who was shot or why; but he could now boast he had been under fire, and he could smoke cigars.

After a few months in Cuba he came home to find that army circles were actively concerned about events in India. There was trouble with the tribesmen of the northwest frontier, who were not showing too great an enthusiasm for British rule and Western civilization.

The Fourth Hussars were sent to Bangalore, where life for a cavalry officer was "gay and lordly," an unending cycle of morning parade followed by evening polo and mess conviviality.

"Service in India," says Sir George Arthur, "for a cavalry officer who is a polo enthusiast, who enjoys adequate means and sound health is—or anyhow was—a truly delightful experience, and Winston set himself to revel in it. The adequate means in his case were furnished from home and neither he nor the two brother officers who shared his luxurious quarters had need to apply to the so-called native bankers."

Polo playing, however, could not take up all his leisure, and as he had much time on his hands he began to read. Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* had been one of his father's favourite books and the sonorous style appealed to him. So did Macaulay's patriotic poetry and history. Other books that he read were Plato's *Republic* and Aristotle's *Politics*, Darwin's *Origin of the Species*, and Winwood Read's *Martyrdom of Man*.

This was probably more than the average officer in the cavalry mess read. But this selection of literature was very limited. One could hardly have expected him to have read or heard of Marx, whose works in the '90's were known better on the Continent than in England and were not written for the Anglo-Saxon aristocracy. But the young British democracy was interested in other books than those about ancient Rome. Gibbon's florid prose had no message for the generation that was reading Carlyle and Ruskin, Shelley and Herbert Spencer, and English novelists like Dickens, whose pages were full of the wrongs and injustices to the working class of Great Britain and who were preaching revolt against industrial capitalism and its ugliness and inequalities. Even Disraeli in his novels had declaimed against the Two Englands. None of this appears to have influenced Winston Churchill. He might as well have been living in another world, as indeed he was.

"The trouble on the N.W. frontier developed into a little war," Sir George Arthur writes, "and Winston had got what he wanted. The Allahabad Pioneer had made him its war correspondent and the Daily Telegraph had agreed to publish letters from the front and to pay him five pounds per column." He had a good friend in his mother in London. She had charm and American push and knew how to approach newspaper proprietors and editors and to boost her young son.

Those were the days when there were few war correspondents and little competition. Winston acquired the art of writing dramatically and telling a story in vivid language, was bold and enterprising, and did not hesitate to find his way into action and adventure, even winning a decoration. The exploits of British soldiers in that part of India were eagerly swallowed by the Daily Telegraph readers, and Winston was able to republish them in a book, *The Story of the Malakand Field Force*. This was well reviewed, sold well and brought a letter of commendation from the Prince of Wales. This was good going at twenty-three. He had found an occupation to his liking. War was his line, and he could not only enjoy it but make money by writing about it.

Winston returned home on leave, and again his mother came to the rescue. She used her influence with Sir Evelyn Wood, the Adjutant General, to get her son sent to another front, to the Sudan, in spite of the opposition of Kitchener. He was told that he could have a commission in the Twenty-first Lancers, unpaid, and with no liability on the Government for compensation in the event of death or injury. He also succeeded in being appointed the war correspondent of the *Morning Post*, to be paid at the rate of five pounds a column.

In the Sudan he again had excellent opportunities. The British public had been whipped up to a high fever of patriotic excitement over the war against the Mahdi and the Dervishes, who had strangely objected to the British occupation of their country. The natives had killed General Gordon at Khartoum, and the British press had glorified Gordon as a great Christian martyr and had convinced the British public that this was the greatest atrocity since the Crucifixion. Actually, it was a cold, calculated war of conquest and annexation. Kitchener, the ruthless military engineer in charge of an army equipped with artillery designed scientifically, mowed



down the fanatical and courageous tribesmen, who had plenty of valour but were no match for European soldiers trained to methodical movement and to the use of high explosives.

General John Maxwell, commanding the Twelfth Sudanese, in a dispatch home said: "Our fire of artillery, maxims, gunboats and infantry was terrific and nothing could stand against it. I do not exaggerate hi putting the Dervishes at 45,000; they marched beau-tifully in excellent formation and delivered a fine but hopeless attack. They were as brave as men could be---" There was nothing really glorious about this mechanical mass murder at all, no more than the mass slaughter of cattle by a mechanical killer.

As a military operation, the charge of the Twenty-first Lancers at Omdurman was pure theatricality. The war was, however, romanticized by colourful descriptions of the charge. Winston, who had taken part in it, wrote it up with great gusto. "He shot half-a-dozen Dervishes," says Hugh Martin, "as he galloped on his Arab pony through the gully where the tribesmen fought savagely with their great curved swords." The charge of the Twenty-first Lancers was actually a minor incident. As Philip Guedalla remarks in his account of the war: "The victory had been won by careful planning and smooth execution. But the strange operations of the public mind at home delighted in the charge of the 21st Lancers which had not very much to do with it."

Within a week of the Battle of Omdurman, Winston came home. From his point of view it had been a great success. His dispatches had been published and widely read at home and he had the material for a new book. He enjoyed writing about war, and it brought more cash.

He decided that having had a shot at war he would next have a shot at politics. Not that he had any political convictions. He had considerable imperialist froth in his head, but he did not go into politics because he had any cause, program or policy to advocate or any cause to serve. It would be a career, a new kind of game, another step on the road to prominence and fame. Had not his father been a great politician and Chancellor of the Exchequer? He would follow in his father's footsteps.

In the words of Mr. Lewis Broad: "He made application to Conservative Party headquarters to be supplied with a constituency." And he was duly supplied with Oldham.

## CHAPTER IV Into Parliament



Winston Churchill had no knowledge of what life in Oldham meant to the overwhelming majority of its working-class; inhabitants. He had never been there. H. H. Asquith, then a rising young barrister, had. He had been there to discuss the problems of local sewage with the members of the corporation committee that had briefed him hi connection with some parliamentary legislation,; According to Asquith, who was familiar with the ugly towns of the industrial north, it was "one of the most dismal places in the country, peopled by wan-faced, grimy, tired artisans who have never known life in its real sense and never will know it till their dying day."

Churchill knew less about them than he knew about the natives of the northwest frontier of India or the Dervishes of the Sudan. But it was an opportunity for embarking on a political career and for arriving on the battleground of Westminster, where he wouH deliver great orations and become

a spectacular national figure; like his father. He had no message, no enthusiasm for anything! except himself. That he had in abundance.

Alfred Harmsworth, who had made his presence felt in the new kind of cheap journalism and was of the same "pushing" type, had acquired the Daily Mail. He instructed G. W. Stevens, the war correspondent, to write Churchill up as one of the coming young men of Europe. Stevens did so with all the fervour with which the advertisement writers of the day wrote about Beecham's Pills or Sunlight Soap. He admitted that "Winston Spencer Churchill can hardly have seen much of Government and Parliament and forensic politics at twenty-three," but he moved "in and out of their deviations with the ease, if not with the knowledge of a veteran statesman." "From his father he had inherited the hereditary aptitude for affairs," and from his mother "a keenness, a shrewdness, a half cynical, personal ambition, a natural aptitude for advertisement, and happily a sense of humour. He may or may not possess the qualities which make a great general, but the question is of no sort of importance. In any case they will never be developed for, if they exist, they were overshadowed by qualities which might make him, almost at will, a great popular leader, a great journalist or the founder of a great advertising business." Stevens certainly laid on the colours. Some of Winston Churchill's biographers have quoted this as a tribute to Stevens' gift of prophecy. But he would have done the same for any young political careerist on whom Harmsworth for the time being wished to turn the limelight.

Stevens' boost of Churchill did not, however, make the necessary impression on Oldham. Here the rich Liberal manufacturers had more influence than the Tory election machine and there was a radical tradition which they exploited in order to return young Walter Runciman, a promising young son of a prosperous ship-owner.

The Labour Party had not arrived to challenge the right of two wealthy political parties to dump ambitious young upstarts, sons of rich fathers, upon the electors, to indulge in sham fights and to make rhetorical onslaughts upon each other in order to win the votes of workingmen who had not yet learned to choose representatives of their own. True, the miner Keir Hardie had made a beginning a few years earlier by opposing a wealthy young ship-owner at Mid-Lanark and by crying "a plague on both your houses," and Robert Blatchford had written his Merrie England, "a series of letters on the Labour problem addressed to John Smith, of Oldham, a hard-headed workman fond of facts."

The Labour Party had hardly been born; the Socialist propaganda had not yet really begun. All John Smith of Oldham had to decide was whether he would vote for rich Young Tweedledum or dashing Young Tweedledee. What did it matter to him anyway? All that young Churchill seemed to know about Lancashire was that it was the home of the Lancashire Fusiliers. Oldham preferred rich young ship-owner Runciman, and young Churchill was defeated by nearly 1,300 votes. The door to politics had not opened to the first push.

Winston had not long, however, to wait for another war. The Boers in South Africa had revolted against the policy of imperialist British greed, and the Tory Government thought it could easily crush them in a short, sharp war. Had we not great generals like Kitchener, and what would a small number of Boer farmers do against British military power and its soldiers, who had won great glory in India and the Sudan? Everybody in political circles in London was cocksure about the prospects of immediate victory. Winston Churchill, who had now gained a reputation as a war correspondent, was commissioned to write up the war for the Morning Post at the handsome salary of £150 a month with all expenses paid. Here was another splendid opportunity for unlimited excitement amidst the glory of war. He had one fear, on the boat going out, "lest the show should be over and victory for the British gained before he got there."

Within a fortnight of his arrival he was taken prisoner by the Boers. They captured the armored train on which he was a passenger. Seeing the hopelessness of the position, he turned and ran, and when cornered in a cutting by three Boers, he wisely surrendered and held up his hands.



Dashing young Tweedledee had ousted wealthy young Tweedledum. It made precious little difference to the workers in the dreary backstreets of Oldham, but it opened a political career for Winston Churchill, M.P.

## CHAPTER V

### The Cuckoo in the Tory Nest



**W**INSTON Churchill had suddenly become the glamour boy of the Tory Party. Oldham was the first constituency to poll. Other places polled later; there were SOS's from the Tory Party leaders for him to address meetings on their behalf, and he went on a triumphal tour to speak for Balfour at Manchester and Chamberlain at Birmingham. He had cashed in on the South African war politically, and he used the opportunity to do so financially.

Churchill was also invited to lecture in America. This brought him in £12,000 and gave him more experience in addressing large audiences.

The new Parliament met on January 23, 1900. It was overwhelmingly Tory. The khaki-election trick had worked well. It was noted carefully by the party managers for future occasions. When popular hysteria and emotion had been worked up during a war, the Government party should stage the election when people's heads were full of the intoxication of victory. Later on, the bills would inevitably have to be paid and the aftermath of discontent faced. The khaki election became an historical political instrument. It was not only an election, but a technique of unscrupulous political trickery—the exploitation of patriotic emotion. It was to be tried again and again and again.

The war in South Africa dragged on, and when Parliament met, the opposition strongly attacked the Government's policy. In the debate on the Address, Lloyd George, who had been one of the strongest opponents of the war, had tabled a critical amendment, and it had been arranged that Winston Churchill should make his maiden speech following Lloyd George. But at the last moment Lloyd George decided to change his tactics. He did not move the amendment and thus left Winston with the notes all carefully prepared oration which were now irrelevant. An old Tory parliamentary hand, Mr. Gibson Bowles, who was sitting next to him, helped him out with a parliamentary witticism, and Churchill was then able to relate some of his experiences in South Africa.

He did not take the view that the Boers had been treated harshly but expressed the opinion that "compared with other wars, especially those in which a civilian population took part, it had on the whole been conducted with unusual humanity and generosity." Compared with Cromwell's wholesale wiping out of the towns in Ireland and the butcheries that followed the medieval wars on the Continent, the South African war might have been described as a comparatively gentlemanly affair; but the relatives of the Boer civilians who died from typhus in the internment camps could scarcely have thought so, and there was another side of the story. Winston was able to tell the House what he had seen, at first hand, and although he testified that the Boers had been a "brave and enduring foe" the speech went down well as one approving of the Government's policy and one which Joseph Chamberlain, the arch imperialist and instigator of the war, described as "admirable."

The older M.P.s remembered Lord Randolph and detected in the son some of his father's mannerisms and characteristics. Winston had studied his father's parliamentary career carefully, and he had come to the conclusion that the Churchill mantle had fallen on his shoulders and that he would continue where Lord Randolph had left off. There was going to be nothing of the "wee modest crimson tippit floo'er" or the humble back-bencher about him.

The Secretary for War was Mr. Broderick, who had been Under-Secretary when Lord Randolph had resigned from the Exchequer because he failed to get a reduction in army expenditure. When Mr. Broderick introduced a bill dealing with army reform, Winston looked up the old controversy and decided to take up his father's old role.

He denounced Broderick's army reforms as extravagant and tabled an amendment which expressed "grave apprehension at the continual growth of purely military expenditure which diverts the energies of the country from their natural commercial and naval development" and called for the postponement of the War Office plans. He recalled his father's fight with the War Office and his unsuccessful campaign against the military barnacles at Whitehall, who were too strong for him, and went on:

The Government of the day threw their weight on the side of the great spending departments and the Chancellor of the Exchequer resigned. The controversy was bitter, the struggle uncertain, but in the end the Government triumphed and the Chancellor of the Exchequer went down for ever, and with him, as it now seems, there fell also the cause of retrenchment and economy, so that the very memory thereof seems to have perished, and the words themselves have a curiously old-fashioned ring about them. I suppose that was a lesson which Chancellors of the Exchequer were not likely to forget. I am very glad the House has allowed me, after an interval of fifteen years, to lift again the tattered flag I found lying on a stricken field. I stand here to plead for the cause of economy. I think it is time that a voice from this side of the House was heard pleading that unpopular cause, that someone not on the benches opposite, but a Conservative by tradition whose fortunes are strongly linked to the Tory Party, who knows something of the majesty and power of Britain beyond the seas, upon whom rests no trust of cosmopolitanism, should stand forward and say what he can to protest against the policy of daily increasing the public burdens.

This was hardly the sort of thing that the War Office brass hats and the Tory chiefs expected from one who had been swept in on a wave of jingo emotion. Was Winston, too, like his father going to become a cuckoo in the Tory nest? His inspiration was evidently going to come from his father's memory and not from the office of the Government whips. He objected to the expense of the so-called army reforms. He said:

I have frequently been astonished since I have been in this House to hear with what composure and how quickly Members, and even Ministers, talk of a European war. I will not expatiate on the horrors of war, but there has been a great change, which the House should not omit to notice. In former days when wars arose from individual causes, from the policy of a Minister or the passion of a King, when they were fought by small regular armies of professional soldiers, and when their cause was retarded by the difficulties of communication and supply, and often suspended by the season, it was possible to limit the liabilities of the combatants. But now, when mighty populations are impelled against each other, each individual severely embittered and inflamed, when the resources of science and civilisation sweep away everything that might mitigate their fury, a European war can only end in the ruin of the vanquished and the scarcely less fatal commercial dislocation and exhaustion of the conquerors. Democracy is more vindictive than Cabinets. The wars of peoples are more terrible than those of kings.

Why then, it may be said, surely he must neglect nothing to make us absolutely secure—much though I hate unproductive expenditure—I would not complain. But it will do no such thing. The Secretary of State for War knows—none better than he—that it will not make us secure, and that if we went to war with any great Power his three army corps would scarcely serve as a

vanguard. If we are hated they will not make us loved; if we are in danger, they will not make us safe. They are enough to imitate, they are not enough to overawe. Yet while they cannot make us invulnerable, they may very likely make us venturesome.

All this annoyed the War Office and the Front Bench, for they had no answer to it. Indeed, nobody even to this day has supplied the answer to this line of reasoning. But the Admiralty were encouraged. Winston was all for "a supreme navy, which was vital to our national existence." "Why should we have a navy dangerously weak and an army dangerously strong?" He did not realize that the naval experts of other nations, reading this argument that a strong navy was necessary to existence, might come to the conclusion that big navies were necessary for them too. If big armies are likely to endanger peace, does not the same argument apply to big navies? He ended with a peroration which would have won the approval of John Bright and the Society of Friends:

From the highest sentimental reasons, not less than from the most ordinary practical considerations, we must avoid a servile imitation of the clanking military empires of the European continent, by which we " can never obtain the military predominance and security which is desired, but may only impair and vitiate the natural sources of our strength and vigour. There is a higher reason still. There is a moral force which, as the human race advances, will more and more strengthen and protect those nations who enjoy it; which would have protected the Boers better than all their cannon and their brave commandos, if, instead of being ignorant, aggressive, and corrupt, they had enjoyed that high moral reputation which protected us in the dark days of the war from European interference—for, in spite of every calumny and lie uttered or printed the truth comes to the top; and it is known, alike by peoples and rulers, that upon the whole (and it is upon the whole that we must judge these things) British influence is a healthy and kindly influence and makes for the general happiness and welfare of mankind. And we shall make a fatal bargain if we allow the moral force which this country has so long exerted to become diminished, or perhaps destroyed, for the sake of the costly, trumpery, dangerous military playthings on which the Secretary of State for War has set his heart.

No pacifist could have stated the argument against a big army more eloquently. But it was not possible for Winston to take this line and hope for quick promotion in the Tory Party. He had vague views about Tory democracy which he had also culled from his father. He had not the temperament of a sheep that could easily be led through the Government lobby. He was no respecter of persons, and he had inherited or acquired the cocksureness of his father. He discovered that the Tory Party leaders had no more brains than the old generals in the army. His supreme self-confidence in debate and a certain truculence, arrogance and contemptuousness towards those whom he attacked made him enemies.

During one speech he vehemently attacked the Government Front Bench and the whole of the Tory Party ostentatiously walked out. A few days afterwards he crossed the floor to the Liberal benches. He had come to the conclusion that this Tory Government was too stupid to last. The war emotions had died down; there was no mistaking the mood of the country. It was no longer khaki-minded. The chickens were coming home to roost. At the next swing of the pendulum the Tories were going out. A sinking ship was no place for him.

## CHAPTER VI "Traitor to His Class"

**W**INSTON was welcomed with open arms by the Liberals. It was futile for him to stand again for Oldham. They would too easily remember his appeals for a Tory Government and his attacks on the Liberals there. He could stand for northwest Manchester. Manchester was the classical home of free trade, which had now become a burning political issue. The Tory Party ran into heavy weather as a result of Joseph Chamberlain's

advocacy of tariff reform. Balfour kept the Tories together as long as he could, but he was at last forced to resign and the Liberal leader, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, became Prime Minister. In the new ministry Winston was given the post of Under-Secretary for the Colonies.

In the election he stood as an enthusiastic Liberal and a fervent supporter of free trade, a good line in Manchester. At a big meeting in the Free Trade Hall at Manchester, he made an eloquent speech in moving a vote of thanks to the veteran Liberal leader, John Morley. It was an oration that made the Tories squirm and which Liberals cheered to the echo. Passages in it have been quoted again and again as acid descriptions of Toryism which have never been surpassed:

We want a Government that will think a little more about the toiler at the bottom of the mine and a little less about the fluctuations of the share market in London. We want a Government which, instead of looking mainly abroad, will look mainly, if not, I think, entirely, at home. We want a Government which we may be able to obtain. That is the kind of Government which Mr. Chamberlain says will "after a brief interval be hissed off the stage." Well, let us get it first, and then we will show what we will do with the hissing.

Now if we know what we want we also are lucky in knowing what we have to fight. A great leader of the Protectionist Party, whatever else you may not think about him, has at any rate left us in no doubt as to what use he will make of his victory if he should win it. We know perfectly well what to expect—a party of great vested interests, banded together in a formidable federation; corruption at home, aggression to cover it up abroad; the trickery of tariff juggles, the tyranny of a party machine; sentiment by the bucketful, patriotism by the imperial pint; the open hand at the public exchequer, the open door at the public house; dear food for the million, cheap labour for the millionaire. That is the policy of Birmingham, and we are going to erect against that policy of Birmingham the policy of Manchester. . . .

It is very likely that in dealing with great urgent questions like land, like liquor, like labour, you may cause some little excitement and even some little irritation among the great vested interests which are affected by your legislation. We wish to treat everybody with the greatest kindness and with the greatest respect. We do not wish, if we can help it, to hurt a fly. But we have got to make this clear in regard to great and urgent social questions such as I have mentioned: that, wherever private privilege comes into collision with the public interest, the public interest must have the right of way....

All through the winter we have listened to the revival of all the stale, old, exploded arguments for Protection—all sorts of doctrines and theories about trade and commerce which it had been hoped in this twentieth century we had cast as far behind as the ancient popular beliefs in magic and witchcraft. That strange experience has produced in many quarters some doubts whether, after all, there is any such thing as real progress in human affairs, whether all the exertions and sacrifices of generations make much difference, whether it is not all a purposeless journeying to and fro, up and down, which leaves us at the end of the day not much further advanced than when we began.

I do not blame those doubters. I do not even wonder at their doubts. But we are here tonight to tell them they are wrong. We are here to sweep away these whisperings of despair. We are here to say that we are not going back, we are going on. Our movements are towards a better, fairer organisation of Society; and our faith is strong and high that the time will surely come—and will come the sooner for our efforts—when the dull grey clouds under which millions of our fellow-countrymen are monotonously toiling will break and melt and vanish for ever in the sunshine of a new and nobler age.

Winston defeated Joynson Hicks in northwest Manchester by 1,241 votes. His prognostications were right. The General Election of 1906 was a landslide to the Left. It looked as if the Tory Party could never come back hi Britain. He had left it just hi tune.



At thirty-one Winston was a junior minister. He was not on the first rung of the ladder, he was halfway up, and was soon one of the most popular speakers on the Liberal Party platform in the country and one of the most redoubtable debaters in the House. But as Under-Secretary for the Colonies he had not much scope for spreading his wings. The Colonial Secretary was the Earl of Elgin, who had been Viceroy of India and knew how to keep his understudies in their place. When Winston submitted to his chief a lengthy memorandum explaining his views on colonial administration and ending, "These are my views," Lord Elgin added, "But not mine."

It had been left to the Liberal Government to effect a political settlement in South Africa, and it wisely decided on a generous measure of self-government. Churchill had the duty of piloting the legislation through the House of Commons and of answering the Tory speeches which prophesied ruin and disaster. He produced a peroration worthy of the occasion:

If as we hope and profoundly believe, better days are in store for South Africa, if the long lane it has been travelling has reached its turning at last, if the near future should unfold to our eyes a tranquil, prosperous, consolidated Afrikaner nation under the protecting aegis of the British Crown, then, I say, the good as well as the evil will not be confined to South Africa, then, I say, the cause of the poor and the weak all over the world will have been sustained, and everywhere small peoples will get more room to breathe, and everywhere great empires will be encouraged by our example to step forward—and it only needs a step—into the sunshine of a more gentle and more generous age.

(He forgot those noble sentiments a generation after when it came India's turn for a generous settlement. See Chapters XVI, XXVII and XXVIII below.)

Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman died, and Herbert H. Asquith succeeded him as Premier. In the reshuffle, Lloyd George became Chancellor of the Exchequer and Churchill was promoted to the Board of Trade. In those days this meant seeking re-election. The Tories had come to regard Churchill as Enemy No. 2 (Enemy No. 1 was Lloyd George), and they left no stone unturned to defeat him and recapture northwest Manchester. The Suffragettes had come to regard him as one of their enemies in the Government, which, they said, had betrayed them, and there were stormy scenes at his meetings. The Tories were exultant. After a stormy campaign, Churchill was defeated. In a leading article the Daily Telegraph became hysterical in its glee over the result: "Churchill out— language fails us just when it is most needed. We have all been yearning for this to happen, with a yearning beyond utterance. Figures—oh yes, there are figures, but who cares for figures today? Churchill is out, out, OUT."

John Morley, his colleague in the Cabinet, explained the defeat at northwest Manchester as follows: "The belief among competent observers is that the resounding defeat of Winston at Manchester was due to the reaction to rather too naked tactics of making deals with this and that and the other groups without too severe a scrutiny in his own political conscience of the terms that they were exacting for him. In other words Winston has no principles. It is believed that he lost 300-400 of these honourably fastidious electors."

The Tories now regarded him as the arch renegade. He had been a traitor to his class. He had let down the team: he was no longer worthy to wear the old school tie; he was a bounder and a cad, the grandson of a duke turned demagogue. When his name was mentioned in the Carlton Club, disgusted colonels growled deep oaths, verged on apoplexy, and spat.

Their exultation was, however, short-lived. On the very evening of his defeat he received an invitation to contest Dundee, and hurried north. The Tories could not keep him out here. He polled 7,079 votes against the Liberal Unionists' (camouflaged Tories') 4,370. An Independent Labour candidate polled 4,014 and a Prohibitionist 655.

Winston had never been in Dundee before and knew nothing about its social problems, but he realized that the harder he hit the Tories here the greater were his prospects of victory, and he did it for all he was worth. But he had to meet something new for him, a formidable attack from the Left, and he had to declare his attitude towards Socialism.

He was, he explained, "for more collective action both by the State and by municipalities, especially in the case of monopoly services," but he rejected Socialism as "a monstrous and imbecile conception." "Mr. Churchill," wrote Mr. Philip Guedalla, "was growing Radical, with a strong tendency to private disquisitions on the poor (he had just discovered the unpleasant fact of poverty and was deeply moved by the discovery) and all he meant to do for them and his providential preservation for this purpose."

He remained President of the Board of Trade for two years. The main measures for which he was responsible were the bill to set up labour exchanges, the bill to set up trade boards for dealing with sweated labour, and the bill for constituting the Port of London Authority.

The labour exchanges were a concession to the Labour Party's demand that the Government should legislate to prevent unemployment, a demand that had been persistently made for many years by Keir Hardie, the lonely Socialist pioneer who had now an organized group behind him. The Labour Party approved of the measure but did not hail it with enthusiasm. It did not go far enough. All that it did was to set up labour-exchange offices where workers might register for jobs and employers look for workers. Socialists characterized it as a mere palliative, characteristic of a Liberal Government that had no intention of proceeding with any far-reaching measure likely to be distasteful to the wealthy ship-owners, coal-owners and the big industrialists who subscribed to the Liberal Party's funds.

Lloyd George and Winston Churchill were now the most spectacular and dynamic figures in the Liberal Party and were regarded as the Left Wing in the Cabinet. Asquith, Haldane and Grey were regarded as the restraining influences. They had supported the Boer War during the years when Lloyd George had made a courageous stand against it both in the Commons and in the country.

Temperamentally, Lloyd George and Churchill had a great deal in common, although their careers had been quite different. Lloyd George had come from a humble family and had forced his way to the front of politics by sheer ability and energy. In Parliament he had been a bitter and caustic critic of Joseph Chamberlain and a brilliant debater. He had not the slightest respect for the ruling aristocracy and ridiculed and despised its leaders and figureheads. Behind him he had the radical section of the Liberal Party and the Non-conformist conscience. He had sprung from the people and had an instinctive hatred of wealth and privilege in his bones, and the rich landlords were his pet aversion.

In politics Lloyd George was shrewd, cunning and calculating, with great personal charm, with immense energy and capacity, and absolutely ruthless. He was the greatest platform orator of his day. He was naturally eloquent and knew how to appeal to the emotions of a crowd. He had a wonderful gift of coining phrases and making vivid metaphors. He used all the armoury of wit, humour and ridicule in stating his case. While Churchill's oratory was always carefully prepared, Lloyd George's was natural and spontaneous, and he had an uncanny gift of playing on the emotions of his audience. He had not read Gibbon and did not model his style on Macaulay. His inspiration came more from the Welsh pulpits.

Like Churchill, Lloyd George was essentially a careerist. The radical and the rebel learned quickly how to play the game of parliamentary intrigue, and he took to Westminster as a duck takes to water. He had emotions, but few principles, and he was desperately ambitious to be right in the very forefront of politics at any cost. Lloyd George mesmerized Winston, who admired his spellbinding oratory and tried his best to imitate it. The influence of Lloyd George was soon

clearly shown in Winston's speeches. He, too, began to perorate about the mountain peaks and the dawn over the hills. But while Lloyd George's silver-tongued oratory was inspired by mountain brooks, Winston's flowery rhetoric was laboriously concocted with the midnight oil.

## CHAPTER VII

### Tonypandy and Sidney Street

**T**he Liberal Government had come into power to carry out a bold, comprehensive program of social reform. It had promised home rule for Ireland, disestablishment for Wales, licensing reform, old-age pensions, and legislation to help the unemployed. It had been elected in the revulsion of public opinion that inevitably follows a war, and had made lavish promises and raised great hopes.

The House of Lords, however, was overwhelmingly dominated by the landed aristocracy, which was determined to do everything in its power to retain its traditional privileges and not to pay any new taxes to finance social reforms. Lloyd George turned all his gifts of vituperative oratory against the Lords, and even Churchill could not equal his Limehouse speech. Lloyd George's People's Budget of 1909 was thrown out by the Lords, and the Liberals went to the country on the popular slogan of Peers vs. People.



Churchill went all out against the House of Lords, which he likened to "a Punch and Judy show." He declared that "the dukes" were defending "vulgar joyless luxury," and assured them that "the tax gatherer will ask in the future not only 'What have you got?' but 'How did you get it?'" The time had gone for a free country to submit to the dictatorship of a hereditary aristocracy.

At the January election Winston increased his majority at Dundee. It was a two-member seat, and he ran in unofficial partnership with the Labour Party candidate, Alexander Wilkie. The result was—

<b>Churchill (Liberal)</b>	<b>10,747</b>
<b>A. Wilkie (Labour)</b>	<b>10,365</b>
<b>J. S. Lloyd (Tory)</b>	<b>4,552</b>
<b>J. Glass (Tory)</b>	<b>4,339</b>
<b>E. Scrymgeour (Prohibitionist)</b>	<b>1,512</b>

Neither the Liberals nor the Labour Party thought it wise to run two candidates and split what was known as "the progressive vote," and so let the Tories in. When another general election came in December of the same year, in order to give the Government a mandate to proceed with the legislation limiting the power of the Lords, the result was very much the same. Churchill and Wilkie had comfortable majorities. Churchill represented Dundee for fourteen years as a Liberal. Another shuffle in the Government made him Home Secretary—more in his line than the Board of Trade.

The Home Secretary did not run wars and control soldiers and sailors, but he was at least responsible for the prisons and the police. At one time it had been suggested that he should go to the Local Government Board, later the Ministry of Health. But this post had no attractions for him. He objected to the Local Government Board because "he declined to be shut up in a soup kitchen with Mrs. Sidney Webb." There were no soldiers to be moved about there. The

humdrum problems of poverty and local government could be left to John Burns, who had been a member of the London County Council. Mrs. Sidney Webb had been agitating for a lifetime for the reform of the Poor Law. There were no medals, no glamour, no excitement to be gained on this front. Winston knew nothing about poverty anyway. He was more interested in the flags and the trumpets and the guns. But if he had no time for Mrs. Sidney Webb, neither had she any time for him. She regarded him as a glib, superficial, time-serving political careerist, abysmally ignorant of the real day-to-day life of the people who were the cannon fodder of the wars.

The year 1910 was one of great industrial unrest. In south Wales there was a long, bitter miners' struggle over the question of a minimum wage. In the Rhondda Valley many of the mines had been acquired by the Cambrian Combine, which was presided over by Lord Rhondda, who, as D. A. Thomas, had sat in the House of Commons as a Liberal M.P. Many of the coal owners were Liberals and subscribed to the Liberal funds. The colliers in the Combine's pits in the Rhondda demanded 2s. 6d. per ton, and the owners were only prepared to give 1s. 9d. The owners issued lockout notices to 950 miners in one of the pits, and the 12,000 miners employed by the Cambrian Combine came out on strike for a minimum wage. In the Aberdare Valley the miners also came out. They picketed the pits, and the local police found themselves incapable of dealing with the situation.

The coal-owners and the coal-owners' press issued frantic appeals to the Government for reinforcements to assist the police. They found a sympathetic hearing at the Home Office, and Winston Churchill decided to send down a mobile detachment of mounted metropolitan police. Their arrival infuriated the miners. They were strangers in South Wales and did not know how to handle Welsh crowds. They charged into a miners' meeting and hundreds of miners were batoned. The strike committee decided to withdraw the safety men, and the coal-owners' press conducted a terrific campaign, demanding that the Government should save the mines.

On November 8 a miners' demonstration was charged by the police in Tonypany Square. The next morning some safety men were escorted to work by the police, and the men immediately adopted mass picketing. Throughout the day the police charged the crowds in order to disperse them; but the Welsh miners were not easily cowed, and both sides had to report considerable casualties—one of the strikers being killed. It was clear that the police had raised intense feeling in the valleys. Winston Churchill decided that soldiers should be sent down to reinforce the police.

Law and order must be maintained while the miners and their families starved. Churchill pressed for the appointment of a senior army officer to take charge, and Haldane, at the War Office, concurred. General Sir Nevil MacCreedy, then Director of Personal Services at the War Office, was ordered to place himself under the Home Secretary.

A formidable force was concentrated in the valleys—600 Welsh police, 500 of the metropolitan force, two squadrons of the Hussars and a detachment of the Lancashire Infantry. Conflict between police, soldiers and the miners continued. Even the organization of the shopkeepers, who were not usually sympathetic to the miners, protested against the unwarranted display of force practiced by the invaders. On the floor of the House of Commons, Keir Hardie used every opportunity to denounce the attitude of the Government—in particular that of the Home Secretary, Winston Churchill—and in a powerful little pamphlet, *Killing No Murder*, denounced the policy of introducing soldiers into an industrial dispute. Keir Hardie wrote:

The last time that men were shot down by the military was at Feather-stone when Asquith was Home Secretary and a Liberal Government was in power. Once more the Liberals are in office and Asquith is Prime Minister; the troops are let loose upon the people to shoot down if need be whilst they are fighting for their legitimate rights. They will give you Insurance Bills, they will give you all kinds of soothing syrups to keep you quiet, but in the end your Liberal Party, just

like your Tory Party, is the party of the rich and exists to protect the rich when Labour and Capital come into conflict.

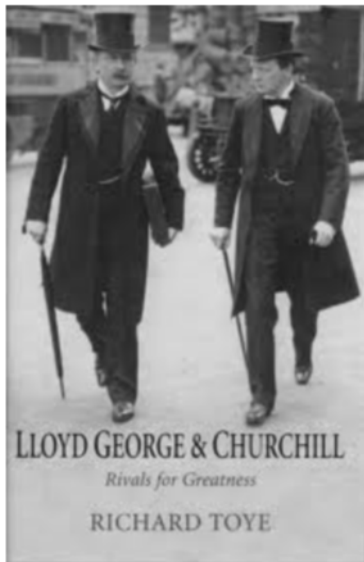
After a long, bitter struggle, which lasted eleven months, the Rhondda miners were starved back to work. The Liberal Government had loyally backed up the Liberal coal-owners, and Winston Churchill had become known in working-class circles as "the hero of Tonypandy." General MacCready wrote: "It was entirely due to Mr. Churchill's foresight in sending a strong force of metropolitan police directly he was aware of the state of affairs in the valleys that bloodshed was avoided." (Churchill evidently had a horror of bloodshed but not of slow starvation.) "Nothing could exceed the support given me by Mr. Churchill, or the entire absence of any interference in measures I judged necessary to cope with the situation."

In the railway strike that followed in August, 1911, the policy of Tonypandy was repeated on a national scale. The railwaymen, for the first time in history, revolted against the railway companies and demanded the recognition of their union. The Government thought this was going too far. If they insisted on their demands, they were told by the Government, all the forces of the Crown would be used against them. Fifty thousand soldiers were called up and supplied with twenty rounds of ball cartridges and stationed at key centres in the country. There were shooting incidents at Llanelly in south Wales and at Liverpool. Again there were heated scenes between Keir Hardie and Churchill in the House of Commons.

Keir Hardie said, "You say to me, the Government is bound to maintain law and order. I do not deny it. But let us begin at the beginning. When the railwaymen said, 'We want our unions recognized'; when the railway directors told the Government that they were not going to recognize the men's unions: what was then the duty of the Government? Not to promise soldiers to back up the directors, but to say to the directors: 'We believe the men to be right, and not one single soldier, not one single constable shall be moved to your assistance until you have met the men's unions.' "

The Liberal Government was not, however, prepared to talk to railway directors and coal-owners in this way. The Liberal Party got most of its money from these gentlemen. They were quite prepared to allow Lloyd George and Winston Churchill to attack the landlords and the dukes, but when it came to interfering with coal and railway capitalists that was a different matter. These gentlemen had not financed the Liberal Party to enable it to take sides against them when low-paid miners and railwaymen came out on strike.

In January, 1911, Churchill also became known as "the Napoleon of Sidney Street." The police had cornered some Russians—who were wanted for crimes of violence—in a building in the East End, and when the news arrived at the Home Office, Churchill decided to take command in person. The house was surrounded; there was shooting, and ultimately the house caught on fire. The affair received enormous publicity and Winston was photographed in high silk hat and long frock coat in the middle of a group of soldiers and armed police, who were firing. Winston was in his element; it appealed to his sense of melodrama. In the House of Commons Balfour remarked that he understood why the photographer was on the scene but not the Home Secretary.



A battle with Anarchists was right up his street. It was in the blood-and-thunder tradition. When the building caught fire and the fire brigade arrived he gave instructions to the fire-brigade officer on his authority as Home Secretary that he was to allow the building to burn.

The charred bodies of the fugitives were found in the burned-out buildings. "Peter the Painter," the alleged leader of the Anarchists, was not there. According to Churchill's later theory, Peter the Painter "was one of those wild beasts who in later years, amid the convulsions of the Great War, were to devour and ravage the Russian state and people." He added: "Rumour has repeatedly claimed him as one of the Bolshevik liberators and saviours of Russia. Certainly his qualities and record would well have fitted him to take an honoured place in that noble land. But of this rumour is alone the foundation." Peter the Painter had no more connection with the Bolsheviks than Jack the Ripper or Dr. Crippen had with Winston Churchill. But the theory fitted in with the blood-and-thunder story. Churchill was obviously too little informed on economic theory or Russian politics to have known that Anarchists were not Bolsheviks and Bolsheviks not Anarchists.

## CHAPTER VIII

### “The Conservative Conspiracy”

**I**N those pre-war days the papers reported political speeches at great length, and Churchill's anti-Tory orations were widely read. Winston did not pull his punches. He was particularly scathing about the House of Lords. In a speech in the House of Commons, June 29, 1907, he asked:

Has the House of Lords ever been right? Has it ever been right in any of the great settled controversies which are now beyond the reach of Party argument? Was it right in delaying Catholic emancipation and the removal of Jewish disabilities? Was it right in driving this country to the verge of revolution in its effort to defeat the passage of reform? Was it right in resisting the Ballot Bill? Was it right in the almost innumerable efforts it made to prevent this House dealing with the purity of its own electoral machinery? Was it right in endeavouring to prevent the abolition of purchase in the Army? Was it right in 1880, when it rejected the Compensation for Disturbance Bill? I defy the Party opposite to produce a single instance of a settled controversy in which the House of Lords was right.

Churchill concluded:

There are to-day, unlike in former ages, actually millions of people who possess not merely inert property, but who possess rent-earning, profit-bearing property; and the danger with which we are confronted now is not at all whether we shall go too fast. No, the danger is that about three-fourths of the people of this country should move on in a comfortable manner into an easy life, which, with all its ups and downs, is not uncheered by fortune, while the remainder of the people shall be left to rot and fester in the slums of our cities, or wither in the deserted and abandoned hamlets of our rural districts.

That is the danger with which we are confronted at the present moment, and it invests with a deep and real significance the issue which is drawn between the two Parties to-night. It is quite true that there are rich Members of the Liberal Party, and there are poor men who are supporters of the Conservative Party; but in the main the lines of difference between the two Parties are social and economic—in the main the lines of difference are increasingly becoming the lines of cleavage between the rich and the poor. Let that reflection be with us in the struggle which we are now undertaking, and in which we shall without pause press forward, confident of this, that if we persevere, we shall wrest from the hands of privilege and wealth the evil, ugly, and sinister weapon of the Peers' veto, which they have used so ill so long.

In one of his speeches at Dundee, Winston said that the Tories "like the Bourbons have learned nothing and forgotten nothing." If they were returned "we shall step back into the period of

obstinate and prejudiced negations." For Ireland—ten years of resolute government. For England—dear food and cheaper gin. And for Scotland—the superior wisdom of the House of Lords! "Is that the work you want to do, men of Dundee?" In another speech at Dundee, October 10, 1908, dealing with unemployment, he said:

*"The social machinery at the basis of our industrial life is deficient, ill-organised, and incomplete. While large numbers of persons enjoy great wealth, while the mass of the artisan classes are abreast of and in advance of their fellows in other lands, there is a minority, considerable in numbers, whose condition is a disgrace to a scientific and professedly Christian civilisation, and constitutes a grave and increasing peril to the State. Yes, in this famous land of ours, so often envied by foreigners, where the grace and ease of life have been carried to such perfection, where there is so little class hatred and jealousy, where there is such a wide store of political experience and knowledge, where there are such enormous moral forces available, so much wisdom, so much virtue, so much power, we have not yet succeeded in providing that necessary apparatus of insurance and security, without which our industrial system is not merely incomplete, but actually inhumane.*

*Churchill also expressed himself strongly on the subject of temperance: "Do not forget, either, how fatal to the social, moral, and political progress of British democracy is the curse of intemperance. There is not a man or woman who lifts a voice and exerts an influence in support either of land or of temperance reform, who will not be doing something not only to alleviate the sufferings of the poor, but to stimulate the healthy advance of British prosperity."*

In the same speech he poured acid invective on Tory politicians:

See now, also, what sort of politicians those are, whichever extreme of politics they may belong to, who tell you that they have an easy, simple, and unailing remedy for such an evil. What sort of unscrupulous and reckless adventurers they are who tell you that tariff reform, that a trumpery ten per cent, tariff on foreign manufactures, and a tax on wheat, would enable them to provide "work for all." I was very glad to see that Mr. Balfour frankly and honestly dissociated himself, the other night at Dumfries, from the impudent political cheap-jacks who are touting the country on behalf of the Tory Party, by boldly declaring that tariff reform, or "fiscal reform," as he prefers to call it, would be no remedy for unemployment or trade oscillations.

At Nottingham on January 30, 1908, Churchill described the Conservative Party as a party destitute of political merit:

But what social legislation, what plans of reform do the Conservative Party offer now to the working people of England if they will return them to power? I have studied very carefully the speeches of their leaders—if you can call them leaders—and I have failed to discover a single plan of social reform or reconstruction. Upon the grim and sombre problems of the Poor Law they have no policy whatever. Upon unemployment no policy whatever: for the evils of intemperance no policy whatever, except to make sure of the public-house vote; upon the question of the land, monopolised as it is in the hands of so few, denied to so many, no policy whatever; for the distresses of Ireland, for the relations between the Irish and British peoples, no policy whatever unless it be coercion. In other directions where they have a policy, it is worse than no policy. For Scotland the Lords' veto, for Wales a Church repugnant to the conscience of the overwhelming majority of the Welsh people, crammed down their throats at their own expense.

It would be bad enough if a Party so destitute, according to its own statement, of political merit were to return with the intention of doing nothing but repeating and renewing our experience under Mr. Balfour's late administration, of dragging through empty sessions, of sneering at every philanthropic enthusiasm, of flinging a sop from time to time to the brewers or the parsons or the landed classes. But those would not be the consequences which would follow from the



Tory triumph. Consequences far more grave, immeasurably more disastrous, would follow. We are not offered an alternative policy of progress, we are not confronted even with a policy of standstill, we are confronted with an organised policy of constructive reaction. We are to march back into those shades from which we had hoped British civilisation and British science had finally emerged.

If you face the policy with which we are now threatened by the Conservative Party fairly and searchingly, you will see that it is nothing less than a deliberate attempt on the part of important sections of the propertied classes to transfer their existing burdens to the shoulders of the masses of the people and to gain greater profits for the investment of their capital by charging higher prices.

The Conservative Party is not a party but a conspiracy.

Such is the great conspiracy with which the British democracy is now confronted—an attempt to place upon the shoulders of wage-earners and not on income-drawers, a disastrous blow at the prosperity, the freedom, the flexibility, and the expansive power of British industry, and a deadly injury to the purity of English public life. The Conservative Party tell us that if they win the victory they will screw a protective tariff on our necks. What do we say? What of the House of Lords? We say that if we win, we will smash to pieces the veto of the House of Lords. If we obtain a majority at the next election—and I have good hopes that if we act with wisdom and with union, and, above all, with courage, we shall undoubtedly obtain an effective majority—the prize we shall claim will be a final change in the relations of the two Houses of Parliament, of such a character as to enable the House of Commons to make its will supreme within the lifetime of a single Parliament; and except upon that basis, or for the express purpose of effecting that change, we will not accept any responsibility for the conduct of affairs.

Here are some further extracts from the speeches in which Churchill expounded his Liberal faith and dealt trenchantly with his Tory critics:

**"Jingo Clamour"** In my judgment, a Liberal is a man who ought to stand as a restraining force against an extravagant policy. He is a man who ought to keep cool in the presence of Jingo clamour. He is a man who believes that confidence between nations begets confidence, and that the spirit of peace and goodwill makes the safety it seeks. And, above all, I think a Liberal is a man who should keep a sour look for scare-mongers of every kind and of every size, however distinguished, however ridiculous—and sometimes the most distinguished are the most ridiculous—a cold, chilling, sour look for all of them, whether their panic comes from the sea or from the air or from the earth or from the waters under the earth.

**"House of Lords"** And after all, gentlemen, when we are upon the sorrows of the rich and the heavy blows that have been struck by this wicked Budget, let us not forget that this Budget, which is denounced by all the vested interests in the country and in all the abodes of wealth and power, after all draws nearly as much from the taxation of tobacco and spirits — which are the luxuries of the working classes, who pay their share with silence and dignity—as it does from those wealthy classes upon whose behalf such heartrending outcry is made. A state of gradual decline was what the average Englishman has come to associate with the House of Lords. Little by little, we might have expected, it would have ceased to take a controversial part in practical politics. Year by year it would have faded more completely into the past to which it belongs until, like Jack-in-the-Green or Punch-and-Judy, only a picturesque and fitfully lingering memory would have remained.

**Class Interest:** And during the last ten years of Conservative Government this was actually the case. But now we see the House of Lords flushed with the wealth of the modern age, armed with a party caucus, fortified, revived, resuscitated, asserting its claims in the harshest and in the crudest manner, claiming to veto or destroy even without discussion any legislation, however

important, sent to them by any majority, however large, from any House of Commons, however newly elected. We see these unconscionable claims exercised with a frank and undisguised regard to party interest, to class interest, and to personal interest. We see the House of Lords using the power which they should not hold at all, which if they hold at all, they should hold in trust for all to play a shrewd, fierce, aggressive party game of electioneering and casting their votes according to the interest of the particular political party to which, body and soul, they belong.

**The Real Enemies:** It is not the Yellow peril nor the Black peril nor any danger in the wide circuit of colonial and foreign affairs. No, it is here in our midst, close at home, close at hand in the vast growing cities of England and Scotland, and in the dwindling and cramped villages of our denuded countryside. It is there you will find the seed of Imperial ruin and national decay—the unnatural gap between rich and poor, the divorce of the people from the land, the want of proper discipline and training in our youth, the exploitation of boy labour, the physical degeneration which seems to follow so swiftly on civilised poverty, the awful jumbles of an obsolete Poor Law, the horrid havoc of the liquor traffic, the constant insecurity in the means of subsistence and employment which breaks the heart of many a sober hard-working man, the absence of any established minimum standard of life and comfort among the workers and, at the other end, the swift increase of vulgar, joyless luxury, here are the enemies of Britain. Beware lest they shatter the foundations of her power.

**"Democracy or Dictators?"** And, lastly, the issue will be whether the British people, in the year of grace 1909, are going to be ruled through a representative Assembly, elected by six or seven millions of voters, about which almost everyone in the country, man or woman, has a chance of being consulted, or whether they are going to allow themselves to be dictated to and domineered over by a minute minority of titled persons, who represent nobody, who are answerable to nobody, and who only scurry up to London to vote in their party interests, in their class interests and in their own interests.

These will be the issues, and I am content that the responsibility for such a struggle, if it should come, should rest with the House of Lords themselves. But if it is to come, we shall not complain, we shall not draw back from it. We will engage in it with all our hearts and with all our might, it being always clearly understood that the fight will be a fight to the finish, and that the fullest forfeits, which are in accordance with the national welfare, shall be exacted from the defeated foe.

In a speech at the Kinnaird Hall, Dundee, May, 1908, Churchill also explained his attitude towards Socialism:

I have no hesitation in saying that I am on the side of those who think that a greater collective element should be introduced into the State and municipalities. I should like to see the State undertaking new functions, stepping forward into new spheres of activity, particularly in services which are in the nature of monopolies. There I see a wide field for State enterprise. But when we are told to exalt and admire a philosophy which destroys individualism and seeks to replace it absolutely by collectivism, I say that is a monstrous and imbecile conception, which can find no real acceptance in the brains and hearts—and the hearts are as trustworthy as the brains—in the hearts of sensible people.

No man can be a collectivist alone or an individualist alone. He must be both an individualist and a collectivist. The nature of man is a dual nature. The character of the organisation of human society is dual. Man is at once a unique being and a gregarious animal. For some purposes he must be a collectivist, for others he is, and he will for all time remain, an individualist. Collectively we have an Army and a Navy and a Civil Service; collectively we have a Post Office, and a police, and a Government; collectively we light our streets and supply ourselves with water; collectively we indulge increasingly in all the necessities of communication. But we

do not make love collectively, and the ladies do not marry us collectively, and we do not eat collectively, and we do not die collectively, and it is not collectively that we face the sorrows and the hopes, the winnings and the losings, of this world of accident and storm.

It would be interesting to know what exposition of Socialism Winston had read to give him the impression that Socialists "wanted to make love collectively or to marry collectively. He had become an adept, when unable to answer an argument, at conjuring up a bogey. But he was rather premature in asserting that men do not die collectively. In the two world wars that followed they certainly did.

But even while he was one of the most popular speakers on the Liberal platform, some of the Radical wing wondered what he was likely to do next. A. G. Gardiner, for many years editor of the Daily News (now News Chronicle), was one of them. In a penetrating character study of Winston Churchill—later republished in his book *Prophets, Priests and Kings*—he asked:

What of his future? At thirty-four he stands before the country the most interesting figure in politics, his life a crowded drama of action, his courage high, his vision unclouded, his boats burned. "I love Churchill, and trust him," said one of his colleagues to me. "He has the passion of democracy more than any man I know. But don't forget that the aristocrat is still there—latent and submerged, but there—nevertheless. The occasion may come when the two Churchills will come into sharp conflict, and I should not like to prophesy the result." Has he staying power? Can one who has devoured life with such feverish haste retain his zest to the end of the feast? How will forty find him?—that fatal forty when the youth of rose light and romance has faded into the light of common day and the horizon of life has shrank incalculably, and when the flagging spirit no longer answers to the spur of external things, but must find its motive and energy from within, or find them not at all.



### **The First Lord of the Admiralty 1916**

That is the question that gives us pause. For with all his rare qualities, Mr. Churchill is the type of "the gentleman of fortune." He is out for adventure. He follows politics as he would follow the hounds. He has no animus against the fox but he wants to be in "at the kill." It is recorded that when a fiery-headed boy at Harrow, he was asked what profession he thought of taking up, he replied, "The Army, of course, so long as there's any fighting to be had. When that's over I shall have a shot at politics." He is still the Harrow boy, having his "shot at politics"—not so much concerned about who the enemy may be or about the merits of the quarrel as about being in the thick of the fight and having a good time. With the facility of the Churchill mind he feels the pulse of Liberalism with astonishing sureness, and interprets it with extraordinary ability. But the sense of high purpose is not yet apparent through the fierce joy of battle that possesses him. The passion for humanity, the resolve to see justice done though the heavens fall and he be buried in the ruins, the surrender of himself to the cause—these things have yet to come. His eye is less on the fixed stars than on the wayward meteors of the night. And when the exhilaration of youth is gone, and the gallop of high spirits has run its course, it may be that this deficiency of abiding and high-compelling purpose will be a heavy handicap. Then it will be seen how far courage and intellectual address, a mind acutely responsive to noble impulses, and a quick and apprehensive political instinct will carry him in the leadership of men.

Gardiner clearly had his doubts whether or not Winston Churchill's faith in Liberalism was destined to last.

## CHAPTER IX

### First Lord of the Admiralty

**T**HE Liberal Government had been swept into power by a great revulsion against the Boer War. Its slogan had been "Peace, Retrenchment and Reform." It had committed itself to a great, costly program of social reform which would have to be paid for by drastic increases of taxation on the wealthy and by a reduction of expenditure on war services.

Lord Randolph Churchill, a generation before, had demanded a reduction of expenditure at the War Office and had resigned from the Chancellorship of the Exchequer rather than yield to the army's demands. Winston himself had taken the same line his opposition to the Tory Broderick's army reforms and had talked grandiloquently about raising the tattered flag "which he had found on a stricken field."

#### A Boer Poster Offering £25 for Churchill

In the Cabinet were men who had strongly opposed the Boer War, John Morley, Lloyd George, John Burns. On the other hand, the Liberal imperialists, Asquith, McKenna, Haldane and Grey, had supported the war. Asquith had not placed any of the "pacifists" in the War Ministries or at the Foreign Office. There was to be a continuity of foreign, imperialist policy. Reginald McKenna was sent to the Admiralty and Haldane to the War Office.

In his speech attacking the Broderick reforms, Churchill had recoiled with horror at the very thought of the organization of an army for a war with a European power. These reforms had been dropped, but Haldane was to revive them in a new form. Britain, it was argued, could not dismiss the possibility of a war on the Continent now that Germany had emerged as a great power; and the military vested interests at the War Office—the generals who had gamed glory in the Sudan and hi South Africa—could not be put on the retired list.

Haldane set out to reorganize the army on the theory that there might be a war on the Continent and that Britain must be prepared to send an expeditionary force. But the greatest demands for more money came from the Admiralty. It had been British politicians' boast that her industrial prosperity was due to her colonies and to the navy, which had secured her the markets. Germany was a rapidly growing industrial nation, and her politicians began to talk the same way. If prosperity came from colonies and a navy, why shouldn't Germany have them too? What about Germany's place in the sun? The Kaiser had grandiose ideas of his own importance hi the world and as the head of a great power. Germany had defeated France in the 1870 war, and the German military caste had gained immense power and prestige. In Germany there had been a good deal of sympathy with the Boers. The Kaiser was proud of his navy. A bigger navy was popular with the German shipbuilders and arms manufacturers; more ships for the German navy meant more profits for Krupps and the arms kings.

With Germany increasing her naval shipbuilding, the British Admiralty was able to point to this as a justification for more big ships. The admirals wanted more dreadnoughts, as did the naval vested interests, the shipbuilders and our big armaments firms. The tension between the countries was reflected in the Daily Mail campaign on the German menace. In the Cabinet, McKenna pleaded for a big naval building campaign and more dreadnoughts. Supporting him were the Liberal imperialist group. At the Foreign Office Sir Edward Grey was negotiating secret treaties and understandings with France and tsarist Russia—Europe was being divided into two armed camps.

In the first few years of the Government, Churchill supported Lloyd George, who was critical of increased expenditure on the navy. In 1909 McKenna brought forward proposals for six new dreadnoughts and an increased expenditure of three million pounds. Lloyd George and Church-

ill were against this measure. They were only prepared to agree to four new ships. At one point the Cabinet had definitely decided not to authorize the building that Fisher (then First Sea Lord) and the Board of Admiralty recommended, and McKenna threatened to resign. Sir Edward Grey strongly supported McKenna. Neither Lloyd George nor Churchill were prepared to resign and risk going into the political wilderness. A compromise was reached—the Admiralty wanted six dreadnoughts. The Cabinet agreed to the laying down of eight; though spread over a period of time. Sir Austen Chamberlain's extract from his diary reflected the Tory view:

And so Lloyd George's Budget was to be approved. The Little Navy men were to be told it was a programme of only four ships and the Big Navy men were to be assured it was really eight. And now as a result of all this manoeuvring the whole country wants eight and will not be happy with less. Asquith jumps about like a parched pea in a frying pan and doesn't know which way to face. The Liberal Party is divided and all sections of it dissatisfied and uneasy.

Lloyd George's anti-war opinions of the Boer War period evaporated with office. In 1911, the Kaiser's Government sent the gunboat Panther to Agadir in Morocco. French and German imperialism were engaged in a diplomatic struggle over this corner of North Africa, and Lloyd George delivered a speech at the Mansion House which was regarded as a warning to Germany that in the event of war England would take sides with France.

The speech created an international sensation. It showed what was coming. Behind the scenes every preparation was made for the possibility of war. The people of Britain, who knew nothing about Agadir and cared less about Morocco, were the potential cannon fodder. But they were completely ignorant of the fact that a handful of politicians were now gambling with their lives and destinies and that Winston Churchill had sent a memorandum to Sir Edward Grey outlining what he thought the war strategy of Britain should be.

One of his proposals was that we should be prepared to send an army to help Belgium to defend Antwerp and to feed that fortress and any army based on it. Another was that we should be prepared to put "extreme pressure" on the Dutch. The Agadir crisis, however, blew over.

The leading men in the Government were now all thinking in terms of preparation for war. It had been realized that there was little agreement between the War Office and the navy about the plans for war and that the Admiralty was against the idea of an expeditionary force to the Continent. Asquith and Haldane agreed that changes were necessary, and as McKenna had been so closely associated with the admirals, changes would be made easier if he were transferred. Asquith suggested Churchill for the Admiralty, but Haldane was not too enthusiastic. Haldane wrote to Sir Edward Grey:

Asquith asked me to see him first alone, and then with Winston. I did so without mincing matters. Winston was very good, reasoned that if he went there [the Admiralty] he would work closely with me at the War Office, in the spirit of his father, who had always said that there ought to be a common administration. I felt, however, that, full of energy as he is, he does not know his problem or the vast field of thought that has to be covered. Moreover, though I did not say this to him, I feel that it was only a year since he had been doing his best to cut down mechanized armies, and that the Admiralty would receive the news of his advent with dismay; for they would think, wrongly or rightly, that as soon as the financial pinch begins to come eighteen months from now, he would want to cut down. He is too apt to act first and think afterwards, though of his energy and courage one cannot speak too highly.

Haldane had ideas of going to the Admiralty himself, but after a visit to the King at Balmoral, Asquith came to the conclusion that this would be too big a snub for the admirals. He decided on Churchill, who accepted "with alacrity." The interview took place in Scotland on the Firth of Forth. When he went back to his bedroom Winston picked up the Bible. He had little difficulty

in opening it at a chapter in Deuteronomy which convinced him that his transfer to the Admiralty to prepare the navy for war was a call from the Lord God Almighty.

At the Admiralty, Churchill had at last a job after his own heart. If he could not play with soldiers or move troops, he was the spokesman of the British navy in Parliament and could wear a naval uniform. If he was not to be a Napoleon, he could at least be a Nelson. He had no doubts at all that he was the Man of Destiny. For his specific commission was to put the fleet "into a state of instant and constant readiness for war in case we are attacked by Germany." His perorations about continuing his father's campaign for economy against the war-vested interests, his opposition to the dreadnoughts program of his predecessor, were forgotten overnight. In a few weeks Haldane was recording in his diary: "Winston and Lloyd George dined with me last night and we had a very useful talk. This is now a very harmonious Cabinet. It is odd to think that three years ago I had to fight these two for every penny for my Army Reforms. Winston is full of enthusiasm about the Admiralty, and just as keen as I am on the war staff. It is delightful to work with him."

The admirals were, however, not so enthusiastic. They candidly asked the questions: "What does Churchill know about the navy? What experience has he had of the sea?" And the answer was, none. He had energy, a vivid imagination, and could talk eternally. He might be superficially brilliant and a glib and pushing politician, but what background and real knowledge had he of naval operations and strategy? Admiral Sir Reginald Bacon, the biographer of Lord Fisher, was to comment later:

Mr. McKenna, the finest First Lord of the Admiralty we have seen in modern times, was superseded by Mr. Winston Churchill, who at once began to bring in a scheme for a Naval War Staff. His ideas were not agreed to by Lord Fisher or by Admiral of the Fleet Sir Arthur Wilson. These two Admirals had far more general experience of the Navy than any other officers and both were strongly against the creation of Chief of Staff other than First Sea Lord. This arbitrary act of overriding the experience and advice of the two greatest admirals of modern times brought retribution to Mr. Churchill later on in the early days of the war.

Admiral Bacon added: "His indomitable energy caused him to meddle in innumerable details that were infinitely better left to the technical officers who had the practical experience necessary to deal with them. His immense range of superficial knowledge beguiled him into believing that that knowledge was accurate and profound."

The change from McKenna to Churchill was of course noted with interest in Germany. Churchill had visited the manoeuvres of the German army at the invitation of the Kaiser, and it is hardly likely that he left the Germans with the impression that he was a man of peace. Lloyd George's Mansion House speech had been denounced in Germany as "sabre rattling" and as an indication that Britain was preparing to join with France and Russia in a war against Germany.

On both sides of the North Sea the army and navy staffs were making their plans on the assumption that war was coming and the politicians on both sides, although they did not take the future cannon fodder of the coming war into their confidence, were thinking in the same terms too. Each side, of course, protested that they were only thinking of the safety of their countries and were merely taking defensive measures. The British navy was, from the British point of view, not aggressive at all; it was purely for the purpose of defending Britain's shores. In Germany, Admiral von Tirpitz was defending his plans for a stronger navy on exactly the same grounds. France and Russia and Italy had warships too, and if they needed them for national defence, was not Germany also entitled to a navy to defend her ships and her coasts?

Churchill, in a speech at Glasgow in February, 1912, defended the British Government's action in the naval race by saying:

The purposes of British naval power are essentially defensive. We have no thoughts and we have never had any thoughts of aggression, and we attribute no such thoughts to other great powers. There is, however, this difference between the British naval power and the naval power of the great and friendly Empire—and I trust it may long remain the great and friendly Empire—of Germany. The British Navy is to us a necessity and, from all points of view, the German Navy is to them more in the nature of a luxury. Our naval power involves British existence. It is existence to us: it is expansion to them. ... If there are to be increases upon the continent of Europe, we shall have no difficulty in meeting them to the satisfaction of the country. As naval competition becomes more acute, we shall have not only to increase the number of the ships we build, but the ratio which our naval strength will have to bear to other great naval Powers, so that our margin of superiority will become larger and not smaller as the strain grows greater.

This speech caused resentment in Germany, whose politicians and naval experts did not gracefully accept the view that what was regarded as a necessity for Britain should be a luxury to them.

So the naval race went on in both countries, with the cordial approval of the vested interests on both sides, and to the great satisfaction of the armament manufacturers and naval contractors who were making substantial profits out of the building of warships and guns and of the sensational newspaper proprietors and journalists, who realized that war was second only to murder in attracting circulation and increasing sales.

When Churchill made his offer of a naval holiday in 1913 there was no response from Berlin. Von Tirpitz took the view that this was a proposal which meant accepting the overwhelming superiority of British naval power as the status quo. Perhaps this was due to the Germans' having discovered that the British Admiralty were contemplating speeding up the secret manufacture of 15-inch guns (ordered some time earlier) in place of the 13.5-inch guns for five new dreadnoughts. Later, in March, 1914, when the matter came up for discussion in Parliament, Churchill said: "We shall have ten ships armed with this weapon by the time any other naval power has two."

Of all the British Tories of the pre-1914 period, the most chauvinistic German-baiter and naval alarmist was Arthur Balfour. The story of his almost criminal bellicosity and of the absence of any actual cause for British alarm over the German naval program has been told effectively by the American publicist Henry Kittredge Norton in an article in the Century Magazine, January, 1928. Even Grey and Churchill both admitted the farce in the Tory alarmism. Grey said: "Our Navy Estimates for 1909 are said to have given provocation. They have not given rise to increased naval expenditure in Germany, or, I believe, in any other country. The last addition to the German naval program was settled by law in 1908."

Churchill was even more decisive in his declaration:

Next year the [German] Naval Law ... prescribes that the limit of expansion has been reached and that the annual quota of new ships added to the German navy will fall to half the quota of recent years. Hitherto that law, as fixed by the German Parliament, has not been in any way exceeded, and I gladly bear witness to the fact that the statements of the German Ministers about it have been strictly borne out by events.

As Mr. Norton concludes:

Here is the word of leading English statesmen that Germany had not only not forced the pace in naval construction but had refused to follow the provocation of England, France and Russia when these countries, under the spur of mendacious propaganda, had nearly trebled their

expenditures. And yet it was the German "challenge to British naval supremacy" that reconciled the people of England to the orgy of slaughter and destruction which began in August, 1914.

The Naval Estimates of 1913 were the largest in British history. The £51,500,000 (pre-war value of the pound) was an increase of £2,750,000 over the previous year and £21,500,000 more than before the Liberal Government had come into power. The radical section of the Liberal Party recalled that only a few years previously Churchill has been calling for a reduction in the Admiralty estimates, which had now soared. But he was still popular with the Liberal rank and file and was disliked by the Tories for his pugnacious parliamentary performances in the stormy debates on the Home Rule for Ireland bill. The differences between the Tories and the Liberals were not, however, so deep as the man in the street believed. Late in 1913 Austen Chamberlain had recorded in his diary: "This autumn I was engaged with others in an attempt to find a compromise on the Irish question which both parties could accept. Mr. Churchill was the prime mover in this overture and again suggested a coalition to make a national settlement of some of the great problems of the day."

The British public knew nothing of these meetings between the Tory leaders and the men whom the public believed to be the bitterest and most irreconcilable political opponents of the Tories. Neither did the British public know that, behind the scenes, feverish preparations were being made for the European war, that British diplomats had come to all sorts of secret understandings with the imperialist French Government and the corrupt autocracy of the Russian Tsar. While all the leading politicians of Europe were protesting, with their hands on their hearts, that they were all in favour of peace, the admiralties and the war offices of Europe had elaborated their plans for war, all proclaiming that they were purely defensive, but with their mobilization and operational plans ready for the day.

In the early days of August, 1914, and indeed ever since, British Government propaganda has always asserted that we were a peaceful nation quite unprepared for war. This is only partially true. Indeed, on August 13, 1911, Churchill had presented a memorandum outlining his ideas on the strategy of the part Britain was to play at a Continental war. The opening sentences of the memorandum said:

The following notes have been written on the assumption . . . that a decision has been arrived at to employ a British military force on the continent of Europe! It does not prejudge that decision in any way.

It is assumed that an alliance exists between Great Britain, France, and Russia, and that these Powers are attacked by Germany and Austria.

In his World Crisis Churchill remarks: "It is true to say that our Entente with France and the military and naval conversations that had taken place since 1906 had led us into a position where we had the obligations of an alliance without its advantages."

When war came in August, 1914, the war politicians whipped up hysteria and indignation about the invasion of neutral Belgium. But this contingency had already been considered by the military chiefs in 1911. Churchill's own strategy included "extreme pressure on the Dutch." He was as little interested in the neutrality of Holland as the German war Lords were in the neutrality of Belgium.

The theory that Britain went into the First World War unprepared cannot be taken seriously in the light of what we now know of what the war lords, diplomats and politicians were doing behind the scenes between 1906 and 1914. "The Navy was ready," was Churchill's proud boast. And the British navy was one of the determining factors in the strategy of the war. In his history of the war Churchill takes great personal credit for the fact that the navy was prepared for war in August, 1914. But this "alone I did" account has not gone unchallenged by less flamboyant



writers who were just as well acquainted with what happened at the Admiralty. True, Churchill was the spectacular figurehead at the Admiralty and its parliamentary spokesman. His naval critics have pointed out that the ships that actually went to sea in 1914 had all been sanctioned and built before he went to the Admiralty. If, by an unlucky chance, a bullet from Peter the Painter's revolver had finished Winston Churchill's career at Sidney Street, it is doubtful whether it would have made the slightest difference to the preparations that were made for the naval war with Germany. Had McKenna remained at the Admiralty, the ships would have been ready just the same. In fact, the Admiralty had a higher opinion of McKenna's capacity as an administrator than they had of Churchill's, although McKenna could not make as flamboyant speeches. In his book *The Tragedy of Winston Churchill*, Mr. Victor Wallace Germain, who expresses the views of military and naval officers of a different school, writes:

The suggestion, for instance, that in view of the threatening international situation the fleet should be kept mobilised instead of being dispersed after the trial mobilisation, emanated not from Mr. Churchill but from Prince Louis of Battenburg—afterwards Lord Mountbatten—the then First Sea Lord. Mr. Churchill did little more than act as the official mouthpiece of the Admiralty. Any other First Lord would and must have done the same. As concerns the actual "preparedness" of the fleet in material, the credit for this is due much more to Reginald McKenna than to Mr. Churchill, but McKenna achieved this in the teeth of the actual opposition of his successor, his colleague, Mr. Lloyd George, and their satellites, in the House, in the Press and on the platform.

When the great international crisis came to a head in July, 1914, after the murder of the Austrian Archduke, Franz Ferdinand, a majority of the British Cabinet were at first against making war over the Austrian demands on Serbia. Haldane and Grey led the minority who were for war from the beginning. As the crisis deepened, the group which stood for peace gradually withered away, especially after the defection of Lloyd George, and joined the pro-war clique. Only John Morley and John Burns held out to the end against war, which they regarded as an international crime with which they could not be associated. They resigned rather than countenance this gigantic gamble with the lives of millions of men. In his famous Memorandum on Resignation, Morley reveals the fact that a majority of the Cabinet had decided to enter the war before the question of the neutrality of Belgium had been brought up in any way.

Winston Churchill was thrilled by the outbreak of the war. Here was his great opportunity. In her autobiography, Mrs. Asquith described the scene at 10 Downing Street the night war was declared:

Henry sat at his writing-table leaning back with a pen in his hand. . . . What was he thinking of?---His sons?---My son was too young to fight; would they all have to fight? ... I got up and leant my head against his: we could not speak for tears.

When I arrived in Downing Street I went to bed.

How did it---how could it have happened? What were we all like five days ago? People were angry but not serious: and now the sound of real war waved like wireless round our heads and the whole world was listening.

I looked at the children asleep after dinner before joining Henry in the Cabinet room. Lord Crewe and Sir Edward Grey were already there and we sat smoking cigarettes in silence; some went out, others came in; nothing was said.

The clock on the mantelpiece hammered out the hour, and when the last beat of midnight struck it was as silent as dawn. We were at war.

I left to go to bed, and, as I was pausing at the foot of the staircase, I saw Winston Churchill with a happy face striding towards the double doors of the Cabinet room.

Sir George Arthur in his book *Concerning Winston Spencer Churchill* writes: "His years of preparation were over, the day of action for the Navy had dawned. It has been well said that in every individual life there is one supreme hour towards which all earlier conditions move, from which all later happenings may be reckoned. It is possible to think that when Big Ben boomed out his eleven fatal strokes Winston Spencer Churchill felt that he would dwell on every moment of it."

How casually and secretly England was involved in the First World War, and thereby in the Second, has been graphically summarized by the distinguished English naval historian and publicist Russell Grenfell in his powerful book *Unconditional Hatred*: "British embroilment in the war of 1914-18 may be said to date from January, 1906, when Britain was in the throes of a General Election. Mr. Haldane, the Secretary of State for War, had gone to the constituency of Sir Edward Grey, the Foreign Secretary, to make an electioneering speech in his support. The two politicians went for a country drive together, during which Grey asked Haldane if he would institute discussions between the British and French general staffs in preparation for the possibility of joint action in the event of a Continental war. Mr. Haldane agreed to do so. The million men who were later to be killed as a result of this rural conversation could not have been condemned to death in more haphazard a fashion. At the moment, not even the Prime Minister, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, let alone other members of the Cabinet, knew what was being arranged." In subsequent pages of his book, Captain Grenfell reveals how this plan unfolded until England entered the war early in August, 1914. We cannot go into these details here, but it may be remarked that the men who were victims of this informal arrangement never knew of it, nor do most of their survivors to this day.

## CHAPTER X

### Antwerp and the Dardanelles

**C**HURCHILL'S opportunity for a spectacular exploit came in the first few weeks of the war. The German army was sweeping through Belgium, but Antwerp was considered a strong fortress which might be saved, and it still protected the left flank of the Allies. The Kaiser had given imperative orders for its capture, and on September 28 the bombardment of the outer ring of fortifications had begun by the powerful German 17-inch howitzers. The panic-stricken Belgian Government sent out an SOS for help. The so-called impregnable fortifications were as strong as the Belgian army. No British soldiers were ready, but at a midnight conference at Kitchener's house it was agreed that Churchill should go to Antwerp to stiffen up the Belgian Prime Minister and that the Royal Naval Division should be sent.

Churchill made a dash to Antwerp and succeeded in persuading the Belgians to continue fighting until the promised reinforcements from Britain arrived. These reinforcements consisted of the Royal Naval Division of some 8,000 men, of whom only about 2,000 were fully trained and equipped. A British war correspondent, Hugh Martin, who was there, has written: "Churchill met the marines on the road between Antwerp and Malines, and addressed them in stirring terms urging them to do or die in a desperate but glorious adventure; but there is no record of his having addressed the Reservists [and recruits] when they arrived two days later. That is perhaps excusable in one who was naturally prone to glory in the panoply and pomp of war. For the Reservists, as I myself encountered them, were indeed a lamentable spectacle of unpreparedness. They lacked almost every aid that a soldier in the field should possess. They carried their ammunition in their pockets and their bayonets stuck in their gaiters. They had next to no supply service and were clearly unfit for anything but garrison duty behind fortifications." "Churchill," wrote Sir Ian Hamilton, ironically, "handles them as though he were Napoleon and they the Old

Guard. He flings them right into the enemy's open jaws." After a day or two at Antwerp, Winston concluded that here was the decisive theatre of the war, and the way to eternal glory was to become the commander-in-chief on the spot. He telegraphed to the Prime Minister:

If it is thought by H. M. Government that I can be of service here, I am willing to resign my office and undertake command of relieving any defensive forces assigned to Antwerp in conjunction with Belgian Army, provided that I am given necessary military rank and authority, and full powers of a commander of a detached force in the field. I feel it my duty to offer my services, because I am sure this arrangement will afford the best prospects of a victorious result to an enterprise in which I am deeply involved. I should require complete staff proportionate to the force employed, as I have had to use all 'the officers now here in positions of urgency. I wait your reply. Runciman would do Admiralty well.

This was indeed an extraordinary telegram to receive from the First Lord of the Admiralty. If the role of the navy in the war was so important and he was the responsible minister for it, why should he so suddenly and impetuously decide to throw it up? Had the British navy suddenly become of secondary consideration? The Prime Minister recorded in his diary:

October 5th.—I find when I arrived here this morning a telegram from Winston who proposes to resign his office to take command in the Field of this great military force. Of course, without consulting anybody I at once telegraphed to him warm appreciation of his mission and his offer, with a most decided negative saying that we could not spare him at the Admiralty. I had not meant to read it at the Cabinet but, as everybody, including K., began to ask how soon he was going to return, I was at last obliged to do so. Winston is an ex-Lieutenant of Hussars and would, if his proposal had been accepted, have been in command of two distinguished Major-Generals not to mention Brigadiers, Colonels, etc., while the Navy are only contributing their light brigade.

October 6th.—Winston persists in remaining there, which leaves the Admiralty here without a head and I have had to tell them to submit decisions to me. I think that Winston ought to return now that a capable General is arriving. He has done good service.

On October 11 Asquith's son, Brigadier General Arthur Asquith, who was himself at Antwerp, visited his father, and the Prime Minister noted in his diary:

I had a long talk after midnight, in the course of which he gave me a full and vivid account of the expedition to Antwerp and the retirement. Marines, of course, are splendid troops and can go anywhere and do anything but Winston ought never to have sent the two Naval Brigades. I was assured that all the recruits were being left behind and that the main body at any rate consisted of seasoned naval reserve men. As a matter of fact, only about a quarter were Reservists, and the rest were a callow crowd of the most raw recruits, most of whom had never fired off a rifle while none of them had ever handled an entrenching tool.

Later in October, Churchill had an interview with Asquith, who recorded the following:

I have had a long call from Winston who, after dilating in great detail on the actual situation, became suddenly very confidential and implored me to take a conventional view of his future. Having, as he says, tasted blood these last few days he is beginning like a tiger to raven for more and begs that sooner or later, and the sooner the better, he may be relieved of his present office and put in some kind of military command. I told him that he could not be spared from the Admiralty. He scoffed at that, alleging that the naval part of the business is practically over as our superiority will grow greater and greater every month.

His mouth waters at the thought of Kitchener's Armies. Are these glittering commands to be entrusted to dug-out trash, bred on the obsolete tactics of twenty-five years ago, mediocrities who have led a sheltered life, mouldering in military routine?

For about an hour he poured forth a ceaseless invective and appeal and I much regretted that there was no shorthand writer within hearing as some of his unpremeditated phrases were quite priceless. He was, however, three parts serious and declared that a political career was nothing to him in comparison with military glory.

The Belgians, however, were not inspired by his theatricality. Hugh Martin, who had been promised the spectacle of "a bit of bayonet work," instead "saw the officers using the flats of their swords on the backs of their men in a desperate effort to rally them." The Belgian soldiers had no stomach for this glorious war. Who were the men that Churchill was prepared to throw into the open jaws of the enemy? He boasts that the navy was ready; it certainly did not apply to them. A couple of Reservist battalions blundered over the Dutch frontier and were interned. Eight or nine hundred men were taken prisoner and 138 wounded. Fifty men and seven officers lost their lives.

The Antwerp expedition was justified on the grounds that the delay there held up the German advance on the Channel ports. But in case Antwerp was so important in the strategy of the war, it was asked, why was so little thought given to it beforehand? Was Antwerp not on the Admiralty maps, and how was it that the men who were thrown into the battle were so poorly equipped? Had the fact that men would not fight without equipment and supplies escaped the First Lord? Were these details not worthy of his attention in his obsession with the glamour and the glory?

One pauses to reflect on what might have happened if the Prime Minister had acceded to Churchill's request and allowed him to become supreme commander on the Antwerp Front. Kitchener had been in favour of making him a lieutenant general and letting him go ahead. In that event, he might have marched "into the jaws of the enemy" himself and fought to the last drop of blood with his back to the wall. Or he might have been interned or taken prisoner. That would have made even the Kaiser and von Tirpitz laugh. But the Government would have had to find another First Lord of the Admiralty and there might have been a different story to tell of the expedition to the Dardanelles.

"The best laid plans o' mice and men gang aft agley." That was what happened in France and Flanders when the rival armies dug themselves in. The War Office had prepared for "a short, sharp war." In the memorandum that he had prepared in 1911, Churchill had forecast the possible development of a war between France and Germany and had got as far as outlining what was likely to happen in the first forty days. "Opportunities," he had concluded, "for the decisive trial of strengths may then occur."

But the forty days had gone and the war, far from having reached a dramatic climax, was, according to Lord Kitchener, likely to last three years; and the glorious victories had not arrived. The British press had been full of stories of the Russian advance on the Eastern Front and had held out hopes to the British public of the "great Russian steamroller" making for Berlin. But something had gone wrong in the eastern theatre, too.

The war did not go according to plan. Even at sea there had been no Trafalgars under the auspices and inspiration of Winston Churchill. The First Lord was indignant because the German fleet had not steamed into the North Sea. In a speech at Liverpool he had declared melodramatically that if the German ships did not come out and fight they would be "dug out like rats out of holes." In his *World Crisis* he describes this as "an unhappy phrase which had slipped from my weary tongue" and complains that "it was fastened upon and pilloried." It may have been the speech of a weary man, but it was also the boastful rant of a reckless man. Shortly afterwards, three cruisers were lost with 1,459 officers and men.

Hopes of a quick victory either on the Western Front or on the Russian Front, where the Tsar's conscript armies were being rolled back, receded, and Lord Kitchener was planning for a three years' war.

At the end of October, 1914, Turkey had come into the war on the side of Germany, and in January, 1915, a message came from the Grand Duke Nicholas that the Russians were being pressed in the Caucasus. The Russians, far from being an asset, were proving a liability. The Cabinet had already discussed the opening of a new front in southeast Europe. "The Allied strategy in France," writes Lloyd George in his War Memoirs, "had been a sanguinary mistake which nearly brought irretrievable defeat. When it failed the High Commands had no rational alternative to propose. The Allied generals were completely baffled by the decision of the Germans to dig in. They could think of nothing better than the sacrifice of millions of men in hopeless effort to break through. The great struggles of 1914 had shattered every military dream and wrecked every military hope on both sides."

Winston Churchill advocated an attempt to break through the Dardanelles. He foresaw such a spectacular effort succeeding, the British fleet arriving before Constantinople, the defeat and surrender of the Turks, and the way opened out to send help to Russia. Kitchener had no troops to spare and Lord Fisher was reluctant to send his precious ships. What Churchill contemplated was, to quote his own words, "something in the nature of an organized rush."

The Admiralty sent a telegram to the vice-admiral at the Dardanelles, asking him if he considered forcing "by ships alone a practical operation. It is assumed older battleships fitted with mine-bumpers would be used, preceded by colliers or other merchant craft as mine-bumpers and sweepers. Importance of results would justify severe loss. Let me know your views."

Vice-Admiral Garden replied: "I do not consider the Dardanelles can be rushed. They might be forced by extended operations with large number of ships." Churchill continued to urge his Dardanelles plan. Lloyd George writes in his War Memoirs: "Jyfr, Winston Churchill had been in constant touch with Lord Kitchener and when the former has a scheme agitating his powerful mind, as everyone who is acquainted with his method knows, he is indefatigable in pressing it upon the acceptance of everyone who matters in the decision---He was prepared to act without waiting for an immediate despatch of troops. His proposal was a purely naval operation in its initial stages."

The Cabinet, all with the exception of Lloyd George, came round to the Churchill plan. Lloyd George adds: "I stood alone in expressing a different and doubting view. Lord Fisher was dumb. I was not aware at the time that he and other Admirals were opposed to the venture as a purely naval operation unsupported by troops. Kitchener had been swung round to the support of the idea as long as he was not asked to supply soldiers, and Mr. Churchill threw into the execution of his scheme all his impulse and ardent energy."

"So," wrote the official Australian historian of the war, "through a Churchill's excess of imagination, a layman's ignorance of artillery and the fatal power of a young enthusiasm to convince older and slower brains, the tragedy of Gallipoli was born."

In his World Crisis, Churchill has written an elaborate defence of his activities in relation to the Dardanelles. He argues that at the beginning, for the twenty days that the project had been under discussion, there was no voice raised and no argument advanced against his plans. In this contention he may, with justification, claim that his advisers and his colleagues could not escape their responsibility. They were either in agreement or were silent when they should have expressed their doubts. Later Lord Fisher was to exclaim, "I was always against the Dardanelles," but Churchill was of the opinion that in the first stages it had his approval.

By the end of January, however, Churchill tells us that after preliminary preparations had been made, "when many orders had been given and when many ships were moving with his full authority, Lord Fisher began to manifest an increasing dislike and opposition to the scheme." On January 28, 1915, at a meeting of the War Council, Fisher threatened to resign but was prevailed upon by Lord Kitchener to continue. "When I finally decided to go on," said Lord Fisher to the Dardanelles Commission later, "I went the whole hog." Churchill writes: "I am in no way concealing the great and continuous pressure which I put upon the old Admiral."

On February 19 the bombardment of the outer forts had begun, but it had become clear that the operation in the Dardanelles "was not going to turn out something in the nature of an organized rush." It was too big a job for the fleet alone and would involve a large-scale military attack. "Having begun the bombardment," Kitchener said, "the effect of a defeat in the Orient would be very serious. There could be no going back." He had hitherto been against sending troops which he thought were needed on the Western Front, but events had forced him to change his view. Churchill was now clamouring for more soldiers.

Then there were international complications. The Russian Government had been secretly promised Constantinople by Sir Edward Grey on November 14, 1914, and now demanded a public declaration, which was given. "In the early days of March," wrote Churchill, "both Great Britain and France apprised the Russian Government that they would agree to the annexation of Constantinople as a part of a victorious peace, and this momentous fact was accordingly made public on the 12th."

The Allies were eager to bring Greece into the war and to 'use a Greek army at the Dardanelles. "The Greek King," reported the British Minister in Athens, "is in favour of the war," and the Greek general staff was prepared to send four or five Greek divisions to fight the Turks. But the Russian Foreign Minister informed the British ambassador in St. Petersburg on March 3: "The Russian Government could not consent to Greece participating in operation in the Dardanelles as it would be sure to lead to complications. The Emperor," M. Sazonov added, "had in an audience with him yesterday declared he could not in any circumstances consent to Greek co-operation in the Dardanelles."

One of the major aims of the attack on the Dardanelles had thus become to capture Constantinople for the Russian Tsar. But the Greeks were also interested in Constantinople. Churchill, eager to get the use of the Greek armies, records that in his distress he sent the following message to the Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey:

I beseech you at this crisis not to make a mistake in falling below the level of events. Half-hearted measures will ruin all, and a million men will die through the prolongation of the war.

You must be bold and violent. You have a right to be. Our fleet is forcing the Dardanelles. No armies can reach Constantinople but those which we invite, yet we seek nothing here but the victory of the common cause. Tell the Russians that we will meet them in a generous and sympathetic spirit about Constantinople. But no impediment must be placed in the way of Greek co-operation. We must have Greece and Bulgaria if they will come. I am so afraid of your losing Greece, and yet paying all the future into Russian hands. If Russia prevents Greece helping, I will do my utmost to oppose her having Constantinople. She is a broken power but for our aid, and has no resource open but to turn traitor—and this she cannot do.

If you don't back up this Greece—the Greece of Venizelos—you will have another which will cleave to Germany.

Such was the diplomatic background of the Dardanelles.

Lord Fisher was now in open revolt against the whole strategy of the Dardanelles. The preliminary bombardment, the rush through, had become a major naval and military enterprise on which he did not wish to risk the big battleships. There was no element of surprise now. The Turks had fortified the peninsula, and their defences had been reorganized under the capable German general, Liman von Sanders. The military attacks on Gallipoli were doomed to failure. There were episodes of frightful and futile slaughter as British, Australian and New Zealand troops were sent to their doom. The full story is to be found in official histories and in books by numerous unofficial writers as well.

By the end of the campaign, and when the evacuation was completed, says the official historian, nearly half a million men had been sent to the Dardanelles. "Of this total 43,000 British officers and men had been killed, taken prisoner or posted as missing, or died of disease. The British casualties, including those of evacuated sick, had amounted to 205,000, those of the French to 47,000."

Mr. Churchill's apologists have come to his defence in the Dardanelles campaign by alleging that, if it had been continued for some additional weeks, it might have turned from disaster into a glorious and decisive victory with a potent influence on the subsequent history of mankind. This may be true, though it can hardly be proved. It is just another one of those ifs of military history and fantasy. It is similar to the statement that, if Hasdrubal had been able to reach and effectively reinforce Hannibal, Hannibal might have overthrown Rome, or that, if Blucher had not arrived before nightfall or if the French cavalry had not charged into a blind gorge, Napoleon might have triumphed over Wellington at Waterloo.

In his speeches, Churchill had led the British public to believe that the capture of the Dardanelles was to be the prelude to over-whelming victory and a triumphant peace. Here is an extract from a characteristic speech delivered in Dundee on June 7, 1915:

You must expect losses both by land and sea, but the fleet you are employing is your surplus fleet after all your needs have been provided for---Losses of ships, therefore, as long as the precious lives of the officers and men are saved, as in nearly every case they have been—loss of that kind, I say, may easily be exaggerated in the minds of both friend and foe.

And military operations will also be costly, but those who suppose that Lord Kitchener [loud cheers] had embarked upon them without narrowly and carefully considering their requirements in relation to the paramount need of our Army in France and Flanders, such people are mistaken—and not only mistaken, they are presumptuous. In looking at your losses squarely and soberly, you must not forget at the same time the prize for which you are contending. The Army of Sir Ian Hamilton, the Fleet of Admiral de Robeck, are separated only by a few miles from a victory such as this war has not yet seen. When I speak of victory, I am not referring to those victories which crowd the placards of the newspapers.

I am speaking of victory in the sense of a brilliant and formidable fact, shaping the destinies of nations and shortening the duration of war.

Beyond those few miles of ridge and scrub on which our soldiers, our French comrades, our gallant Australians and our New Zealand fellow subjects are now battling, lie the downfall of a hostile Empire, the destruction of an enemy fleet and army, the fall of a world-famous capital and probably the accession of powerful allies. The struggle will be weary, the risks numerous, the losses cruel, but victory when it comes will make amends for all.

There never was a great subsidiary operation of war which a more complete harmony of strategic, political and economic advantages has combined, or which stood in truer relation to the main decision which is in the central theatre.

Through the narrows of the Dardanelles, and across the ridges, of the Gallipoli peninsula, lies some of the shortest paths to triumphant peace.

This bombastic speech was not only read in Britain, it was read in Constantinople, too. Says the official History of the War: "General Liman von Sanders has admitted that this utterance helped him to realize that the British attacks would surely be resumed with increasing violence."

The German generals must have been as disconsolate as Winston Churchill himself when the political crisis following the resignation of Lord Fisher removed him from the Admiralty and from further control of the strategy of war. Fisher told Lloyd George, "I want to speak to you. I have resigned. I can stand it no longer. Our ships are being sunk, while we have a fleet in the Dardanelles which is bigger than the German Navy. Both our Army and Navy are being bled for the benefit of the Dardanelles." The other Sea Lords backed Lord Fisher. They drew up a joint memorandum supporting him in his dissatisfaction at the method of directing the distribution of the fleet and the conduct of the war "by which orders for controlling movements and supplies appear largely taken out of the hands of the First Sea Lord."

The Cabinet wanted Lord Fisher to stay, but he resolutely declined. The first condition he laid down was "that Mr. Winston Churchill is not in the Cabinet to be always circumventing me."

The Tories supported Fisher. They threatened that they would break the political truce and denounce developments at the Admiralty. They would no longer tolerate the presence of Churchill there. Letters passed between Asquith and Bonar Law. It was decided to form a Coalition Government. Churchill was removed from the Admiralty and became Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

Lord Riddell, calling at the Admiralty, found him almost broken-hearted. "This," he said, with a wave of his hand to the charts on the wall so plainly betokening the war, "this is what I live for---Yes," he said, "I am finished in respect of all I care for—the waging of the war, the defeat of the Germans."

Churchill made one last desperate effort to retain his post at the Admiralty by writing a long appealing letter to the Tory leader, Bonar Law. But the Tories were having none of it. They were adamant. Churchill had to go.

For a few months he remained in his sinecure office excluded from the War Council. Then he decided to resign. "I am an officer," he wrote to the Prime Minister, "and I place myself unreservedly at the disposal of the military authorities, observing that my regiment is in France. I have a clear conscience, which enables me to bear my responsibility for past events with composure."

In the House of Commons, he made a histrionic farewell speech, defending his Dardanelles policy and replying to Lord Fisher. He was still enthusiastic about Constantinople. "In" the East, take Constantinople. Take it by ships if you can. Take it by soldiers if you must. Take it by whichever plan, military or naval, commends itself to your military experts. But take it; take it soon; take it while time remains."

Winston became Major Churchill of the Grenadier Guards and went to France. A month later Gallipoli was evacuated and the evacuation was hailed in the British press as if there had been a major victory. But for a generation afterwards soldiers blinded, maimed, without legs and arms, cursed the Dardanelles. They had been the victims of the "legitimate war gamble" that had failed.



## CHAPTER XI

### To the Front and Back

**C**HURCHILL went to France," said Lord Beaverbrook in his reminiscences, "and was offered by General Sir John French, who was then nearly at his last gasp as Commander-in-Chief, an A.D.C.'s post at G.H.Q. or, as the alternative, a brigade. Churchill chose the brigade but insisted on first obtaining some practical experience of trench warfare. For this purpose, he served a month with the Grenadier Guards. After that Churchill was actually given a brigade in Bridges' Division. But the very first day after this was apparently settled, French happened to go home to London and told Asquith what he was doing. The Premier was apparently frightened, and urged French, who was in no position to insist on having his way, to give Churchill no more than a Battalion."

French was recalled a month later and Haig became commander-in-chief. Winston was not on terms of friendship with him and could not pull strings. "Never was he so disappointed and hurt as over the withdrawal of the offer of a brigade," says his biographer Lewis Broad. "His actual command had been nominated and he had spent his spare time evolving his plans, devising in his fertile brain new methods for encompassing the downfall of the Hun. His mortification was extreme, but it was forgotten when he took over the battalion that was given him—the 6th Royal Scots Fusiliers." He became a lieutenant colonel. He had no opportunities to exercise his tactical or strategic abilities.

"He loved soldiering," wrote Captain X, who wrote an obsequious little volume called *Winston Churchill at the Front*. "It lay very near his heart, and I think he could have made a very great soldier. How often have we heard him say by way of encouragement in difficult circumstances, 'War is a game to be played with a smiling face.'" But Churchill did not stay long at the front. In the autumn of 1916 he was back in the House of Commons. His command had disappeared. The military authorities had decided that the Sixth Royal Scots Fusiliers, considerably under strength, should be amalgamated with another battalion. "It had been represented to him," says Lewis Broad, "that a man of his brain and genius had no right to waste on the command of a tiny province abilities that were needed at home. Despite the high value which he placed on his work in the trenches, with its risk and honour, Winston was persuaded that he had not the right to remain."

Other men did not succeed in getting away from the front so easily. They, too, might have thought that they could use their brains and genius at home—but they were not Winston Churchills. "So," says his biographer, "Malbrouk picked up his kit and returned from the wars, at which we can indulge in a sigh of heartfelt relief. A chance bullet from a German rifle might have changed the course of history when Winston was in Plug Street."

Back in Parliament, he plunged into the political fray, eager to get back into the limelight and into the Cabinet. There was growing discontent with the Asquith Government, and intrigues took place behind the scenes. In December, 1916, Asquith resigned and Lloyd George became Prime Minister. Churchill and Lloyd George had been close friends, but Winston waited in vain for the call that never came. But it was not Lloyd George's fault. He wished to include Winston in his Government, but the Tories would not have him. Lloyd George explained why in his *Memoirs*: Mr. Bonar Law had a profound distrust of him. I did my best to persuade him to withdraw his objection and I urged the argument which is usually advanced on these occasions, that Mr. Churchill would be more dangerous as a critic than as a Member of the Government. .

..

When I put it this way to Mr. Bonar Law his reply was, "I would rather have him against us every time."

I deeply regretted this attitude but I could not risk a break-up of the political combination which was an essential foundation of the Government for the sake of an immediate inclusion of Mr. Churchill in the Ministry. A few months later I was able to appoint him to the leadership of the Ministry of Munitions. Even then the Tory antipathy to him was so great that for a short while the very existence of the Government was in jeopardy.

One of the Tories wrote:

"May I again and for the last time urge you to think well before you make the appointment (W.Ch.) which we have more than once discussed? It will be an appointment intensely unpopular with many of your chief colleagues—in the opinion of some of whom it will lead to the disruption of the Government at an early date, even if it does not lead, as it may well do, to resignations now. X—who opened the subject to me of his own accord this evening and who has spoken to you—tells me that it will be intensely unpopular in the Army. I have every reason to believe the same of the Navy. . .

"He is a potential danger in opposition. In the opinion of all of us he will, as a member of the Government, be an active danger in our midst."

Another Minister wrote at the same time: "Apart from every other consideration, is it wise for you to have as one of your Ministers, a dangerously ambitious man? . . ."

And another important Conservative Minister wrote me in a similar strain: "As regards W. Churchill and the Government, I have made enquiries and from what Z tells me, I am satisfied it would bring about a very grave situation in our Party. . . ."

Why were they so bitter and implacable? His political record naturally exasperated his old party. He does something by halves, and when he left it he attacked his old associates and condemned his old principles with a vigour and a witty scorn which rankled. When war was declared, the national peril constrained all parties into a temporary truce, in which party ranks and party rancours were, for the time being, overlooked or ignored. But Conservatives could not forgive or forget Churchill's desertion to their enemies and their rout had begun. Had he remained a faithful son of the political household in which he was born and brought up, his share in the Dardanelles fiasco would have been passed over and another sacrifice would have been offered up to appease the popular anger. There was an abundant choice from which the altar could have been supplied. His mistakes gave resentful Tories an irresistible opportunity for punishing rank treason to their party, and the lash which kept Churchill out of office, although knotted with the insults he had hurled at them, was wielded with an appearance of being applied not by vindictive partisans, but by dutiful patriots.

For days I discussed with one or other of my colleagues Churchill, his gifts, his shortcomings, his mistakes, especially the latter. Some of them were more excited about his appointment than about the war. It was a serious crisis. It is interesting to observe in a concentrated form every phrase of the distrust and trepidation with which mediocrity views genius at close quarters. Unfortunately, genius always provides its critics with material for censure—it always has and always will. Churchill is certainly no exception to this rule.

They admitted he was a man of dazzling talents, that he possessed a forceful and a fascinating personality. They recognised his courage and that he was an indefatigable worker. But they asked why, in spite of that, although he had more admirers, he had fewer followers than any prominent public man in Britain? They pointed to the fact that at the lowest ebb of their fortunes, Joseph Chamberlain in Birmingham, and Campbell-Bannerman in Scotland, could count on a territorial loyalty which was unshakable in its devotion. On the other hand, Churchill had never attracted—he had certainly never retained—the affection of any section, province or town. His changes of party were not entirely responsible for this. Some of the greatest figures in British

political life had ended in a different party from that in which they commenced their political career. That was therefore not an adequate explanation of his position in public confidence. They asked: What then was the reason?

Here was their explanation. His mind was a powerful machine, but there lay hidden in its material or its make-up some obscure defect which prevented it from always running true. They could not tell what it was. When the mechanism went wrong, its very power made the action disastrous, not only to himself but to the causes in which he was engaged and the men with whom he was co-operating. That was why the latter were nervous in his partnership. He had, in their opinion, revealed some tragic flaw in the metal. This was urged by Churchill's critics as a reason for not utilising his great abilities at this juncture.

They thought of him not as a contribution to the common stock of activities and ideas in the hour of danger, but as a further danger to be guarded against.

I knew something of the feeling against him amongst his old Conservative friends, and that I would run great risks in promoting Churchill to any position in the Ministry; but the insensate fury they displayed when later on the rumour of my intention reached their ears surpassed all my apprehensions, and for some days it swelled to the dimensions of a grave ministerial crisis which threatened the life of the Government. I took the risk, and although I had occasionally some reason to regret my trust, I am convinced I was right to overrule the misgivings of my colleagues, for Churchill rendered conspicuous service in further increasing the output of munitions when an overwhelming supply was essential to victory. As to Churchill's future, it will depend on whether he can establish a reputation for prudence without losing audacity.

Lloyd George believed that in the War Cabinet Churchill's "erratic impulses could have been kept under control, and his judgment supervised and checked before plunging into action. Men of his ardent temperament and powerful mentality need exceptionally strong brakes. Unfortunately, the Tory Ministers, with the exception of Mr. Balfour and Sir Edward Carson, were unanimous in their resolve that he should not be a member of the Ministry, and most of them made it a condition precedent to their entry into the Government that he should be excluded."

Churchill was, therefore, out of office for twenty months. When he returned it was to the Ministry of Munitions, where he was not allowed to move armies or direct fleets. There he remained until the end of the war.

It is easy to understand why the Tories were indignant and vindictive with respect to Churchill on account of his desertion of the Tory Party and his violent denunciation of Tory principles. But it is not easy to comprehend how they could have recognized in him any traits of genius, thought his mind was a "powerful machine," or believed that he had great organizing and administrative ability.

Churchill's political posts and responsibilities had been relatively trivial from 1900 to 1911. He had not personally accomplished anything of note as First Lord of the Admiralty before war broke out. His ventures at Antwerp and the Dardanelles were complete fiascoes, humiliating and, in the case of the Dardanelles, vastly expensive in men, munitions and money. His achievements as a land commander on the Continent were little more than a minor burlesque. About all that could honestly be said for Churchill down to 1918 was that he exhibited boundless energy and ambition, had unlimited self-confidence, and talked a great deal about his genius.

As in the case of the Second World War, Britain was saved from defeat in 1914-18 by German folly and by the intervention of the United States. To these factors might also be added the prestige, patience and skill of General Pétain in quelling the mutiny in the French army in the spring of 1917.

Churchill made a strong effort to influence his friends in the United States in favour of the Allied cause, but it is doubtful that he exerted any considerable influence in bringing the United States into the war—certainly nothing like the tremendous power he exercised in producing American intervention in 1941. The primary success here must be assigned to the clever propaganda of Sir Edward Grey and the activities of the War Propaganda Bureau organized in September, 1914, by Charles Masterman. Sir Gilbert Parker was entrusted with the all-important task of handling the propaganda needed to affect American opinion favourably. They were all aided by the strongly Anglophile sentiments of the American ambassador in London, Walter Hines Page, whom President Wilson, in a moment of exasperation, once described not inaccurately as "more British than the British."

Powerful economic factors also promoted American entry into the war, such as the prospects that munitions orders would avert a threatened depression and the vast interest of Wall Street in protecting the extensive loans to the Allies by American intervention. Stories of alleged German atrocities in Belgium and elsewhere, given prestige and a sense of authenticity in the United States by being vouched for by no less a name than that of James Bryce, also helped to inflame American opinion against Germany, to make Americans feel that Grey was right in his insistence that Britain was fighting solely for civilization and humanity. German folly consisted mainly in the work of her submarines in the effort to counter the British blockade. This may have been as legal as, perhaps even more legal, technically, than the excesses of the British blockade, but it played a crucial role in bringing the United States into the war.

All these things were needed, for, unlike President Roosevelt a generation later, Mr. Wilson at the outset made a genuine effort to maintain American neutrality and to keep his country out of the war. Occasionally he blurted out such phrases of annoyance at pressure as his statement that the United States was "too proud to fight," and that the only durable peace must be "a peace without victory." But, in the end, he was worn down by British propaganda, by the Anglophile pressure of his associates from Secretary of State Lansing down, and by the German indiscretions, especially the declaration of unrestricted submarine warfare early in 1917.

One of the incidents which did most to arouse the American people against Germany was the sinking of the great liner *Lusitania* by a German submarine off the Irish coast on May 7, 1915. This was an incident which took place while Churchill was still First Lord of the Admiralty. There are a number of interesting details about the sinking of this vessel which brought the United States and Germany to the verge of war two years before the actual American entry that have never been fully explained. It is well known that the *Lusitania* was listed as a naval auxiliary. It was carrying a heavy load of munitions and thus lost its status and immunities as a merchant vessel. American passengers had been warned against taking passage by both the German authorities and by the American Secretary of State, William Jennings Bryan. The question whether the *Lusitania* was also armed has never been settled, although an article in the *New York Tribune* stated that she had been armed.

Most baffling are the following facts. When the *Lusitania* sailed from New York the regular captain had been suddenly replaced by Captain William Thomas Turner. When the ship reached the danger zone it disregarded strict sailing orders. The formal sailing orders Turner had in New York instructed him to avoid the highly dangerous area where the vessel was actually sunk, to increase his speed in the danger zone, and to steam in a zigzag course so as to increase the difficulty of being hit by a torpedo. All these orders were violated. The *Lusitania* entered the tabooed zone; it slowed down its speed, and it failed to zigzag. Whether Captain Turner received any orders by wireless after leaving New York which altered his original instructions has never been determined. Captain Turner also discouraged such emergency measures as getting the passengers into lifeboats. He may have believed that the vessel would remain afloat, for it is thought that the sinking was caused by a later explosion of the ammunition in the cargo.

The American public was greatly excited and many, including former President Theodore Roosevelt, wished immediate war. To intensify American bitterness against Germany, the British Government prematurely released the Bryce Report on German atrocities on May 12, 1915. All the facts about the Lusitania episode may never come to light. The best accounts to date are by American writers, Chapter V of H. C. Peterson's *Propaganda for War*, and Oswald Garrison Villard's article, "The True Story of the Lusitania" in the *American Mercury*, May, 1935. The lamentable hoax of the Bryce Report on German atrocities was fully exposed by a distinguished British publicist, Sir Arthur Ponsonby, in his book *Falsehood in Wartime*.

It is now an accepted fact of history that Britain, after winning the "knockout victory" that Lloyd George had demanded in 1916, lost the peace as thoroughly as Churchill lost it in the years 1943–45. It was just as much a case of "triumph and tragedy" for Lloyd George as it turned out to be for Churchill some twenty-five years later. For this, so far as Britain was concerned, Lloyd George was as much to blame as Churchill was in a later generation, although Churchill also contributed to tragedy in this early period by his violent anti-Bolshevik crusade. This had almost as serious results for later British relations with Russia as the Treaty of Versailles had for the German problem between the two world wars.

On January 8, 1918, President Wilson had issued the famous Fourteen Points, which embodied his views as to the issues of the war into which the United States had entered nine months earlier. They were much the same as the Atlantic Charter of 1941, except that they were somewhat more precise and specific as to the details of a postwar settlement and were really taken seriously by Mr. Wilson rather than being a delusive smoke screen for proposed aggressive action. The Germans signed the Armistice on November 11, 1918, on the understanding that the Fourteen Points would be the basis of the forthcoming peace treaty.

This was very unlikely for several reasons. The Fourteen Points were long before this belied by the secret treaties that the Allies had made early in the war. Moreover, soon after the Armistice, Lloyd George had held his "khaki election," which had as a main slogan "Hang the Kaiser" and was as full of hatred for all things German as Churchill's fulminations were a quarter of a century afterwards. The Allies, aside from Russia, which was not represented at Paris, demanded the fulfilment of the secret treaties; and after the British public had been worked up to a fever heat of hatred against Germany on the eve of the Peace Conference, Lloyd George did not have the courage to support sanity in any forthright manner at Paris, even after he had become convinced that a just peace must be provided if Europe was to be saved from another war.

That Lloyd George suffered a rude awakening at Paris has been proved by the ace and veteran English foreign correspondent, Sisley Huddleston, who tells the story in his book *In Our Time* (pp. 133 ff.). In his exasperation at Clemenceau and Orlando, Lloyd George granted an interview to Huddleston that was published in the *Westminster Gazette* March 31, 1919. The tenor of his sentiments then can be discerned from the following passage in the interview: "We want a sane peace. I repeat, a sane peace. Righteous passions have been aroused in all Allied countries. But we have to face realities and prepare a practical treaty which will be signed, and will not breed new wars, whether it disappoints Allied peoples or not. If we statesmen cannot face the situation we must clear out. Our duty is plain and our policy must not arouse implacable antagonisms."

Many realistic Englishmen hailed the interview with delight and hope, but Lloyd George feared the political repercussions. When he returned to London in mid-April he repudiated the interview and did little or nothing more to assure that a just peace treaty would be provided. President Wilson did little to support any such wise policy or drastic revision of the Treaty. He had been disillusioned by the pressure for the fulfilment of the secret treaties and by Clemenceau's vindictiveness, although he had read the secret treaties before he left Washington to go to Paris. Instead of battling decisively against folly in the Peace Treaty, Wilson concentrated his attention mainly on getting the Covenant of the League of Nations embodied in the treaty and on inducing

the United States to join the League. Hence, the Germans were forced, almost at the point of the gun, to sign the treaty, which they had no part in making, in the Hall of Mirrors at the Palace in Versailles on June 28, 1919. The results are now history, and the most tragic of these results was the rise of Adolf Hitler, the Second World War, and the ominous current aftermath of the second world conflict.

## CHAPTER XII

### Churchill's Anti-Bolshevik Crusade

**T**HE Lloyd George Coalition Government decided to cash in on victory in the khaki coupon election that followed victory in 1918. Churchill was elected by a majority of 15,365 in Dundee. The Labour M.P. who held the other seat was also elected. In the election the coalition had overwhelmed its opponents. The I.L.P. (Independent Labour Party) critics of the war, MacDonald, Snowden and others, were branded as pro-Germans and pacifists, and were defeated. So also was Arthur Henderson, who had left the Government. The electorate was drunk with victory, and Lloyd George, "the man who won the war," and his Tory-Liberal coalition, backed by the hard-faced profiteers who had done well out of the war, were triumphant.

At Dundee, Churchill was rampant, exploiting to the utmost the jingo frenzy and patriotic hysteria of the moment. The Dardanelles had receded in the memory of the electors, drunk as they were with the froth of victory. Churchill was one of the men of the hour, and this was not the time to listen to reason. Disillusionment was to come only later on.

Winston wanted to return to the Admiralty but was sent to the War Office instead. Much of the work was not to his liking. He had to supervise the demobilization of an army, not to plan victories.

But there was still a war on hand. British soldiers were still in Russia. The Government of the Tsar, whom Churchill was so eager to keep in power, had collapsed. The Tsar's armies had dissolved and the Russian peasants and workers, who never had any enthusiasm for the war and had been thrown into action half-clad, badly fed, and without the guns to fight the German armies, had revolted. The war had been no glamorous, thrilling adventure for them. The corrupt tsarist autocracy, which the British Government had tried to save both with money and help (the casualties of Gallipoli were the price British, Australian and New Zealand soldiers had paid for the attempted break-through to Russia to help the Tsar's policy), had gone and the Bolsheviks had captured power.

Their slogan was "Peace and Socialism," and they represented the very opposite of what Winston Churchill stood for in politics. They had been against the "imperialist war." They had published the secret treaties from the tsarist archives, and they were denouncing imperialist adventurers in all countries. The Russian masses were being led in a way that Churchill had never dreamt of. A great social upheaval had come in Russia, led by men who were determined to make it a Socialist revolution and completely to change the old order of society that had broken up as a result of the war.

As a part of military operations against the Germans a British force had been sent during the war to Murmansk and Archangel. But the new Russian Government was not going on with the war. Its slogan had become "No Annexation and No Indemnities." Even if it had wished to carry on the war, the Russian soldiers had decided otherwise, as Lenin put it, "with their feet." But there were still remnants of the old tsarist armies led by General Denikin and Admiral Koltchak. Winston Churchill's sympathies were naturally with them. He was completely in favour of giving the counterrevolutionaries all the military help that he could. "The most formidable and irresponsible protagonist of an anti-Bolshevik war," writes Lloyd George in his Truth About the

Peace Treaties, "was Mr. Winston Churchill. He had no doubt a genuine distaste for Communism---His ducal blood revolted against the wholesale elimination of Grand Dukes in Russia."

While Lloyd George was in Paris opposing French plans for an attack on the Bolshevik Government, Churchill was trying to persuade the Cabinet in London to agree to military intervention. Lloyd George writes:

There were powerful and exceedingly pertinacious influences in the Cabinet working for military intervention in Russia, and—I was not on the spot in London to exercise direct influence and control over the situation—for a while I was out-manoeuvred, and Mr. Bonar Law, who presided over the Ministers in my absence, was overridden. Mr. Winston Churchill, in particular, threw the whole of his dynamic energy and genius into organising an armed intervention against the Russian Bolshevik power.

When Lloyd George returned for a time to London, Mr. Churchill, according to Lloyd George, "very adroitly seized the opportunity created by the absence of President Wilson and myself to go over to Paris and urge his plans with regard to Russia upon the consideration of the French, the American, and the British delegations."

Lloyd George wished to invite representatives of the Russian Government to Paris to discuss the situation. "Personally," he explains, "I would have dealt with the Soviets as the de facto Government of Russia. So would President Wilson. But we both agreed that we could not carry to that extent our colleagues at the Congress." So the Soviet Government had no voice at all in the peace treaty that drew up the new frontiers of Europe, fixed the boundaries of Russia, established Poland and Czechoslovakia, and dictated the terms to Germany that did so much to bring Hitler to power and to create the conditions and the international situation which again led to war in 1939.

Had the Allied governments at Versailles recognized the Soviet Government and negotiated with it as the Government of a nation whose co-operation in Europe was essential if world peace were to be secured, the whole tragic history of international relations would have been changed, and the Second World War might have been averted.

The Soviet Government held out the hand of friendship, which was rejected. On January 21, 1919, President Wilson reported that the representative of the United States of America had had confidential conversations with M. Litvinov in Copenhagen. Litvinov had stated that the Soviet Government was eager for permanent peace and was even "prepared to compromise on all points, including protection to existing foreign enterprises, the granting of new concessions in Russia, and the Russian foreign debt." Said the American representative: "The Soviet's conciliatory attitude is unquestionable. Litvinov showed me an open wireless message which he had just received from Tchitcherin, the Soviet Foreign Minister, affirming the willingness of the Government to be conciliatory with reference to the question of the foreign debt. Litvinov and his associates realize fully that Russia will need, for a long time, expert assistance and advice, particularly in financial and technical matters, and that she cannot get on without manufactured imports, including, especially, foreign machinery." But Litvinov was not allowed to come anywhere near Versailles.

If the Soviets were conciliatory at this time, the Allied governments were not. They laboured under the delusion that the Bolsheviks could easily be destroyed. In Britain the anti-Bolshevik crusade was led, as we have noted, by Churchill, who was abysmally ignorant of what was actually happening in Russia, but who went up and down the country repeatedly chanting his hymn of hate. Speaking in London at a luncheon of the Aldwych Club (January 11, 1919) he declared:

Of all tyrannies in history the Bolshevist tyranny is the worst, the most destructive, the most degrading. It is sheer humbug to pretend that it is not far worse than German militarism. The miseries of the Russian people under the Bolsheviks far surpass anything they suffered even under the Tsar. The atrocities of Lenin and Trotsky are incomparably more hideous, on a larger scale and more numerous than any for which the Kaiser is responsible. The Germans at any rate have stuck to their allies. They misled them, they exploited them, but they did not desert or betray them. It may have been honour among thieves, but that is better than dishonour among murderers.

Much of Churchill's bitterness against the Bolsheviks appears to have been due to the fact that Lenin and Trotsky, after the October Revolution of 1917, opposed carrying on the war against Germany. But, even if they had been in favour of doing so, such a policy would have been impossible in view of the mass desertions from the front, the hatred of the war, and the determination of the soldiers, the greater number of them conscript peasants, to return home. Lenin and Trotsky had not been responsible for this. They had been exiles abroad. From the beginning of the war Lenin had opposed it, and the governments of Britain and France were no more his allies than the governments of Germany and Austria. Both Lenin and Trotsky were exiles who had fled from the persecution of the tsarist Government, which had plunged Russia into the war. Lenin had written incessantly after 1914 of the "imperialist war" and had strongly denounced all the Socialists, of whatever country, who had supported it. Lenin was an anti-imperialist and a Marxist.

Nevertheless, it is hardly to be wondered that Churchill did not understand Lenin. Churchill had read Gibbon and Macaulay and Kipling, but not Marx, and he had not the slightest understanding of the political and social philosophy of the Russian Revolution. The miseries of the Russian people, the social collapse as a result of the war, had come not as a consequence of Bolshevism but as the aftermath of the collapse of the Russian armies and the chaos into which a European war had plunged a people whose incompetent government had broken down.

Churchill's hysteria about the atrocities of Lenin and Trotsky being "incomparably more hideous and more numerous than any for which the Kaiser was responsible" was, of course, nonsense. The Bolshevik leaders had not plunged Russia into war; they had tried to get Russia out of it, and they were eager for peace because the Russian soldiers demanded it. War is always an atrocity, and Mr. Churchill had played a far greater part in preparing for it than Lenin and Trotsky. They had not been responsible for the Dardanelles. They did not share the Tsar's ambitions for Constantinople. They repudiated it and published the secret treaties for the whole world to see what diplomatic duplicity and knavery had been going on behind the scenes. They could not be charged with betraying their Allies, for they had never recognized them.

What they had done was to substitute the dictatorship of the proletariat for the dictatorship of the Tsar, and its aims were Socialism and peace. The atrocities to which Churchill was presumably referring were the casualties of the civil war. But the seizure of political power by the Bolsheviks had been a comparatively bloodless affair because the soldiers and sailors of Petrograd had supported them. Certainly the bloodshed that had occurred in the first stages of the Revolution was incomparably less than that of the war, when the badly armed Russian soldiers had been mowed down by the tens of thousands by the German machine guns.

The latter, from Churchill's point of view, had been glorious sacrifice. War on the Eastern Front had been as ghastly and hideous and as cruel as war could be. But Churchill had never denounced the Tsar or the grand dukes and the Russian generals; they were his Russian counterparts. And who was Churchill to denounce Lenin and Trotsky as murderers? They were not architects of the First World War.



In a speech at the Mansion House on February 19, 1919, Churchill denounced "the foul baboonery of Bolshevism" and urged that arms, equipment and technical assistance should be sent to those who were fighting the Soviet Government.

"Since the Armistice my policy would have been 'Peace with the German people, war on the Bolshevik tyranny,'" wrote Churchill in a memorandum to Lloyd George in March, 1920. "Willingly or unavoidably, you have followed something very near the reverse----But we are now face to face with the results. They are terrible. We may well be within measurable distance of universal collapse and anarchy throughout Europe and Asia. Russia has gone into ruin. What is left of her is in the power of these deadly snakes."

He prophesied that the Bolshevik Government would be easily overthrown. Reporting his speech on the Army Estimates on June 29, 1919, The Times said: "In his speech in debate on the Army Estimates to-day Mr. Churchill presented a cheerful view of the situation in Russia. The military weakness of Bolshevism had become very apparent. Wherever they were faced with determination they had been driven back. ... It was hoped that a juncture would soon be formed between Koltchak's and the Archangel forces, and that before the summer was out the situation would be placed on a Russian basis."

In his World Crisis, Churchill boasted that we provided General Denikin alone "with the means of arming and equipping nearly a quarter of a million men." Civil war is nearly always ruthless, and the counterrevolutionary generals had nothing to learn in the way of massacre and terrorism. They burned down villages, shot revolutionaries, carried out mass executions in the traditional Russian way. Were these not atrocities? Churchill reserved his invective for the Soviets.

In his Order of the Day to the Red Army (October 24, 1919), Trotsky struck a note of dignity and balance which was absent in Churchill's vituperations:

Red warriors! On all the fronts you meet the hostile plots of the English. The counter-revolutionary troops shoot you with English guns. In the depots of Shendursk and Onega, on the Southern and Western fronts you find supplies of English manufacture. The prisoners you have captured are dressed in uniforms made in England. The women and children of Archangel and Astrakhan are maimed and killed by English airmen with the aid of English explosives. English ships bomb our shores.----But even to-day, when we are engaged in a bitter fight with Yudenich, the hireling of England, I demand that you never forget that there are two Englands. Beside the England of profits, of butchery, of violence and bloodthirstiness, there is the England of labour, of spiritual power, of high ideals, of international solidarity. It is the base and dishonest England of the Stock Exchange manipulators that is fighting us. The England of labour and the people are with us.

In his book *Memoirs of a British Agent*, Brace Lockhart, who was sent by the British Government to study the situation in Russia, describes what a disastrous effect Churchill's intervention had upon Britain's relations with the Soviet Government. In the early days of the Revolution, he noted—the comparative tolerance of the Bolsheviks, because the cruelties which followed later were the result of the intensification of the Civil War. For the intensification of that bloody struggle Allied intervention with the false hopes it raised was largely responsible.

I do not say that a policy of abstention from interference in the internal affairs of Russia would have altered the course of the Bolshevik Revolution. I do suggest that an intervention intensified the terror and increased the bloodshed.

Bruce Lockhart had some idea of what was happening in Russia, Churchill had not. According to Lockhart:

Churchill had been entirely captivated by Boris Savinkov, the Russian novelist, and saw in him a Russian Bonaparte. Boris Savinkov for some reason which I have never been able to understand has always been regarded by Englishmen as a man of action and therefore as a hero. More, even than most Russians, Savinkov was a schemer—a man who could sit up all night drinking brandy and discussing what he was going to do the next day. And when the morrow came he left the action to others. His talents cannot be denied. He wrote several excellent novels. He understood the revolutionary temperament better than almost anyone and knew how to play on it for his own ends. He had mingled so much with spies and agents provocateurs that, like the hero in his own novels, he hardly knew whether he was deceiving himself or those whom he meant to deceive. Like most Russians too, he was a forcible speaker who could impress his personality on his listeners.

Such was Churchill's Russian Napoleon. Bruce Lockhart was a witness of the Russian Revolution, had met the Bolshevik leaders and understood what Churchill did not. Churchill, in the House of Commons, has since sought to justify his policy of intervening on the side of the "Russian Whites" on the ground that he was right in his attempt to strangle Bolshevism at birth. But what was the situation in Russia in 1918? Bruce Lockhart sums it up clearly:

The Revolution took place because the patience of the Russian people broke down under a system of unparalleled inefficiency and corruption. No other nation would have stood the privations which Russia stood, for anything like the same length of time. As instances of the inefficiency, I give the disgraceful mishandling of food-supplies, the complete break-down of transport, and the senseless mobilisation of millions of unwanted and unemployable troops. As an example of the corruption, I quote the shameless profiteering of nearly everyone engaged in the giving and taking of war contracts. Obviously the Emperor himself, as a supreme autocrat, must bear the responsibility for a system which failed mainly because of the men (Sturmer, Protopopoff, Rasputin) whom he appointed to control it. If he had acted differently, if he had been a different man---These arguments are childish.

What it is important to realise is that from the first the revolution was a revolution of the people. From the first moment neither the Duma nor the intelligentsia had any control of the situation. Secondly, the revolution was a revolution for land, bread, and peace—but, above all, for peace.

There was only one way to save Russia from going Bolshevik. That was to allow her to make peace. It was because he would not make peace that Kerensky went under. It was solely because he promised to stop the war that Lenin came to the top. It will be objected that Kerensky ought to have shot both Lenin and Trotsky. The soldiers, who argue in this way, always ignore the psychological premises. The old regime having broken down, the type of leader (i.e. a Kerensky) whom the first revolution threw up was bound to be a man who would not shoot his opponents. It was the first stage of a natural process. Secondly, even if Kerensky had shot Lenin and Trotsky, some other anti-war leader would have taken their place and would have won through on his anti-war programme.

The total cost of the military help given to the counterrevolutionary forces was estimated in a White Paper at £100,000,000. In his defence in his book, Churchill argued that this was "an absurd exaggeration." "The actual expense, apart from munitions, was not a tithe as great." Obviously no war would cost so much if munitions were left out of the calculation, for human life is cheap. Churchill did not think the cost of the munitions should be included, because "though they had been most costly to produce, they were only an unmarketable surplus of the Great War, to which no money value can be assigned. Had they been kept in our hands till they mouldered they would only have involved additional charges for storage, care and maintenance."

What an amazing defence! Since the guns would have become rusty in Great Britain, we were justified in sending them to Russia to be used against the Russian peasants and workers! When the British Government later proceeded to claim compensation for the British money which had

been lost in Russia, M. Rakovsky put hi a counterclaim on the grounds that the war of intervention had cost Russia £2,000,000,000!

But it was not only the monetary cost of Churchill's war that was important. It left behind hi Russia a heritage of bitter memories, hatred and ill will that is impossible to estimate. Lloyd George's Treaty of Versailles had assured that British relations with Germany and Italy would be strained and hazardous in the post-war period. Churchill's Russian foray guaranteed that British contacts with Russia would be equally or more difficult and suspicious.

Herbert Spencer was fond of pointing out that political acts very often produce precisely the opposite results from those intended by their authors. This was notably the case with the Allied effort to nip the Bolshevik experiment in the bud. Most historians now agree that if there had been no Allied intervention in Russia following 1918 it is quite possible, or even likely, that spontaneous civil war or general anarchy would have resulted and the new Soviet system would have perished. But the Allied intrusion greatly stimulated the national sentiment of the Russians and rallied to the Bolshevik cause many who would otherwise have been opposed to it or would have refused to support it. The foreign interference thus probably solidified the Russians, saved the Communist Revolution, and assured the permanence of the Bolshevik regime. As the man who spearheaded the movement for intervention, Churchill may fairly be set down as, perhaps next to Lenin and Trotsky themselves, the saviour of the Bolshevik system that was later to plague or inspire him and to lead him into numerous political oscillations between the most venomous and articulate hatred and fulsome praise

## **End of Part Two**

# **PART THREE**

## **Between Two World Wars**

### **CHAPTER XIII**

#### **Out of Parliament**

**T**HE popularity of the Lloyd George coalition and its principal figures declined quickly. The soldiers returned home to discover that "the land fit for heroes to live in" that had been promised in Lloyd-Georgian perorations was a mirage. Instead, many of them found no jobs, and the windows of the pawnshops were soon filled with war medals.

There was serious industrial unrest, especially in the coalfields, and the Government side-tracked the miners, first by appointing a royal commission to inquire into the case for the nationalization of the mines, and then shelving its recommendations.

Ireland was seething with rebellion; repression had failed and was followed by the terrorism of the Black and Tans. The Liberal press was bitterly critical. The radical Left Wing of the Liberal Party was going over to Labour.

Lloyd George and Winston Churchill, who had been the platform heroes of the British democracy a decade before the war, were now regarded as the mouthpieces of "the hard-faced men who had done very well out of the war." They had dug the grave of the great Liberal Party, a

section of which, under Asquith, was also in opposition. Lloyd George and Churchill were desperately eager to keep the coalition in existence as a National Government in opposition to Socialism.

In the country, the I.L.P., which had opposed the war, was carrying on a vigorous propaganda, and Ramsay MacDonald and Philip Snowden were now listened to respectfully by audiences which had, during wartime, howled them down. A new type of trade-union leader had emerged, and the T.U.C. had become an active political force, hostile to the Coalition Government and inclined to sympathize with the mood of the Russian Revolution.

Strongholds of the Liberal Party like South Wales and the Clyde were seething with industrial troubles and swinging over to Socialism. Their alliance with the Tories in the Coalition Government had ended the claims of the Liberals to speak for the masses. Lloyd George and Churchill were no longer attacking the landlords and the big vested interests in their public speeches, but were attacking Socialism instead. They wanted the coalition to continue indefinitely.

But the Tory central office had a different idea. The split between Asquith and Lloyd George had weakened the Liberals, and the Tory caucus was determined to get rid of Lloyd George and his followers and have complete control of the government itself. Britain had been on the brink of war with the Turks over the Chanak crisis, with Winston pursuing a line of action that nearly precipitated another war with Turkey.

The Tories held a party meeting at the Carlton Club with Stanley Baldwin taking a strong anti-Lloyd-George line that ended the coalition. Churchill was eager to have a centre party with Austen Chamberlain and Birkenhead in it. But the Tories would have none of it. Bonar Law was called upon to form a government, and the general election followed at the end of 1922.

Churchill went back to Dundee to fight as a Liberal and a free-trader. But Dundee was now interested in other things than free trade, and the Liberal Party and its shibboleths no longer roused enthusiasm. Winston labelled himself National Liberal and had the local Tory support as he ferociously beat the anti-Bolshevist and anti-Socialist drum. Edward Serymgeour, the Prohibitionist candidate, stood again; the Labour candidate was E. D. Morel, and Will'am Gallacher stood as Communist.

Churchill was now on the defensive. E. D. Morel, a former Liberal, was an eloquent speaker with a wide knowledge of international affairs. He knew the diplomatic history of the war and how it had come about. Every speech Morel made was a devastating criticism of war. In Europe, he said, all the governments had pursued policies which had led their peoples to the slaughter, and he presented a vigorous indictment of Churchill's blunders during the war. If Morel omitted anything, Gallacher supplied it with a double dose of vitriol. Serymgeour was a local personality with a strong religious backing, and he was anti-Churchill, too.

Winston was handicapped by the fact that he had just undergone an operation for appendicitis and was late in the field. But he snarled back. Socialism and Communism were the same twin-headed monster. "Mr. Gallacher," he said, "is only Mr. Morel with the courage of his convictions" (Gallacher had been in jail) "and Trotsky is only Mr. Gallacher with the power to murder those whom he cannot convince." Trotsky had once referred contemptuously to Winston and the latter never forgot it. Perhaps, later on, this was one of the points on which he could cordially agree with Stalin. Trotsky was certainly the bloodthirsty ogre of Churchill's orations at this tune. But he could no longer sway Dundee. The result was—

<b>Serymgeour (Prohibitionist)</b>	<b>32,578</b>
<b>E. D. Morel (Labour)</b>	<b>30,292</b>
<b>D. J. Macdonald (National Liberal)</b>	<b>22,244</b>

**Rt. Hon. Winston Churchill (National Liberal) 20,466**  
**W. Gallacher (Communist) 6,682**

Churchill's majority of 15,700 in the khaki-coupon election had been wiped out, and he was beaten by 10,000 votes. It was a bitter blow to him. He never returned to Dundee. He left the country to recuperate in Italy and Spain, to paint, to curse Bolshevism and Socialism in newspaper articles, and to write his history of the First World War.

The Tory Government elected in 1922 did not last long. Bonar

Law died, and he was succeeded by Stanley Baldwin, who decided to go to the country to ask for a mandate for a policy of tariffs and imperial preference. This reunited Lloyd George and Asquith on a free-trade platform, and Winston, still proclaiming himself a Liberal, fought West Leicester. The result was—

**F. W. Pethick Lawrence (Labour) 13,634**  
**Rt. Hon. Winston Churchill (Liberal) 9,236**  
**Capt. A. Instone (Independent) 7,696**

There was to be no comeback as a Liberal. There was no Liberal revival; the Liberal star had set. Asquith and his followers numbered only 158 in the new Parliament; the Tories had gone down from 347 to 255. The Labour Party had now 191 seats. The country had decided against the Tory policy of protection, and the Liberals decided to give their support to the first Labour Government, which, under Ramsay MacDonald, took office without power. They were entirely dependent on the good will of the Liberals, and that was not destined to last very long.

Winston surveyed the political scene and came to the conclusion that, after some twenty years, it was time to depart from the Liberal fold. On January 17, 1924, he sent a letter to the press denouncing the Liberal Party's decision to allow a minority Labour Government to go into office. According to Churchill, the Labour Party "was innately pledged to the fundamental subversion of the existing social and economic civilisation, and organised for that purpose and that purpose alone. Strife and tumults, deepening and darkening, will be the only consequence of minority rule."

Winston was now all for co-operating with the Tories. Hysterical, violent anti-Socialism had suddenly become one of Winston's dominant traits. During the war, in a speech at Dundee he had called for an all-out effort to win the war. "For this purpose," he had said, "our whole nation must be organised [cheers], must be socialised if you like the word, must be organised." That was to win the war. Why should Winston have been scared about similar methods in order to win the peace? Even he, at an election at Dundee, had advocated the nationalization of railways without delay.

After all, had he not, in the later stages of the war, been Minister of Munitions, a ministry which had come into existence to control and regulate and increase the production of armaments when it was deemed necessary by the wartime Government to prevent private enterprise from gross profiteering in a time of national need? He had boasted of the enterprise and success of the Ministry of Munitions when he was at its head. Why, then, should he have been scared stiff at a moderate Labour Government under Ramsay MacDonald, with the Liberal Party holding the balance of power and able to defeat it if it pursued extreme policies?

The Conservative Party had not changed since he had described it as "a party of great vested interests, banded together in a formidable federation." Indeed, it had become rather more so. What had become of the great social-reform program that Churchill had outlined on innumerable platforms before 1914? He had once compiled a selection of his social-reform speeches

under the title *Liberalism and the Social Problem* in a book to which the radical journalist H. W. Massingham had contributed an introduction.

Did Winston really believe that the Conservative Party had fundamentally changed and had become the great hope of democracy? He had denounced the House of Lords; he had poured acrid scorn on the Tory Party and its leaders and all its works. Was he really convinced that the Tory Party had been born again? Or was he just thinking in terms of his own political career and, realizing that the Labour Party and the Socialists had no place for him, making his way back into the Tory Party because it was the only party which could offer him a place in the political limelight and prospects of office again? Later on, Churchill was to attempt an apologia in a newspaper article entitled "Consistency in Politics," pointing to the different British politicians who had changed their parties and even citing the case of "the hapless Ramsay Mac-Donald" in his own defence. But none of the politicians he referred to had done a political somersault twice in a generation. None of them had twice seen the light on the road to Damascus.

Winston had expounded the principles of Liberalism in West Leicester as late as December, 1923, but by the middle of January, 1924, he was making desperate efforts to be recognized by the conservative head office as their official candidate at the by-election in the Abbey Division of Westminster caused by the death of a Tory M.P., Brigadier General Nicholson. Feelers had been put out to the Tory Party leaders, and things had almost been fixed up, when the local Tory association upset the arrangement by nominating a nephew of the late member. But Winston had the support of Balfour, Austen Chamberlain, and Lord Birkenhead. The 107 Tory Party in the House wanted him back so that he could make vitriolic attacks on the Labour Government, but the local Tory diehards would not give way. Winston, however, thought he could capture the seat. He issued a statement which reeked of humbug.

"If I thought the present Conservative candidate represented the force of character of the constituency I should not have come forward as a candidate." What nonsense!

All that Winston wished for was to get into Parliament. The local Tories circulated the story that he declined to join the Conservative Party. To this he replied, "I do not think it would be right of me to change like that for the purpose of securing an easy return to Parliament." (He did so officially to become the Tory candidate for Epping a few months later.) He declared that he had spent the last twenty years fighting Socialism and protection (he did not include the Tory Party). "If I am able to co-operate cordially with the Conservative Party," he added, "it is not because I have changed my position. It is because they have very wisely and rightly returned or are in process of returning to a broad and progressive platform!"

There was not the slightest actual sign of this. The Tories were no more progressive than they had been when he had referred to them as standing "for sentiment by the bucketful, patriotism by the imperial pint, the open hand at the Exchequer, the open door at the public house, dear food for the million, cheap labour for the millionaire." The "broad and progressive platform" existed only in Winston's imagination. But it was as good a line to take in appealing for the Tory vote as anything else. As the Tories' nominee had called himself the Conservative candidate, Winston had to think of something else. "Liberal Conservative" still sounded contradictory, and "Independent Conservative" was not a good label either. So he stood as a "Constitutionalist"—which could mean anything but sounded super-patriotic.

Winston always believed that an election should be run very much like a circus, and his supporters ranged from heavyweight boxers to Daly's chorus girls and Mayfair ladies. While he was deeply impressed with "the force of character" of the Westminster division, he thought it would be better with a touch of Barnum and Bailey's show. But he was beaten by the Conservative candidate by 43 votes. Captain Nicholson was returned and passed into Westminster and out of history, to the mortification of Winston, who had hoped for a spectacular and theatrical comeback. The result was—

<b>Captain Nicholson (Conservative)</b>	<b>8,187</b>
<b>Rt. Hon. Winston Churchill (Constitutionalist)</b>	<b>8,144</b>
<b>Fenner Brockway (Socialist)</b>	<b>6,156</b>
<b>Scott Duckers (Liberal)</b>	<b>291</b>

Winston had to attack the MacDonald Government not from the front Opposition bench but from outside. In a few months' time he had become the candidate for what was regarded as the safe Tory seat of Epping.

When the Labour Government proposed a treaty with Russia, Churchill's anti-Socialist orations touched a high note of vehemence. He became deeply concerned about religion in Russia. Speaking at Epping he said that in Russia it had been made a criminal offense to teach religion to any child under fifteen years of age, and these were the people, the Labour Party said, the English were to give forty millions to enable them to go on with the good work. It made him sick. The two democratic republics of France and the United States were not doing this, but Britain was asked to lend this money in order to curry favour with "the blood-dyed tyrants of Moscow."

By September he was addressing the Scottish Conservative Club at Edinburgh, and delighted the Scottish Tories with a bloodcurdling anti-Russian oration. He said that the Russians had to be left to solve their problems. Britain could leave it to the good sense of her businessmen to trade with them when opportunity offered, but she should not go out of her way to give special aid and succour to a regime that was criminal in its origin and aims, and that sought the destruction of civilized institutions all over the world. (Cheers.) There had never before been any treaty like the present one; where was the name of the King? He suggested that it was not out of regard for the feelings of the sovereign, although many of his relatives had been massacred by the Bolshevik Government,

that the treaty did not bear the King's signature; rather, to soothe the feelings of the Russian dictators Britain was sacrificing and ignoring her great and venerable constitution in order to conform to the fads and whims of Moscow.

The Zinoviev-letter\* election was one after Winston's own heart, and he rose to great oratorical heights in a speech at Lough-ton, where he denounced Ramsay MacDonald for tampering and tinkering with the Russian Bolsheviks and "demonstrating a sense of comradeship with the foul, filthy butchers of Moscow":

They write from their Presidium, or centre of control, in order that germ cells shall be established in our regiments and on our ships, that propaganda shall be developed in our streets and villages. They write to order that preparations shall be made for bloody revolt to be started and for civil war, flames, and carnage to disturb and defile our streets. They write to order these things in this country at the very moment when they are here discussing with the British Government a treaty for a loan, asking for more of our money. I say such a situation has never occurred in the history of this country. [Loud cheers.]

Dr. Goebbels never did better than this.

\* This letter, played up by the Tories in the October, 1924, election, was alleged to have been written by Gregory Zinoviev, Bolshevik leader in charge of Soviet propaganda abroad, to British Communists urging them to prepare for the Communist revolution in England. The Tories attacked the Labour Party vigorously, charging that they had provided full liberty—indeed, license—for Communists to carry on their revolutionary propaganda in Britain. Later, the Zinoviev letter was proved a forgery, but by that time it had done its damage to the Labour

cause and had served the purposes of Tory campaign propaganda, having played an important part in Labour's rebuff in the election.

## CHAPTER XIV

### Tory Chancellor

**C**HURCHILL'S vehement anti-Russian campaigns and his violent attacks on the Ramsay MacDonald Government soon made the Tories forget his Liberal past. Only Lord Birkenhead could rival him as a vituperative orator, and Birkenhead was an earl operating in what Churchill had politely described as a Punch and Judy show.

Birkenhead sent a message to Epping urging the electors to return Churchill as "the greatest House of Commons man living." Austen Chamberlain supported him because "the old quarrels of Liberal and Conservative belong to the past." They were all anti-Socialists now. The old Liberal Party was as good as dead. At the General Election of 1924 they kept only forty seats.

The farcical Zinoviev-letter scare, the anti-Bolshevik stunts, the unscrupulous misrepresentation of the Russian treaty—which had been described as giving British money to murderers, whereas it actually guaranteed payment to British landholders whose property had been confiscated in Russia, and was designed to help trade with Russia as well as to restore normal diplomatic relations—all helped to whip up eve-of-the-poll panic, and the Tories found themselves returned with a large majority of 211 over all parties.

By his platform oratory and his anti-Bolshevik and anti-Socialist fulminations Winston had worked his passage back into the Tory fold. He was one of their conquering heroes now, and his reward was the Chancellorship of the Exchequer in Baldwin's Government. This was the surprise of the new ministry. The story went around that Baldwin had meant to invite Winston to become Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster but that he had accepted the Chancellorship of the Exchequer. The older Tories gasped. This would never have happened under Bonar Law. It was time that the prodigal son return, but was it necessary to overdo the welcome home and entrust him with the very custody of the Golden Calf?

It was recalled that Winston's father, Lord Randolph Churchill, had once been Chancellor of the Exchequer and that he was puzzled by the decimals—what were "the damned dots"? What the qualifications of Winston Churchill were for the office of the Chancellor of the Exchequer nobody knew. If he had gone to the Admiralty or to the War Office nobody would have been surprised; that was his life, but at the Treasury—what was Winston Churchill likely to do there?

The Tories were now in an overwhelming majority and could do as they liked. They had fought the election on a scare and stunt anti-Socialist policy and had not the slightest conception of a positive program of reconstruction. All they knew was that they had to carry out the dictates of the real rulers of the country—High Finance and Big Business.

The City of London financiers wanted a return to the gold standard; the Treasury experts recommended it; and so Winston Churchill automatically decided upon it as the main feature of his first budget. The charitable explanation of his decision is that he was blissfully ignorant of its economic consequences and of the devastating effect his action was going to have on British trade and industry.

During the war Britain had gone off gold. That had not been one of the things that had worried Churchill then. The value of the pound had fallen so that it was only worth 90 per cent of its pre-war value. The financiers of the City (London's "Wall Street") were desperately eager to



maintain London as the financial centre of the world. The return to the gold standard was in their interests.

But it was a different matter for the export trades. Even with the pound sterling at its 1924 level, merchants were having difficulties in selling their goods in continental markets. With the pound worth 18 shillings, their difficulties were worsened by the return to gold, for the overseas customer would have to pay 20 shillings for the goods that had been costing 18 shillings. The return to the gold standard meant that the British exporter could only retain his customers by cutting his price. This meant, in turn, that the export trades had to reduce costs of production, and British capitalists know only one way of doing this—reducing wages.

This had not been an issue at the general election. The British workers who had voted Tory, supposedly in order to save themselves and their children from the bloodthirsty Bolsheviks, had done so in entire ignorance of the fact that the first thing that the new Tory Chancellor of the Exchequer would do would be to introduce a financial measure which was to bring about a reduction in their wages and was to be the prelude to years of mass unemployment, years of untold misery and wretchedness for the British working class. The Zinoviev election had been a fraud, the people had been duped and deluded, and they were to pay the inevitable penalty of this ignorance and folly for years.

The economist John Maynard Keynes, who had written a historic warning that the economic consequences of the reparations policy of the Versailles Peace Treaty were likely to be disastrous, was now to point out what were likely to be the "Economic Consequences of Mr. Churchill," and he did so in a brilliantly convincing little pamphlet whose predictions were to be fulfilled to the letter. He declared that the return to the gold standard was certain to involve unemployment and industrial disputes. He wrote:

To begin with, there will be great depression in the export industries. This, in itself, will be helpful, since it will produce an atmosphere favourable to the reduction of wages. The cost of living will fall somewhat. This will be helpful too, because it will give you a good argument in favour of reducing wages. Nevertheless, the cost of living will not fall sufficiently and, consequently, the export industries will not be able to reduce their prices sufficiently, until wages have fallen in the sheltered industries. Now, wages will not fall in the sheltered industries merely because there is unemployment in the unsheltered industries.

Therefore, you will have to see to it that there is unemployment in the sheltered industries also.

The way to do this will be by credit restriction. By means of the restriction by the Bank of England, you can deliberately intensify unemployment to any required degree until wages do fall. When the process is complete the cost of living will have fallen too; and we shall then be, with luck, just where we were before we started.

This was precisely what "happened. The first victims were the miners. The coal-owners, faced with competition from the Continent, including the coal from Germany that was part of the reparations that were being exacted under the peace treaty, decided that they must cut miners' wages. Keynes stated the issues bluntly:

The Chancellor of the Exchequer has expressed the opinion that the return to the gold standard is no more responsible for the condition of affairs in the coal industry than the Gulf Stream. These statements are of the featherbrained order. "Why should coal miners suffer a lower standard of life than other classes of labour? They may be lazy, good-for-nothing fellows who do not work so hard as they should. But is there any evidence that they are more lazy or more good-for-nothing than other people?"

On grounds of social justice, no case can be made out for reducing the wages of the miners. They are the victims of the economic Juggernaut. They represent in the flesh the fundamental adjustments engineered by the Treasury and the Bank of England to satisfy the impatience of the City fathers to bridge "the moderate gap" between \$4.40 and \$4.86. They, and others to follow, are "the moderate sacrifice" still necessary to ensure the stability of the gold standard. The plight of the coal miners is the first but not—unless we are very lucky—the last of the economic consequences of Mr. Churchill.

The colliery owners propose that the gap should be bridged by a reduction of wages, irrespective of a reduction in the cost of living— that is to say by a [reduction of the] standard of life of the miners.

They are to make the sacrifice to meet circumstances for which they are in no way responsible and one over which they have no control.

Thus Mr. Churchill's policy of improving the exchange by ten per cent was, sooner or later, a policy of reducing everyone's wages by two shillings in the pound.

In doing what he did in the actual circumstances of last spring, he was just asking for trouble. For he was committing himself to force down wages and all money values, without any idea of how it was to be done. Why did he do such a silly thing?

Partly, perhaps, because he has no instinctive judgment to prevent him from making mistakes; partly because, lacking this instinctive judgment, he was deafened by the clamorous voices of conventional finance; and most of all, because he was gravely misled by his experts.

Credit restriction is an incredibly powerful instrument, and even a little of it goes a long way—especially in circumstances where the opposite course is called for. The policy of deliberately intensifying unemployment with a view to forcing wage reductions is already partly in force, and the tragedy of our situation lies in the fact that, from the misguided standpoint which has been officially adopted, this course is theoretically justifiable. No section of labour will readily accept lower wages on the pressure of unemployment and of strikes and lockouts; and in order to make sure of this result we are deliberately intensifying the unemployment.

The return to the gold standard was the inevitable prelude to the miners' lockout and the general strike of 1926. Faced with the coal-owners' ultimatum—which involved a big reduction in wages—the miners appealed to the other unions organized in the T.U.C.

The general strike gave Churchill another opportunity for playing Napoleon. He reviewed the milk lorries assembled in Hyde Park, and he became the editor of the British Gazette, the paper which was run by the Government when the printers went on strike. The owners of the Morning Post, the most reactionary Tory paper, offered their plant and their premises to the Government, and the paper was produced by black-leg labour. His biographer Lewis Broad says: "I doubt if any editor can provide an equal to his increase in circulation. When it first appeared on May 5th some 230,000 copies of the British Gazette were circulated. On its final issue only eight days later the circulation was ten times larger." Mr. Broad omits to mention, however, that this was not just due to the editorial genius of Churchill but to the fact that, apart from a strike sheet run by the striking printers, no other paper was available except a diminutive edition of The Times.

Among Churchill's youthful ambitions was that of becoming a great newspaper editor. Now was the hour of another spectacular triumph. According to Hugh Martin, another biographer, "he went down to the offices of the Morning Post sternly resolved to do his duty." Next day, the Morning Post came out under the new name of the British Gazette, although its format and style were very much the same. It contained the following announcement:

Late last night important visitors to the Editor were announced, and into the Editorial Room marched the Chancellor of the Exchequer [Churchill], Sir Samuel Hoare [later Secretary for India] and Mr. J. C. C. Davidson [Chief Tory Whip] and a train of departmental officials. They, had come to act on a suggestion of the Editor, to commandeer on behalf of His Majesty's Government, the Morning Post and to convert it off hand into the Government news sheet the British Gazette. The staff, it was recorded, gave them "a frolic welcome."

For eight days Churchill gloried hi the editorial chair of the British Gazette at the head of the Morning Post staff who, accustomed to turning out a bitterly anti-Socialist, anti-trade-union, anti-working-class paper, were having the time of their lives. It denounced the T.U.C., the miners and the Labour Party as enemies of the nation. It suppressed their point of view and quoted the story from a French newspaper that the strike was a sensational Russian plot.

A peace manifesto issued by the Archbishop of Canterbury was refused publication. The Gazette published distorted, highly coloured reports of parliamentary debates with such references to M.P.s as "Mr. George Lansbury, a mild Socialist, passionate and shouting," .etc. Lloyd George described the work of the Gazette in the debate that followed the general strike as "a first-class indiscretion, clothed in the tawdry garb of third-rate journalism."

The general strike collapsed; Churchill had triumphed, and the miners were slowly starved back to work. It was one of the longest and most disastrous work stoppages hi British history, hi which the miners and their wives and children suffered great hardship. Grim and sullen, the men finally had to go back to the pits. Years of poverty and unemployment lay ahead. Winston Churchill had been victorious hi his war with the miners.

Even his most fervent admirers do not claim that Winston Churchill was a great Chancellor of the Exchequer; his critics declare that he was the worst. In his first budget, relief was granted to the high bracket tax-payers and the income tax was reduced from 4s. 6d. to 4s. in the pound.

High Finance and Big Business that had financed the Tories' general-election campaign received their reward. Not that Big Business was satisfied. Sir Alfred Mond, later Lord Melchett, head of the great chemical combine, thought it was only robbing Peter to pay Paul, for although the income tax was reduced by £20,-000,000 to stimulate industry, there was an item of £ 14,000,000 to be paid in contributions to pensions. For many years the Labour Party had agitated for widows' pensions. In his short term as Chancellor of the Exchequer, Philip Snowden had done the preparatory work, and if the Labour Government had not been thrown out on the Russian-treaty issue, widows' pensions would have been in his 1925 budget.

Churchill took this over, realizing that it would make his rich man's budget look more progressive and enable him to pose as the widows' friend and to claim the credit for the Tory Party. Another feature of his budget was the restoration of the McKenna duties which Snowden, a rigid free-trader, had repealed. Winston put them back again, in spite of the fact that as late as the Abbey by-election he had declared that free trade was one of the fundamentals of his political faith. What did that matter now? He was a Tory Chancellor in a Tory Government. He was prepared to swallow tariffs at a gulp just as he had swallowed all the other Tory doctrines that he had assailed with such scorn when he was one of the Liberal spellbinders before the war.

In his next budget in 1926 he raided the Road Fund, i.e., transferred the £ 7,000,000 that motorists had paid in taxation for road-construction purposes to general expenditures. "Twelve months ago," was Snowden's comment, "I described the budget as a rich man's budget. Today I describe this budget as the budget of a profligate and a bankrupt."

## CHAPTER XV

### Salute to Mussolini

**T**HE spectre of Bolshevism still haunted Churchill's thoughts, and he conjured it up in nearly all his platform orations. The Russian Government was Enemy No. 1, and Churchill denounced it on every possible occasion. At the 1924 election the bearded Bolshevik with the blood-stained hands had been the Tories' greatest election asset, and Churchill was determined to continue to denounce the Labour Party as being in the grip of the Bolsheviks. It had been the most successful political stunt of the post-war years and Winston hoped to exploit it indefinitely. In a characteristic speech at the Alexandra Palace on June 20, 1926, he denounced the Bolshevik Government:

These miscreants, who have ruined their own country, are powerless in their efforts to ruin our country. In their plan of world revolution they found us an obstacle. If Russian Bolsheviks could only pull down Britain, ruin its prosperity, plunge it into anarchy, obliterate the British Empire as a force in the world, the road would be clear for a general butchery, followed by a universal tyranny of which they would be the heads and out of which they would get the profit. They will not succeed in their aim. [Cheers.]

They thought the same sort of stuff with which they bamboozled their own moujiks would suit Britain. They are always expecting to wake up and find that we are cutting each other's throats for their benefit. They have their dupes, they have their feather-headed hirelings and allies in this country, but they will be disappointed. His Majesty's Government understand exactly their aims and their methods. The Socialist Party in the House of Commons are now labouring to prove that the Russian Government had nothing to do with the sending of money to foment the General Strike. But what are the facts? The Russian Trade Government, the Third International, and the Russian Trade Unions are all of them only off-shoots of the Russian Communist Party. The inner committee of the Communist Party is the sole central governing, controlling body in Russia. It is the real Cabinet of Russia. They work all the marionettes. They animate and direct every part of the diabolical machinery which is in action all over the world. When they know the hand that fires the pistol, what does it matter which finger pulls the trigger?

The Government are under no illusions. I have heard the question asked several times, and it is a perfectly fair question: "Why do you let them stay here? Why do you not throw them out?" [Cheers]

I am sure it would give me a great deal of satisfaction if they were thrown out. Personally, I hope I shall live to see the day when either there will be a civilised Government in Russia or that we shall have ended the present pretence of friendly relations with men who are seeking our overthrow. . . .

Does not all this show what a folly Mr. Lloyd George committed when he brought these Russian intriguers into our midst? It was one of those fatal downward steps in his career. I did my best to persuade him from it.

But we must not allow our policies to be unduly swayed by our feelings [sic.]. We have decided, under careful survey, without allusion to the whole position that the present time is not the time when we should take the step of rupturing the negotiations and relations.

Even the Daily Express thought that Winston had gone too far and remarked (June 21, 1926) that his language "was such as would draw a protest from any other foreign government in the world."

Three days after that speech the Government produced a Blue Book based on documents which had been seized in a police raid on the Communist Party offices nine months before. Lloyd George delivered a scathing attack on this new "exposure of Bolshevism." "Trade which runs into millions," he exclaimed, "£34,000,000 last year—and it will be more when we take what we want in the way of timber and other essential commodities from Russia—trade which is growing year by year is to be thrown away for this miserable abortion of a book."

In striking contrast to the bitter hatred he continually expressed of the Bolsheviks was Churchill's servile adulation of Mussolini. He had denounced the Bolsheviks as dictators. But was not Mussolini a dictator too? Had not Mussolini seized power by the forcible overthrow of democratic institutions in Italy? Had his Fascist braves not clubbed, castor-oiled, and murdered their political opponents?

Nevertheless, Winston Churchill made no secret of his warm and sincere admiration of Mussolini and his methods. In this he joined hands with eminent Americans like Nicholas Murray Butler, who declared that Mussolini was probably the greatest statesman of the twentieth century, and Owen D. Young, who, in the depression years, was asserting that the United States needed a Mussolini to solve its economic and political problems. Hitler was later to pay his tribute in his *Mein Kampf* to "that great man across the Alps"; but Churchill did it first. Mussolini was the first of the Fascist dictators, and had he not succeeded in Italy it is doubtful whether the methods which Hitler copied and improved would have been used in Nazi Germany.

In January, 1927, Churchill paid Mussolini a complimentary visit at Rome and received a hearty welcome from the Italian dictator, whose press gave Winston lavish praise and publicity. After having been feted for a week by Mussolini, he gave a press conference at which he extolled the achievements of his friend. The *Times*, January 21, 1927, reported it as follows:

Before leaving for London today Mr. Churchill received representatives of the Italian and foreign press. Mr. Churchill informed his audience that he had prepared what he, an ex-journalist, considered the questions and answers most likely to help them in their work, and that a typed copy of this would be given to whomsoever desired one. The following are extracts in his own words from the impressions made upon him by a week's visit to Italy:

"You will naturally ask me about the interviews I have had with Italian statesmen and, in particular, with Signer Mussolini and Count Volpi. Those interviews were purely private and of a general character. It is a good thing in modern Europe for public men in different countries to meet on a friendly and social basis and form personal impressions of one another. It is one of the ways in which international suspicion may be diminished, and frank and confident relations maintained.

"I could not help being charmed, like so many other people have been, by Signer Mussolini's gentle and simple bearing and by his calm detached poise in spite of so many burdens and dangers.

"Secondly, anyone could see that he thought of nothing but the lasting good, as he understood it, of the Italian people, and that no lesser interest was of the slightest consequence to him.

"I am sure that I am violating no confidence when I say that a large part of my conversations with Signer Mussolini and with Count Volpi turned upon the economic position of the Italian wage earner---I was very glad to hear and to have it proved to me by facts and figures that there is a definite improvement month by month over the preceding year. . . .

"I have heard a great deal about your new law of corporations, which, I am told, directly associates twenty millions of active citizens with the State, and obliges the State to undertake very direct responsibilities in regard to these and their dependents. Such a movement is of the deepest interest, and its results will be watched in every country. In the face of such a system,

ardently accepted, it is quite absurd to suggest that the Italian Government does not rest upon popular bases or that it is not upheld by the active and practical assent of the great masses.

"If I had been an Italian I am sure that I should have been whole-heartedly with you from start to finish in your triumphant struggle against the bestial appetites and passions of Leninism. But in England we have not had to fight this danger in the same deadly form. We have our way of doing things. But that we shall succeed in grappling with Communism and choking the life out of it—of that I am absolutely sure.

"I will, however, say a word on an international aspect of Fascismo. Externally, your movement has rendered a service to the whole world. The great fear which has always beset every democratic leader or working-class leader has been that of being undermined or overbid by someone more extreme than he. It seems that continued progression to the Left, a sort of inevitable landslide into the abyss, was the characteristic of all revolutions. Italy has shown that there is a way of fighting the subversive forces which can rally the mass of the people, properly led, to value and wish to defend the honour and stability of civilised society. She has provided the necessary antidote to the Russian poison. Hereafter, no great nation will be unprovided with an ultimate means of protection against cancerous growths, and every responsible labour leader in every country ought to feel his feet more firmly planted in resisting levelling and reckless doctrines. The great mass of the people love their country and are proud of its flag and history. They do not regard these as incompatible with a progressive advance towards social justice and economic betterment."

In conclusion, Mr. Churchill referred to the policy of the British Government in Europe, which is "that Great Britain, France, Italy, and Germany should work together for the revival of Europe and to heal the wounds of the war."

The Times added next day:

Mr. Churchill's parting message has elicited enthusiastic comments from all the Fascist newspapers which speak of it as one of the most important judgments ever delivered on Fascismo by a foreign states-man, and they express confidence that it will have the most favourable effect on world opinion of Fascismo.

Mr. Churchill is congratulated especially on having understood the real spirit of the Fascist movement, an understanding in which, the-newspapers declare, so many other observers of Fascismo have failed.

History has now revealed not only how Mussolini's political career began but also how it ended. Nobody now believes that Mussolini saved Italy. His foreign policy, though originally designed to revise the vindictive treaties after the First World War and to provide a four-power pact against Bolshevism and war, ultimately led the Italians to disaster and to defeat in war. In deference to historical truth, however, it should be pointed out that it was the stupid and bellicose diplomacy of Stanley Baldwin and Anthony Eden, which applied sanctions to Italy in connection with Ethiopia, refused to negotiate seriously on the problem, and rejected Mussolini's constructive four-power pact, probably even more statesmanlike than the Locarno agreement, which drove Mussolini into the Rome-Berlin Axis and the pact with Hitler.

Churchill's admiration of Mussolini was not just a passing affection. As late as September 26, 1935, he referred to Mussolini as "so great a man and so wise a ruler." But probably Winston's classic tribute to Mussolini was his statement that the world should be grateful to II Duce for saving it from "the foul baboonery of Bolshevism."

It is interesting to note that in the first volume of his war memoirs, *The Gathering Storm* (1948), Churchill has the following note on Mussolini:

While Corporal Hitler was making himself useful to the German officer-class in Munich by arousing soldiers and workers to fierce hatred of Jews and Communists, on whom he laid the blame for Germany's defeat, another adventurer, Benito Mussolini, provided Italy with a new theme of government, which while it claimed to save the Italian people from Communism, raised himself to dictatorial power. As Fascism sprang from Communism, so Nazism developed from Fascism. Thus were set on foot those kindred movements which were destined soon to plunge the world into even more hideous strife, which none can say has ended with their destruction.

Nobody would gather from this that Churchill had, in 1927, visited Rome and assured Mussolini that the latter had rendered "a service to the whole world." Churchill carefully omitted all reference to this visit and his eulogy of Mussolini from his history of the war.

When Mussolini was brutally murdered on April 29, 1945, and his body hung head down to be spat upon and showered with garbage by the Italian mob in Milan, there is no evidence that Churchill shed any tears over the ignominious demise of his "great and good friend." Indeed, he announced the news by rushing into his dining-room and shouting to his guests: "Ah, the bloody beast is dead!" Nor, when peace had come and such an act would have been quite permissible and in good taste, did Churchill send any note of condolence to Mussolini's widow and tell her of his regret that "so great a statesman" had passed from the scene in so foul a manner. Churchill's words and actions at the time of Mussolini's death provide the acid test of the extent of his ideological consistency, sportsmanship, and gallantry.

The essential lesson of this episode is, of course, that Churchill could have had no ideological basis for promoting or fighting a war against Mussolini and Fascism. If he lost his affection for the Duce after 1935, it could only have been because the latter mildly challenged British imperial interests in his Ethiopian foray. Indeed, Italian scholars have unearthed evidence that, in the spring of 1940, when it appeared that Franco-British defeat was inevitable, Churchill favoured Mussolini's entry into the war in order to exercise a moderating influence over Hitler at the peace table—but he suggested that Mussolini direct his military efforts against Greece and the Balkans.

## CHAPTER XVI

### Nightmare Over India

**T**HE Baldwin Government lasted five years, and Churchill remained Chancellor of the Exchequer during that time. Election trickery may induce the masses to return Tory governments, but these governments, once in power, soon reveal themselves for what they are—governments of the landlord and capitalist classes obediently following the dictates of High Finance and Big Business. The elections are scarcely over before the people begin to realize what they have done and how they have been deceived. Between 1924 and 1929 the working classes paid the full price for Tory rule. Following the reduction in miners' wages, workers in other industries suffered too. These were chronic years of unemployment and short time, with over a million on the dole or on poor-law relief.

When the Baldwin Government went to the country in 1929 the Tories were defeated; Labour was again the strongest party, and the Liberals, though weaker, still held the balance of power and agreed to a Labour Government. Ramsay MacDonald became Premier for the second time. In Epping, Churchill's majority went down from 9,763 to 4,967 and an ex-Communist, J. T. W. Newbold, polled 6,472 votes. His Liberal opponent polled 19,005. In a straight fight Churchill would probably have lost the seat. He was to be out of the Cabinet for ten years and out of step with the Tory Party too.

India was the first issue on which Churchill took his own line. He became the spokesman and the figurehead of the Right-wing Tory clique that wished to retain the grip of British imperialism on India and opposed concessions to the Indian National Congress and to Gandhi. If there ever was any genuine Liberalism in Churchill's mental make-up, there was no sign of it when any suggestion was made that the time had come for the British Government to yield to the demand hi India for independence.

Lord Irwin, a Tory Viceroy, favoured concessions in India, but Churchill denounced Irwin's policy as "misguided benevolence." He refused to contemplate "the casting away of that most truly bright and precious jewel in the crown of the King which more than all our other Dominions and Dependencies constitutes the glory and strength of the British Empire."

Winston could always produce this sort of schoolboy rhetoric by the yard, and the controversies over the Indian bill gave him unlimited opportunities. The mere mention of the name of Gandhi was enough to make him foam at the mouth. "The truth is," he told a meeting of diehards at the Cannon Street Hotel, "that Gandhi-ism and all that it stands for will, sooner or later, have to be grappled with and finally crushed. It is no use trying to satisfy the tiger by feeding it on cat's meat. . . .

"The loss of India would mark and consummate the downfall of the British Empire. That great organism would pass at a stroke out of Life into History. From such a catastrophe there could be no recovery."

Churchill disagreed with Baldwin on this issue and ostentatiously left the Tory shadow cabinet, and there was a clash on the floor of the House. Baldwin, however, had the majority of the Tory Party behind him. At a meeting of businessmen at the Constitutional Club, Winston had an audience more to his liking. With an expressive sweep of his arm he exclaimed:

See what happens when you get upon the slippery slope; when, instead Of the Conservative Party putting its hand on the brake, it puts its foot upon the accelerator! Gandhi, with his deep knowledge of the Indian peoples, by the dress he wore or did not wear, by the way in which his food was brought to him at the Viceregal Palace, deliberately insulted—in a manner which he knew everyone in India would appreciate—the majesty of the King's representative.

These are not trifles in the East. Thereby our power to maintain peace and order among immense masses of India has been sensibly impaired.----But that is only the beginning. These are the first drops of the storm. Gandhi is resolved—and those who work behind him and through him are still more resolved—to bring practically all British importations, certainly all Lancashire importations, to an absolute end. That spells the doom of Lancashire. Unless you are prepared to defend your rights and interests in India you will be stripped of every vestige you possess and expelled with ignominy from its shores.

This was good stuff for the businessmen thinking of their shares in Indian companies, but even the Tory front bench thought it was out of date. Churchill's speeches of prophecy of doom hi India were so frequent during the debates on the India bill that they became boring. In one final speech of denunciation, Winston reiterated all his histrionic prophecies of impending doom hi India. He was followed by Leo Amery, also an arch-imperialist. Mr. Amery deflated Winston's rhetorical bladder. "Here endeth the last chapter of the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah," was his comment.

At a big demonstration in the Albert Hall, Churchill described the India bill as "a hideous act of self-mutilation, astounding to every nation in the world. I am against this surrender to Gandhi," he declared. "I am against these conversations and agreements between Lord Irwin and Mr. Gandhi. Gandhi stands for the expulsion of Britain from India. Gandhi stands for the substitution of Brahmin domination for British rule in India. You will never be able to come to terms



with Gandhi." When Churchill talked about India in his feverish orations, the Brahmins for the time being took the place of the Bolsheviks. Everything good in India he attributed to the results of British rule:

Here you have nearly three hundred and fifty millions of people, lifted to a civilisation and to a level of peace, order, sanitation and progress far above anything they could possibly have achieved themselves or could maintain. This wonderful fact is due to the guidance and authority of a few thousands of British officials responsible to Parliament who have for generations presided over the development of India. If that authority is injured or destroyed, the whole efficiency of the services, - defensive, administrative, medical, hygienic, judicial, railway, irrigation, public works and famine prevention, upon which the Indian masses depend for their culture and progress will perish with it. India will fall back quite rapidly through the centuries into the barbarism and privations of the Middle Ages.

To abandon India to the rule of the Brahmins would be an act of cruel and wicked negligence. It would shame for ever those who bore its guilt.

The gulf between Hindus and Moslems is impassable. Over both of them the impartial rule of Britain has hitherto lifted its appeasing sceptre.

Churchill forecast that, if the British withdrew their army from India, the Hindus would be conquered by the Moslems:

The Brahmins know well that they cannot defend themselves against the Moslems. The Hindus do not possess among their many virtues that of being a fighting race. The whole South of India is peopled with races deserving all earnest solicitude and regard, but incapable of self-defence. It is in the North alone that the fighting races dwell. There can be no doubt that the departure of the British from India, which Mr. Gandhi advocates and which Mr. Nehru demands, would be followed first by a struggle in the North and thereafter by a re-conquest of the South by the North and of the Hindus by the Moslems.

He saw every disaster and evil under the sun following a withdrawal of British soldiers from India. And greatest horror of all he had read in The Times:---of the crowd of rich Bombay merchants and millionaire mill-owners, millionaires on sweated labour [it sounded like a description of a Tory Conference] who summoned Mr. Gandhi, the saint, the lawyer, Lord Irwin's dear colleague and companion. What are they doing there, these men, and what is he doing in their houses? They are making arrangements that the greatest bluff, the greatest humbug and the greatest betrayal shall be followed by the greatest ramp. Nepotism, back-scratching, graft and corruption in every form will be the handmaiden of a Brahmin domination.

Winston was, however, to live long enough to see that his worst nightmares about disorder in India were not realized. But, by promoting Britain's entry into the Second World War and insisting on continuing it after the German attack on Russia on June 22, 1941, Churchill's policy was more responsible than anything else for so weakening the British Empire that India had to be given her independence, and thus was lost "the brightest pearl of Empire." Churchill said during the war that he did not become the King's First Minister to liquidate the British Empire, but this is just what his foreign policy after 1938 accomplished.

Churchill had so overdone the Indian melodrama in his opposition to the India bill that the House of Commons ceased to take his fulminations very seriously. They were too much for the Tory back benches, and even the diehards became surfeited with his overdoses of rhetoric.

More and more, Winston came to be regarded as a lone wolf, a picturesque survival of the old Liberal-Tory years, a political flamboyant with no particular principles, a parliamentary careerist whose day was over. The Tory leaders laughed at his debating dexterity; they marvelled at

his flow of language and his mastery of the tricks of the politician's trade; they liked him as an entertainer. He had many friends but few followers; they could appreciate the agility of the Westminster knockabout artist but did not regard him as one whose judgment was sound or whose leadership could be relied upon.

When the national coalition was formed after the financial crisis of 1931, Winston was not included in the new ministry. MacDonald certainly did not want him, neither did Baldwin; he was a doubtful asset in the country and would only be a nuisance in the Cabinet. So he was left out. He was regarded as a back number and reluctantly assumed the pose of the elder statesman in splendid isolation, ready and willing to offer his advice and services in any political crisis that might turn up. He was not slow to remind Baldwin that the latter had been the man responsible for the breakup of the Lloyd George coalition, "and therefore it is certainly surprising to find him the champion coalitionist."

But the same "honest Baldwin" was not so naive as he looked. He had no doubts in his own mind what sort of a coalition this one "was going to be and who was to be the top dog. Ramsay MacDonald was no Lloyd George and had entered the Tory spider's parlour with far less assertiveness than the proverbial fly. They would get no trouble from him; he had burned his Socialist bridges behind him; the Tories could afford to let him remain the patriotic figurehead of the national government until the time came to remove him from the stage. Ramsay MacDonald and Philip Snowden would be useful for the general election, and after that the Tories could come into the open and take control.

So, the great British democracy was fooled again. Winston increased his majority to 12,786 at the 1931 election but was not officially allowed anywhere near 10 Downing Street or Whitehall.

In Germany, Adolf Hitler came to power in January, 1933.

## CHAPTER XVII

### The Abdication

**C**HURCHILL'S most spectacular clash with Baldwin, however, came over the political issues involved in the abdication of King Edward VIII. When the young King had been installed as Prince of Wales at the Investiture at Caernarvon Castle in 1911, Winston Churchill had been present as part of his duties as Home Secretary, and in his ministerial duties had met the Prince frequently during the intervening years. The news of King Edward's relations with Mrs. Simpson were first made public on December 1, 1936.

The British press had kept silent on what had been widely publicized in America and in other parts of the world—that King Edward, whose coronation was to take place the following year, had become infatuated with an American lady who had already been divorced and was shortly to figure in divorce proceedings with Mr. Ernest Simpson. The American weekly *Time* had given the whole story great publicity in its columns, as had the sensational press of the United States. Mrs. Simpson had been with the King on innumerable occasions and had even been entertained at Balmoral.

The disclosure was made to the British public following an address critical of the King that had been delivered by Dr. Blunt, Bishop of Bradford. The King had intimated to Mr. Baldwin, the Prime Minister, that he intended to marry Mrs. Simpson and thus precipitated a constitutional crisis. This had completely upset court circles, and vastly disturbed the Archbishop of Canterbury, who shuddered at the very thought of an American woman who had already had two husbands becoming Queen of England. The King was apparently under the impression that he could marry Mrs. Simpson, in defiance of Mr. Baldwin and the Archbishop, and even seemed

to have thought that if Mrs. Simpson would not be allowed to become Queen of England, Parliament would agree to pass legislation legalizing a morganatic marriage.

That he should have harboured these delusions is perhaps understandable. He had enjoyed great popularity as Prince of Wales and was the most praised and publicized personality in the country. In fact, in its efforts to strengthen British public opinion in support of monarchy, the press and the B.B.C. had made the young King into almost a demigod. He had been hailed as a national hero by enthusiastic crowds all over the country and had been acclaimed in the mining villages of south Wales and other Socialist strongholds. His journeys had been one long triumphant reception through cheering multitudes. As prince, Edward had become accustomed to this, and since he had become king it had all grown to one grand crescendo of adoration.

Every possible device of publicity had been employed to hypnotize the British public into the belief that Edward was probably the most wonderful king England had ever known. He had been photographed in almost every conceivable kind of uniform; he had been everywhere and had seen everything, and was represented to be a most versatile, gifted, democratic monarch. He had been trained for his great task and was the incarnation of all that was dashing and gallant, exactly the right man to be the ruler of a mighty empire. Who, then, were Baldwin and the Archbishop of Canterbury that they should dictate to him and object to the woman he wished to make his wife?

If Edward had decided on some foreign princess, however vacuous, they would all have declared that he had done the right thing and would have vied with one another in their fawning and their flattery. Why could he not marry the woman of his choice, even if she were an American and had been divorced twice? Was he not doing enough for the country by going through all the conventional routine, appearing at innumerable functions, signing all the documents, dressing up in all sorts of uniforms, always doing the correct thing at the right time, and smiling, smiling, smiling, at lord mayors, and mayors and aldermen and their wives, and always having to pretend to look pleased and delighted. Why could they not let him please himself with his Wally, who had more life and brains and energy in her than all the royal crowd and the princesses who bored him to death?

Edward did not wish to abdicate and was quite prepared to go through with his royal duties. Even if they did not want Wally as queen, could Parliament not fall in with his wishes and pass legislation sanctioning a morganatic marriage? That was Edward's point of view, and he thought that he was popular enough in the country to be able, in the last resort, politely to tell Mr. Baldwin and the Archbishop of Canterbury to go to hell.

But he underestimated Stanley Baldwin, the stubborn, conventional Englishman who believed in Victorian morality and was determined that he was not going to bow the knee to any Wally Simpson or have her hovering around Buckingham Palace and giving the wrong advice to the King. Besides, if the King had his way on this matter, what effect would it all have upon the future of the British monarchy? Would it not lower its prestige? And if the monarchy fell into disrepute would it not imperil the British Constitution, that great bulwark against revolution, and imperil everything for which the Conservative Party stood?

So Baldwin was obdurate and unyielding, and backed up the Archbishop of Canterbury. It was the Prime Minister's duty to tender advice to the King, and his advice to the King was that his Government was not prepared to introduce legislation sanctioning a morganatic marriage, and that, if the King persisted in his intention to marry Mrs. Simpson, he would have to abdicate.

This advice was not what the King wanted. He suggested to Mr. Baldwin that he would like further advice from Mr. Winston Churchill. It is said that the Prime Minister raised no objection, but he must have been astonished, for Churchill was not the leader of a party and was not regarded as a responsible elder statesman. But this development, far from deflecting Baldwin

from the line he had taken, probably made him more determined than ever and prepared to roll up his sleeves and also polish off Winston Churchill if necessary.

When Baldwin had made his statement in the House, Churchill had intervened to ask the Prime Minister to give an assurance to the House that no irrevocable step would be taken before a formal statement was made to Parliament. It looked as if Winston was attempting to fish in troubled waters. The next day Winston issued an impressive statement to the press. It read:

I plead for time and patience. The nation must realise the character of the constitutional issue. There is no question of any conflict between the King and Parliament. Parliament has not been consulted in any way, nor allowed to express any opinion.

The question is whether the King is to abdicate upon the advice of the Ministry of the day. No such advice has ever before been tendered to a Sovereign in Parliamentary times.

This is not a case where differences have arisen between the Sovereign and his Ministers on any particular measure. These could certainly be resolved by normal processes of Parliament or dissolution.

In this case we are in presence of a wish expressed by the Sovereign to perform an act which in no circumstances can be accomplished for nearly five months, and may conceivably, for various reasons, never be accomplished at all.

That, on such a hypothetical and suppositional basis the supreme sacrifice of abdication and potential exile of the Sovereign could be demanded, finds no support whatever in the British Constitution. The Ministry has the authority to advise the abdication of the Sovereign. Only the most serious Parliamentary processes would even raise the issue in the decisive form. The Cabinet has no right to prejudge such a question without having previously ascertained at the very least the will of Parliament. This could, perhaps, be obtained by messages from the Sovereign to Parliament, and by addresses of both Houses after due consideration of these messages. For the Sovereign to abdicate incontinently in the present circumstances would inflict an injury upon the constitutional position of the monarchy which is measureless and cannot fail to be grievous to the institution itself, irrespective of the existing occupant of the Throne.

Parliament would also fail entirely in its duty if it allowed such an event to occur as the signing of an abdication in response to the advice of Ministers without taking all precautions to make sure that these same processes may not be repeated with equal uncanny facility at no distant date in unforeseen circumstances. Clearly time is needed for searching constitutional debate.

The next question—what has the King done? If it be true, as is alleged, that the King has proposed to his Ministers legislation which they are not prepared to introduce, the answer of Ministers should be not to call for abdication, but to refuse to act upon the King's request, which thereupon became inoperative.

If the King refuses to take the advice of his Ministers they are, of course, free to resign. They have no right whatever to put pressure upon him to accept their advice by soliciting beforehand assurances from the leader of the Opposition that he will not form an alternative Administration in the event of their resignation, and confronting the King with an ultimatum. Again, there is cause for time and patience.

Why cannot time be granted? The fact that it is beyond the King's power to accomplish the purpose which Ministers oppose until the end of April [the decree absolute in Mrs. Simpson's divorce suit would not be pronounced until that month] surely strips the matter of constitutional urgency.

There may be some inconvenience but that inconvenience stands on a different plane altogether from the grave constitutional issues I have set forth.

National and Imperial considerations alike require that before such a dread step as a demand for abdication is taken, not only should the constitutional position be newly defined by Parliament, but that every method should be exhausted which gives the hope of a happier solution.

Lastly, but surely not least, there is the human and personal aspect. The King has been for many weeks under the greatest strain, moral, and mental, that can fall upon a man. Not only has he been inevitably subjected to the supreme stress of his public duty, but also to the agony of his own feelings.

Surely, if he asks for time to consider the advice of his Ministers, now that at length matters have been brought to this dire culmination, he should not be denied.

Howsoever this matter may turn, it is pregnant with calamity and inseparable from inconvenience. But all the evil aspects will be aggravated beyond measure if the utmost chivalry and compassion is not shown, both by Ministers and by the British nation, towards a gifted and beloved King torn between private and public obligations of love and duty.

The Churches stand for charity. They believe in the efficacy of prayer. Surely their influence must not oppose a period of reflection. I plead, I pray, that time and tolerance will not be denied. The King had no means of personal access to his Parliament or his people. Between him -and them stand in their office the Ministers of the Crown. If they thought it their duty to engage all their power and influence against him, still he must remain silent. All the more must they be careful not to be the judge in their own case, and to show a loyal and Christian patience even at some political embarrassment to themselves. If an abdication were to be hastily extorted the outrage so committed would cast its shadow forward across many chapters of the history of the British Empire.

There was much in this sensible and humane statement which appealed to public opinion and Winston waited to see the effect.

From the purely constitutional point of view there was much logic in his argument. There was no precedent, nothing to guide anybody in the constitutional-law books, for no English king had ever contemplated marrying a twice-divorced American woman before. They had had their mistresses and their illegitimate children, but there had been nothing illegal or constitutionally wrong in this. Indeed, if King Edward had decided to make Mrs. Simpson his mistress without marrying her, it is unlikely that either the Prime Minister or the Archbishop of Canterbury could or would have dared to mention the matter publicly, and there would have been a tacit general agreement to keep the scandal hushed up.

Winston's demand for time for consideration appealed to the people's sense of fair play, and his request for Christian charity and time for prayer were obviously directed at the Archbishop of Canterbury, who seemed to be doing his utmost to rush the King off the throne.

One wonders what attitude Churchill would have taken had he been Prime Minister, as he became later. From his statement it is clear that he was inclined to be sympathetic with the King. He seemed to think that the abdication of Edward and his being supplanted by George would shake the foundations of the Constitution, of the Empire, indeed of civilization itself.. Winston had always been good at conjuring up nightmares to suit the occasion, and his reference to the proposed abdication as "an outrage which would cast its shadow forward across many chapters of the history of the British Empire" was one of them. His prediction that the abdication "would inflict an injury upon the constitutional position of the monarchy which is measureless and cannot fail to be grievous to the institution itself" was an attempt to make the nation's flesh

creep, even if Baldwin's and the Archbishop's did not. What the abdication incident did show was that a king could be sacked just as easily as a plumber. And, unlike the plumber, the King had no union to protect him.

If Winston's plea for time and prayer had been acceded to, it is quite likely that a press campaign might have been whipped up in the King's favour, for Baldwin and Archbishop Lang were not by any stretch of the imagination over popular. Perhaps they realized that the sooner the abdication was over and done with the better.

On Thursday, December 7, the Prime Minister gave a cautiously worded statement stating that the King was engaged in making up his mind on his course of action and deprecating any further supplementary questions. Winston, however, rose to repeat his request that no irrevocable step should be taken before a formal statement was made to Parliament. From all sides of the House came loud cries of "No" and "Sit down." The mood of the House was so obvious that Churchill, not easily suppressed, was so taken aback that he could do nothing but subside.

The victory went to Baldwin and the Archbishop. The world heard over the radio that the King had abdicated and heard his dramatic, pathetic farewell. The Speaker announced it at the House on December 10 without Parliament having had any voice in the matter. There was a brief debate after his statement. Churchill made a brief speech in which he said:

Nothing is more certain or more obvious than that recrimination or controversy at this time would not only be useless, but harmful and wrong. What is done, is done. What has been done, or left undone, belongs to history, and to history, so far as I am concerned, it shall be left. I will therefore make two observations only.

The first is this: It is clear from what we have been told this after-noon that there was at no time any constitutional issue between the King and his Ministers, or between the King and Parliament. The supremacy of Parliament over the Crown, the duty of the Sovereign to act in accordance with the advice of his Ministers; neither of those was ever at any moment in question. I venture to say that no Sovereign has ever conformed more strictly to the Constitution than his present Majesty. In fact he has voluntarily made a sacrifice for the peace and strength of his realm, which go far beyond the bounds required by the law and constitution. This is my first observation.

My second is this: I have, throughout, pleaded for time; anyone can see how grave would have been the evils of protracted controversy. On the other hand it was, in my view, our duty to endure these evils, even at serious inconvenience, if there was any hope that time would bring a solution.

Whether there was any hope or not is a mystery which, at the present time, it is impossible to resolve. Time was also important from another point of view. It was essential that there should be no room for aspersions, after the event, that the King had been hurried to his decision. I believe that, if this decision had been taken last week, it could not have been declared that it was an unhurried decision, so far as the King himself was concerned, but now I accept wholeheartedly what the Prime Minister has proved, namely, that the decision taken this week has been taken by His Majesty freely, voluntarily and spontaneously, in his time and in his own way. As I have been looking at this matter, as is well known, from an angle different from that of most members, I thought it my duty to place this fact also upon record.

That is all I have to say upon the disputable part of this matter, but I hope the House will bear with me for a minute or two, because it was my duty as Home Secretary, more than a quarter of a century ago, to stand beside His Majesty and proclaim his style and titles at his investiture as Prince of Wales amid the sunlit battlements of Caernarvon Castle, and ever since then he has honoured me here, and also in wartime, with his personal kindness and, I may even say,

friendship. I should have been ashamed if, in my independent and unofficial position, I had not cast about for every lawful means, even the most forlorn, to keep him on the Throne of his fathers, to which he only recently succeeded amid hope and prayers of all.

In this Prince there were discerned qualities of courage, of simplicity, of sympathy and, above all, of sincerity, qualities rare and precious which might have made his reign glorious in the annals of this ancient Monarchy. It is the acme of tragedy that these very virtues should, in the private sphere, have led only to this melancholy and bitter conclusion. But, although to-day our hopes are withered, still I will assert that his personality will not go down uncherished to future ages, that it will be particularly remembered in the homes of his poorer subjects, and that they will ever wish from the bottoms of their hearts for his private peace and happiness, and for the happiness of those who are dear to him.

I must say one word more, and I say it especially to those here and out of doors—and do not underrate their numbers—who are most poignantly afflicted by what has occurred. Danger gathers upon our path. We cannot afford—we have no right—to look back. We must look forward; we must obey the exhortation of the Prime Minister to look forward. The stronger the advocate of monarchical principle a man may be, the more zealously must he now endeavour to fortify the Throne, and to give His Majesty's successor that strength which can only come from the love of a united nation and Empire.

It was a skilful parliamentary get-out, a brave attempt to cover a quick retreat. Winston knew as well as anybody else that the statement that the decision taken by the King was "taken freely, voluntarily and spontaneously" was actually so much eyewash.

So Edward went; Winston's tragic forebodings were not realised: the British Constitution was not undermined, the monarchy went on from strength to strength, the earth continued on its axis, and by December 25, 1936, the nation had recovered sufficiently to enjoy its Christmas pudding.

Winston, however sound in his ethics and logic, had taken the wrong political line. His public stock, which had been rising, slumped heavily. Baldwin and the Archbishop, playing upon Victorian tradition, had been too much for him.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### Tribute to Hitler

**O**ut of office, Churchill had greater leisure for writing, and he contributed regularly to the press. Many of these articles are interesting, especially in so far as they show the mind of the man. Take, for example, his studies of personalities of his generation, later published in book form under the title of *Great Contemporaries*. They are written in typical sonorous Churchillian prose, with innumerable adjectives, chosen not so much for their meaning as for their sound. The most interesting of these essays in the light of later events is his chapter on Hitler.

Winston's extravagant eulogy of Mussolini has already been discussed. What, then, were his impressions of Hitler in 1935? What had endeared Mussolini to Churchill was his successful campaign against Communism in Italy. Had he been an Italian, he assured Mussolini, he would have been with him from the start. Churchill did not, like Lloyd George, go to Germany to meet Hitler. The Fuhrer was a German and not an Italian, and Churchill had seen enough of the Germans in the First World War to know what formidable enemies they could be. He had no doubts about giving his unqualified approval to the Fascist idea in Italy, but when it spread to Germany and took the form of a belligerent resurgence of German nationalism, whose objective was to end the Treaty of Versailles and to reverse the military defeats of the First World War, that was a different matter. Had Hitler been concerned only with preaching a holy war against

Russia, Churchill could not logically have quarrelled with him. For he was as bitterly anti-Bolshevik as Hitler or Goebbels or any of the school of anti-Russian hate merchants and propagandists who exploited the Red bogey in their political warfare. Winston had been a pioneer and a distinguished master of this propaganda from the beginning, long before the Russians or the rest of Europe had heard of Goebbels. Indeed, in his memorandum to Lloyd George, written in March, 1920, he had developed a theory of building up Germany as a bulwark against Bolshevism.

In 1920 he wrote to Lloyd George, "You ought to tell France that we will make a defensive alliance with her against Germany if, only if, she entirely alters her treatment of Germany and loyally accepts a British policy of help and friendship towards Germany." He did not believe that "any real harmony is possible between Bolshevism and present civilization." "But Germany," he wrote, "may perhaps still be saved." What he meant was, of course, from Socialism and Communism. But Hitler was not merely an anti-Communist, he was anti-French and opposed to the victors of Versailles, too, although not anti-British prior to 1941. So, in 1935, Churchill had not quite made up his mind about Hitler. In the first paragraph of his essay "Hitler and His Choice," he wrote: "Although no subsequent political action can condone wrong deeds, history is replete with examples of men who have risen to power by employing stern, grim and even frightful methods but who, nevertheless, when their life is revealed as a whole, have been regarded as great figures whose lives have enriched the story of mankind. So may it be with Hitler."

He was not sure where Hitler was going to lead Germany, but could not refrain from admiration of this "corporal, a former house-painter," who had "set out to regain all."

In fifteen years that have followed this resolve, he has succeeded in restoring Germany to the most powerful position in Europe, and not only has he restored the position of his country, but he has even, to a very great extent, reversed the results of the Great War----the vanquished are in process of becoming the victors and the victors the vanquished---whatever else may be thought about these exploits they are certainly among the most remarkable in the whole history of the world.

Churchill had always been a worshipper of success, whether in politics or war, and Hitler's success had certainly been spectacular. Now what were the reasons for this? Churchill went on: "Hitler's success, and indeed his survival as a political force, would not have been possible but for the lethargy and folly of the French and British governments since the War, and especially in the last three years."

These were years when Churchill had not been in the Cabinet. But he had been the Chancellor of the Exchequer for five years in the critical period after the war, and there is no evidence that during this time he had been very active himself in trying to change the trend of British policy towards Germany and to remedy the grievances which Hitler had exploited. He had been too busy carrying on his rhetorical campaigns against Russia. Then he adds:

For a long time the French pursued the absurd delusion that they could extract vast indemnities from the Germans in order to compensate them for the devastation of the war. Figures of reparation payments were adopted, not only by the French but by the British [incidentally Churchill was a prominent member of the Government that adopted them] which had no relation whatever to any process which exists, or could be devised of transferring wealth from one community to another.

All this had been clearly explained over thirty years before by Norman Angell in his *Great Illusion*, and at the time of the signing of the Versailles Treaty by J. M. Keynes in his *Economic Consequences of the Peace*. Churchill was rather late in discovering all this, and certainly for many of these years he shared the governmental responsibility for British foreign policy.



Actually, according to Churchill, during all the years that had followed the ending of the First World War British foreign policy had been wrong, but except for brief intervals in 1924 and in 1929-31 the Tories had been in power. In the years when a Labour Government had been in office attempts had been made to pursue a more enlightened policy aiming at reversing the errors of Versailles. But there had been no help from Winston; on the contrary, he had been chiefly concerned with trying to get these Labour Governments out of power.

Churchill went on to outline the blunders in British and French policy which had helped Hitler to build up his Nazi movement, and continues:

In fact nothing was gained at the cost of all this friction for although the Allies extracted about one thousand million pounds worth of assets from the Germans, the United States and, to a lesser extent, Britain, lent Germany at the same time over two thousand million. [He might have added that Germany re-lent some of this money to Russia when he had feverishly campaigned against a Russian loan.] Yet while the Allies poured their wealth into Germany to build her up and revive her wealth and industry, the only results were an increasing resentment and the loss of their money.

Even while Germany was receiving great benefits by the loans which were made her, Hitler's movement gained each week life and force from irritation at Allied interference.

All that Churchill said in 1935, after Hitler had become Germany's dictator, had been said before by internationally-minded British statesmen during the fifteen years in which the policy, now denounced by him, was in operation.

Where, one might ask, had Churchill been during these years? Had he ever raised his voice against reparations when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer in Baldwin's Government? What protests had he made against "the lethargy and folly of the French and British governments since the war?" Had he not been one of the leading members of these governments? E. D. Morel had warned the country what would be the inevitable result of the policy embodied in the Treaty of Versailles when he had opposed Churchill at Dundee. But then Churchill stood as the principal protagonist of this policy.

"Little was done to redress the grievances of the treaties of Versailles and Trianon," wrote Churchill in 1935, explaining why Hitler had been able to capture power in Germany. J. M. Keynes, sixteen years earlier, had written his historic warning in his book *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*. If Churchill had read that book he certainly had not come out to support its author. One of the political consequences of the peace had been Hitler, and Churchill admits that Hitler's success and his survival as a political force "was due to the lethargy and folly of British governments." It was a Tory Foreign Minister, Sir Austen Chamberlain, who had refused the concessions to Stresemann at Geneva, the concessions with which Stresemann said he could have "won this generation for peace." This was Tory policy, and during this time Churchill had been Chancellor of the Exchequer! The charges of folly and lethargy which he now levelled at the British postwar Governments surely applied to him.

Did Churchill campaign during these years for a policy to-wards Germany which would have prevented Hitler? Or was he too obsessed by his hatred of Russia and with his nightmares about India to realize the importance of what was happening in Germany? Churchill writes as if the trouble started only with the MacDonald Government of 1929. In 1933, Churchill had in the House of Commons vigorously attacked Mussolini's proposal for a four-power pact, the one comprehensive plan set forth in Europe which might have revised post-war treaties in a peaceful manner and held Hitler in check. Churchill went on to express admiration of Hitler's struggle for power:

While all these formidable transformations were occurring in Europe, Corporal Hitler was fighting his long, wearing battle for the German heart.

The story of that struggle cannot be read without admiration for the courage, the perseverance and the vital force which enabled him to challenge, defy, conciliate, or overcome all the authorities or resistances which barred his path. He, and the ever increasing legions who worked with him, certainly showed at this time, in their patriotic ardour and love of country, that there was nothing they would not do or dare, no sacrifice of life, limb and liberty that they would not make themselves or inflict upon their opponents. The main episodes of the story are well known. The riotous meetings, the fusillade at Munich, Hitler's imprisonment, his various arrests and trials, his conflict with Hindenburg, his electoral campaign, Von Papen's tergiversation, Hitler's conquest of Hindenburg, Hindenburg's desertion of Brüning— all these were the milestones upon that indomitable march which carried the Austrian-born corporal to the life dictatorship of the entire German nation of nearly seventy million souls, constituting the most industrious, tractable, fierce and martial race in the world.

For the success of Hitler, Churchill insists, the Allies, Britain and France, were responsible, "and the achievement by which the tables have been turned upon the complacent, feckless and purblind victors deserves to be reckoned a prodigy in the history of the world and a prodigy which is inseparable from the personal exertions of life thrust of a single man." Churchill went on to ask:

What manner of man is this grim figure who has performed these superb toils and loosed these frightful evils? Does he still share the passions he has evoked? Does he, in the full sunlight of worldly triumph, at the head of the great nation he has raised from the dust, still feel racked by the hatreds and antagonisms of his desperate struggle; or will they be discarded like the armour and the cruel weapons of strife under the mellowing influence of success? Evidently, a burning question for men of all nations. Those who have met Hitler face to face in public, business, or on social terms, have found a highly competent, cool, well-informed functionary with an agreeable manner, a discerning smile, and few have been unaffected by a subtle personal magnetism.

Nor is this impression merely the dazzle of power. He exerted it on his companions at every stage in his struggle, even when his fortunes were in the lowest depths. Thus the world lives on hopes that the worst is over, and that we may yet live to see Hitler a gentler figure in a happier age.

Certainly Hitler could not complain that the article was un-complimentary. True, Churchill regarded him as a possible menace to the peace of Europe, but he hoped that the Führer would become a responsible and a respectable European statesman like his old friend Mussolini. He was not quite sure whether Hitler was going to be the bearer of an olive branch or the wielder of a rubber truncheon or an iron club. But he certainly could not conceal his admiration for Hitler and his career. Two years later he wrote: "One may dislike Hitler's system and yet admire his patriotic achievement. If our country were defeated I hope we should find a champion as admirable to restore our courage and lead us back to our place among the nations."

It is well to remember that all this fulsome eulogy of Hitler was written after Hitler had revealed all the traits and policies which could justify any rational opposition to his regime: the establishment of concentration camps for liberals, democrats, Communists and Jews; his anti-Semitic measures; the brutal purge of June-July, 1934; repudiation of the Treaty of Versailles and revival of German armament; the occupation of the Rhineland, and the like. If any leader of a democracy had reason at any time to rise up against Hitler, the justification existed hi 1937, if it existed at all—indeed, even as early as 1935.

In his Second World War, Churchill wrote quite differently of Hitler. He had forgotten the tributes of 1935 and 1937. He did not refer to Hitler in 1935 and 1937 as the corporal who had made himself "useful to the German officer-class by arousing soldiers and workers to fierce hatred of Jews and Communists." On the contrary, Churchill had then expressed his admiration of Hitler's early career.

There is little reason to think that Churchill was ever greatly disturbed by Hitler's ideology or his anti-democratic policies. His antagonism seems to have been born of fear that Germany might become too powerful under the Nazis and challenge British dominance in Western Europe and of the recognition that rousing Britain against Hitler might be the only way in which he could once again gain an important public post.

Evidence of the first factor appears in a statement which Churchill made to the eminent American businessman General Robert E. Wood. Wood had lunch with Churchill in the latter's apartment in London in November, 1936, and at that time Churchill remarked to Wood: "Germany is getting too strong and we must smash her." But Churchill was surely sufficiently well acquainted with Hitler's notorious Anglomania and his almost servile admiration of British imperialism to realize that Hitler was not likely to challenge England unless directly provoked. He wished collaboration with England rather than antagonism.

It is likely that political ambition was the most important factor which led Churchill to become a Hitler-baiter and to attempt to rouse Britain against the Nazis. The American publicist Francis Neilson, in his *The Makers of War*, states this point very concisely: "It is easy for us to see that Hitler at the head of the German people was Churchill's political adversary. History provided the scheme in which both enacted their roles. Without Hitler and the background of the events that spurred him to act, Churchill might never have held office again."

When Churchill finally turned on Hitler, he went all out in fierce antagonism. His politically simulated fury knew no bounds. In his *Grand Alliance* he wrote: "I have only one purpose, the destruction of Hitler, and my life is much simplified thereby." And no holds were to be barred in this effort. On September 21, 1943, Churchill told the House of Commons that "To achieve the extirpation of Nazi tyranny there are no lengths of violence to which we will not go." The bombing of Dresden in February, 1945, bore this out, even though it was not in the least needed to unseat Hitler, whose situation had become hopeless before this time.

## CHAPTER XIX Trotsky and Shaw

**I**N marked contrast to his personal admiration of Mussolini and Hitler were Churchill's savage attacks on contemporaries who were on the side of the Russian Revolution. Trotsky especially was depicted as a Red ogre. Churchill wrote of Trotsky: "He did not like the Tsar, so he murdered him and his family." The historical facts are that the Tsar and his family were shot without Trotsky knowing anything about it. "He did not like the imperial government, so he blew it up." The imperial government was overthrown before Trotsky returned to Russia from Canada. One can understand why Churchill disliked Trotsky and the Russian Revolution, but he might at least have made sure of the simple facts. Trotsky was a personality against whom Winston could rave with impunity:

He still fumed, growled, snarled, bit and plotted. He had raised the poor against the rich. He had raised the penniless against the poor. He had raised the criminal against the penniless. All had fallen out as he had willed. But nevertheless the vices of human society required, it seemed, new scourgings. In the deepest depths he sought with desperate energy for a deeper. But poor wretch—he had reached rock bottom. Nothing lower than the Communist criminal class could be found. In vain he had turned his gaze upon the wild beasts. The apes could not appreciate his

eloquence. He could not mobilise the wolves, whose numbers had so notably increased during his administration.

Trotsky had "the ferocity of Jack the Ripper, the toughness of Titus Oates!---Like the cancer bacillus, he grew, he fed, he tortured, he slew in fulfilment of his nature." Churchill had obviously got Trotsky on the brain. And he still regarded the Russian Revolution as if it were a continuation of Sidney Street. "For all its horrors, a glittering light plays over the scenes and actors of the French Revolution. The careers and personalities of Robespierre, of Danton, of Marat, gleam luridly across a century. But the dull, squalid figures of the Russian Bolsheviks are not redeemed hi interest even by the magnitude of their crimes." Lenin, Trotsky, Stalin. Whatever history might say of them it will hardly dismiss them as "dull"!

Churchill's outburst against Trotsky was clearly caused by the contemptuous references that the latter had made to him in a review of his book *The Aftermath* in John o' London's Weekly (April 20, 1929). In his book Churchill had written the following passage about Lenin. It was typical Churchillian journalese:

Implacable vengeance, rising from a frozen pity in a tranquil, sensible, matter-of-fact, good-humoured integument! His weapon logic; his mood opportunist. His sympathies cold and wide as the Arctic Ocean: his hatreds tight as the hangman's noose. His purpose to save the world: his methods to blow it up. Absolute principles, but ready to change them. Apt at once to kill or learn: dooms and afterthoughts: ruffianism and philanthropy: But a good husband; a gentle guest; happy, his biographers assure us, to wash up the dishes or dandle the baby; as mildly amused to stalk a capercaillie as to butcher an Emperor.

The quality of Lenin's revenge was impersonal. Confronted with the need of killing any particular person he showed reluctance—even distress. But to blot out a million, to proscribe entire classes, to light the flames of intestine war in every land with the inevitable destruction of the well-being of whole nations—these were sublime abstractions.

Trotsky's review was published under the headline: "MR. CHURCHILL is WRONG. The Real and Mythical Lenin: Was He Reckless in Taking Lives? Why the Russian Army Collapsed." Trotsky wrote:

In 1918-19 Mr. Churchill attempted to overthrow Lenin by force of arms. In 1929 he attempts a psychological and political portraiture of him in his book *The Aftermath* (Thornton Butterworth, 30/-). Perhaps he was hoping thereby to secure some sort of literary revenge for his unsuccessful appeal to the sword. But his methods are no less inadequate in the second mode of attack than they were in the first.

"His [Lenin's] sympathies cold and wide as the Arctic Ocean. His hatreds tight as the hangman's noose," writes Mr. Churchill. Verily, he juggles with antitheses as an athlete with dumb-bells. But the observant eye soon notices that the dumb-bells are painted cardboard, and the bulging biceps are eked out with padding.

The true Lenin was instinct with moral force—a force whose main characteristic was its absolute simplicity. To try to assess him in terms of stage athletics was bound to spell failure.

Mr. Churchill's facts are miserably inaccurate. Consider his dates, for instance. He repeats a sentence, which he had read somewhere or other, referring to the morbid influence exercised on Lenin's evolution by the execution of his elder brother. He refers the fact to the year 1894. But actually the attempt against Alexander IP's life was organised by Alexander Ulianof (Lenin's brother) on March 1st, 1887.

Mr. Churchill avers that in 1894 Lenin was sixteen years of age. In point of fact he was then twenty-four and in charge of the secret organisation at Petersburg. At the time of the October Revolution he was not thirty-nine, as Mr. Churchill would have it, but forty-seven years old. Mr. Churchill's errors in chronology show how confusedly he visualises the period and people of which he writes.

But when from the point of view of chronology and fisticuffs we turn to that of the philosophy of history, what we see is even more lamentable.

Mr. Churchill tells us that discipline in the Russian army was destroyed after the February Revolution, by the order abolishing the salute to officers. This was the point of view of discontented old generals and ambitious young subalterns: otherwise it is merely absurd. The old army stood for the supremacy of the old classes, and was destroyed by the revolution. When peasants had taken away the land-owners' property the peasants' sons could hardly continue to serve under officers who were sons of landowners. The army is no mere technical organisation, associated only with marching and promotion, but a moral organisation founded on a definite scheme of mutual relations between individuals and classes. When a scheme of this kind is upset by a revolution, the army unavoidably collapses.

It was always thus.---I suspect that Mr. Churchill did not even deign to take the trouble carefully to read the article on Lenin which I wrote for the Encyclopaedia Britannica in 1926. If he had, he would not have committed these crude, glaring errors of dates which throw everything out of perspective.

One thing Lenin could not tolerate was muddled thought. He had lived in all European countries, mastered many languages, had read and studied and listened and observed and compared and generalised. When he became the head of a revolutionary country, he did not fail to avail himself of this opportunity to learn, conscientiously and carefully. He did not cease to follow the life of all other countries. He could read and speak fluently English, German and French. He could read Italian and a number of Slavonic languages. During the last years of his life, though overburdened with work, he devoted every spare minute to studying the grammar of the Czech language in order to have access, without intermediaries, to the inner life of Czechoslovakia.

What can Mr. Churchill and Lord Birkenhead know of the workings of this forceful, piercing, tireless mind of his, with its capacity to translate everything that was superficial and fundamental?

Trotsky then dealt with some statements that had been made in an article by Lord Birkenhead, but later returned to Mr. Churchill, who had written indignantly about the cruelty of the Bolsheviks in the Civil War:

Mr. Churchill brings up against Lenin—and it is the very keystone of his article—statistics of the casualties of the civil war. These statistics are quite fantastic. This, however, is not the main point. The victims were many on either side. Mr. Churchill expressly specifies that he includes neither the deaths from starvation nor the deaths from epidemics. In his would-be athletic language he declares that neither Tamerlane nor Jenghiz Khan were as reckless as Lenin in expenditure of human lives. Judging by the order he adopts, one would hold that Mr. Churchill considers Tamerlane more reckless than Jenghiz Khan. In this he is wrong; statistical and chronological figures are certainly not the strong point of this Finance Minister. But this is by the way.

In order to find examples of mass expenditure of human life, Mr. Churchill must needs go to the history of Asia in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The great European war of 1914-18, in which ten million men were killed and twenty million crippled, appears to have entirely escaped his memory. The campaign of Jenghiz Khan and Tamerlane were child's play in comparison with the doings of civilisation from 1914 to 1918. But it is in a tone of lofty moral

indignation that Mr. Churchill speaks of the victims of civil war in Russia forgetting Ireland, and India, and other countries.

In short, the question is not so much the victims as it is the duties and the objects for which war was waged. Mr. Churchill wishes to make clear that all sacrifices, in all parts of the world, are permissible and right so long as the object is the power and sovereignty of the British Empire—that is, of its governing classes. But the incomparably lesser sacrifices are wrong which result from the struggle of peoples attempting to alter the conditions under which they exist—as occurred in England in the seventeenth century, in France at the end of the eighteenth, in the United States twice (eighteenth and nineteenth centuries), in Russia in the twentieth century, and as will occur more than once in the future. It is vainly that Mr. Churchill seeks assistance in the evocation of the two Asiatic warrior chiefs, who both fought in the interests of nomadic aristocracies, but yet aristocracies coveting new territories and more slaves—in which respect their dealings were in accordance with Mr. Churchill's principles, but certainly not with Lenin's. Indeed, we may recall that Anatole France, the last of the great humanists, often expressed the idea that of all kinds of the bloodthirsty insanity called war, the least insane was civil war, because at least the people who waged it did so of their own accord and not by order.

Trotsky went on to argue that the prolongation of the Civil War had been due to the Allied intervention:

Mr. Churchill has committed yet another mistake, a very important one, and, indeed, from his own point of view, a fatal one. He forgot that in civil wars, as in all wars, there are two sides: and that in this particular case, if he had not come in on the side of a very small minority, the number of the victims would have been considerably less. In October, we conquered power almost without a fight. Kerensky's attempt to reconquer it evaporated as a dewdrop falling on a red-hot stone. So mighty was the driving power of the masses, that the older classes hardly dared to resist.

When did the civil war, with its companion the Red Terror, really start? Mr. Churchill, being weak in the matter of chronology, let us help him. The turning point was the middle of 1918. Led by the Entente diplomatists and officers, the Czechoslovakians got hold of the railway line leading to the East. The French Ambassador, Noullens, organised deeds of terror and an attempt to cut off the water supply to Petersburg. Mr. Churchill encourages and finances Savinkov; he is behind Judenich. He determines the exact dates on which Petersburg and Moscow are to fall. He supports Denikin and Wrangel. The monitors of the British Fleet bombard our coast. Mr. Churchill proclaims the coming of "fourteen nations." He is the inspirer, the organiser, the financial backer, the prophet of the civil war: a generous backer, a mediocre organiser, and a very bad prophet.

He had been better advised not to recall the memories of those times. The number of the victims would have been not ten times, but a hundred or a thousand times smaller but for British guineas, British monitors, British tanks, British officers, and British food supplies.

Mr. Churchill understands neither Lenin nor the duties that lay before him. His lack of comprehension is at its worst when he attempts to deal with the inception of the new economic policy. For him, Lenin thereby gave himself the lie. Lord Birkenhead adds that in ten years the very principles of the October Revolution were bankrupt. Yes: he who in ten years failed to do away with the miners' unemployment or to palliate it, expects that in ten years we Russians can build up a new community without committing one mistake, without one flaw, without one setback; a wonderful expectation which gives us the measure of the primitive and purely theoretical quality of the honourable Conservative's outlook. We cannot foretell how many errors, how many setbacks, will mark the course of history; but to see, amid the obstacles and deviations and setbacks of all kinds, the straight line of historical evolution was the achievement of Lenin's genius.

Churchill's reputation as a historian of the events of his day and his estimate of the outstanding international personalities of the time had never been so completely and scathingly debunked before, and this made him abusive and angry. While the British public was regarding him as a brilliant historian, Trotsky was deflating his rhetoric, penetrating his superficialities, exploding his facts, and generally treating him contemptuously as an ignoramus. The best that Winston could do in reply was his shrill, abusive article on "Trotsky, Alias Bronstein," and yell "Jack the Ripper."

Later on, Churchill was to pay his tribute to Stalin, hail him as a mighty warrior and drink his health in the Kremlin. Churchill could always turn on the orations to suit the occasion. But even the most fervent admirers of his literary style will hardly claim his essay on Trotsky and the Bolsheviks as one of his best efforts.

Boris Savinkov, the agent of Koltchak, was Churchill's ideal Russian. He also figures among the Great Contemporaries. According to Churchill, "he displayed the wisdom of a statesman, the qualities of a commander, the courage of a hero and the endurance of a martyr.----Savinkov seemed to be the appointed agent of Russian salvation." That was how Winston Churchill saw the Russian Revolution. Savinkov has disappeared into the mists of history. Nobody remembers him as a great Russian except Mr. Churchill.

It is difficult to understand how Trotsky, if he had "the ferocity of Jack the Ripper" could have been "a dull, squalid figure." Trotsky was anything but that. Consistency was never Churchill's strong point. But one might have expected him to remember what he had written on a previous page. He contradicted himself. His nightmare had again overcome him. These fantasies of Sidney Street mixed up with the French Revolution must be recognized-as hysteria, not history.

Churchill could not even write an essay on Bernard Shaw without going off at a tangent and raving about Russia. Shaw had obligingly tried to educate Winston on the economics of Socialism and had hopefully sent him *The Intelligent Women's Guide to Socialism*. Shaw overrated his powers of persuasion. Winston desired no guide, and he was not an intelligent woman. He had worked himself up to the pitch that he believed that Socialism-meant a firing squad and was determined that nothing would shift him from it. Shaw's visit to Moscow again precipitated the delirium. Winston wrote: "The massed bands blared. Loud cheers, from sturdy proletarians rent the welkin.----Commissar Luna-charsky delivered a flowery harangue. Commissar Litvinov, un-mindful of the food queues in the back streets, prepared a sumptuous banquet" (surely Shaw did not enjoy it) "and Arch. Commissar Stalin 'the man of steel' flung open the closely guarded sanctuaries of the Kremlin and, pushing aside his morning's budget of death warrants and *lettres de cachet*, received his guests with, smiles of overflowing comradeship."

Winston himself was to arrive at the Kremlin later, an experience we shall presently describe. But in 1935 Stalin was numbered among his ogres, and the fact that Shaw had visited him in Russia sent Winston into two pages of sustained execration. Shaw had visited a land "where God is blasphemed, where man, plunged in this world's misery, is denied the hope of mercy on both sides of the grave, where there is a power ceaselessly engaged in trying to overturn existing civilisations by stealth, by propaganda, by bloody force." Curious how Winston should have been so worried about "bloody force"; did he not believe in it too?

No—Shaw definitely was not among Winston's heroes. Give him the men of blood and iron so long as they were not bloodthirsty Bolsheviks. Foch, Haig, Clemenceau, Hindenburg, Mussolini, Hitler,—he raised his hat to them; they belonged to his world.

## CHAPTER XX

### Churchill and Chamberlain

**M**R. CHURCHILL'S disciples had no reason to complain of lack of epistles. He continued to write exhortations and expostulations in fortnightly articles to Lord Beaverbrook's Evening Standard which were syndicated to the provincial papers, to Europe and America. Churchill was probably one of the most widely read and best-paid columnists in the world.

These materials he published in 1939 in book form under the title *Step by Step*, stating that he had not omitted a single letter in any essential. He prided himself on the fact that his comments and forecasts had been vindicated, adding: "It is a gratification to me that His Majesty's Government have at length by leisurely progress along their own paths of thought adopted even to detail the policy and theme set forth. I cannot conceal my sorrow that they did not read these conclusions earlier."

Along with his speeches in Parliament, they are pointed to by Churchill idolaters that he was right in the years before the war, when Baldwin and Neville Chamberlain were fumbling and procrastinating in a way that ultimately and inevitably led to war. Winston Churchill, they say, was the far seeing patriot who courageously protested against Chamberlain's policy of appeasement. In contrast to Neville Chamberlain, who yielded to Hitler, sold Czechoslovakia and yielded to Mussolini, Winston Churchill is held up to our admiration as the man who saw the red light and warned the world that the war was coming and that we should be prepared to meet it. Yet it had been Churchill who had most bitterly attacked Mussolini's plan for a four-power pact in 1933, the most statesmanlike plan submitted for peacefully revising the post-war treaties, holding Hitler in check, and preserving the peace of Europe.

When it was decided to appoint a Minister of Defence, Churchill was suggested, but although Austen Chamberlain was in favour of giving him the office Neville was not. Austen wrote in his diary: "In my view there is only one man who by his studies and special abilities and aptitudes is marked out for it, and that man is Winston Churchill. I don't suppose that S. B. will offer it to him, and I don't think Neville would wish to have him back, but they are both wrong. He is the right man for the post, and in such dangerous times that consideration ought to be decisive."

There are few people who will argue in the light of events that Neville Chamberlain was a great Prime Minister. But it must be remembered that Churchill was the man who strongly advocated that Chamberlain should succeed Baldwin. When Baldwin resigned Winston claimed the right to second the nomination, made by Lord Derby, the Tory landlord peer. Neville Chamberlain had been Chancellor of the Exchequer and had come to be regarded as the next Prime Minister. Churchill was not even in the Government. He might have had some private thoughts about his own qualifications for the Premiership, but the Tories did not want him. They regarded him as an irresponsible and not an asset to their party in the country. He was, however, allowed to second the nomination of Chamberlain and to pay a tribute to "his prudent, austere, skilful and vigorous administration of the Exchequer." He continued:

Any Chancellor of the Exchequer naturally finds as his normal business that he should resist and criticise and canvass expenditure, particularly expenditure on what are called unproductive channels. But when the late Government were at length convinced—you will pardon my "at length"—of the urgent need to rearm against the danger in which we stood and still stand, no one was more active than Mr. Chamberlain.

Indeed, no one was so active in pressing forward the policy of rearmament and in providing the immense supplies of money which had been rendered available, largely through his own foresight and prudence.



We feel sure that the leader we are about to choose, as a distinguished Parliamentarian and House of Commons man, will not resent honest differences about methods of administration, which must inevitably from time to time arise among those who mean the same thing.

I will also say that I feel sure that his great experience of the party and all its branches, and all its organisation, will make it certain that party opinion will not be denied; that if subordinate it will still have its rightful place in the mind of the leader. We have to combat the wolf of Socialism, and we shall be able to do it far more effectively as a pack of hounds than as a flock of sheep.

This was regarded as an attempt to get on the right side of the obstinate Neville and a bid for a post in the new Cabinet. Lord Salisbury and others supported the movement to bring Winston back into the Government, but there was no response from Downing Street. Chamberlain thought that it might be necessary to appease Hitler, not Churchill.

Neville Chamberlain was trying to persuade Hitler that he was a man of peace. Indeed, some people have even referred to him as though he were a pacifist. Chamberlain was nothing of the kind. He thought he could carry a program of rearmament and be a man of peace at the same time.

There could be no misunderstanding by anyone who had read *Mein Kampf* that, if Hitler intended to carry out the policy outlined in his book, it meant war. What Hitler thought was that he could avoid war on two fronts, the war which the German general staff dreaded. He knew how much the British Tories hated Russia and he knew that Churchill's hostility to Communism amounted to a disease. Indeed, had not Churchill himself advocated building up Germany as a bulwark against Russia, and was not this exactly what the Nazis were doing? Hitler calculated that a British Government and a Tory Party which had got into power as a result of a forged Zinoviev letter, and regarded the Bolshevik bogey as its most priceless election asset, would never be in an alliance with the Bolsheviks against him. How could Churchill ever make common cause with Stalin? How could British Tories and Russian Communists combine in a common cause? That was how Hitler and Goebbels argued, and of course, in the 1930's they had good reasons for their theory.

One looks in vain in Churchill's writings from 1936 until the eve of the war to find any persistent advocacy of a military alliance with Russia such as existed before 1914. The Russians were asking for this, and however much Churchill hated the Bolsheviks, one might have expected him to have been interested in an alliance with Russia as a check to Hitler if he really feared the Führer. Had he not been an enthusiastic believer in the Russian steamroller in 1914 and 1915? Had he not been a great believer in the strategic importance of Russia when he was prepared to take the gamble of the Dardanelles? Did he not realize that the Russians had millions of trained soldiers and capable generals? He was to discover this later, but his hatred of the Communists made him turn a blind eye even to Russia as a potential ally in the event of war with Hitler. Even when he wrote about the dress rehearsal for the World War in Spain he could not disguise the fact that his ideological sympathies were more with Hitler's protégé Franco than with the Left. Of the Spanish Civil War, he could write (August 10, 1936):

Two new Spains are struggling for mastery. Two antagonistic modern systems are in mortal grapple. Fascism combats Communism. The spirit and prowess of Mussolini and Hitler strive with those of Trotsky and Bela Kun.

Here is no class conflict, no ordinary division of the poor and the rich, of the have-nots against the haves. All the national and martial forces in Spain have been profoundly stirred by the rise of Mussolini to Imperial power in the Mediterranean. Italian methods are a guide. Italian achievements are a Sphinx.

Shall Spain, the greatest empire in the world when Italy was a mere bunch of disunited petty princedoms, now sink into the equalitarian squalor of a Communist State or shall it resume its place among the great Powers of the world? Here is a living appeal to the youth and manhood of a proud people. The old Spain fell with the monarchy. The parliamentary constitution has led to a chaos of blood and fire. Who will make a new Spain and in what form? This is the issue which it seems must be fought to an indubitable decision.

Even Franco could not have put his case better than that. No wonder Franco's press repeated these rhetorical questions and supplied the answers.

Churchill went on to ask, "What is to be the course of France and Britain? Whoever wins in Spain, freedom and free democracy must be the losers. A revived Fascist Spain in closest sympathy with Italy and Germany is one land of disaster; a Communist Spain spreading its snaky tentacles through Portugal and France is another, and many will think it worse."

But Churchill was not in favour of British intervention. Franco was not a great Christian hero like Koltchak or a saviour of the world like Mussolini. Britain had no surplus store of old armaments to spare even for shooting the Spanish Reds. So his advice was to keep out. His reinforcements for Franco were purely rhetorical. What a pity he had not displayed a similar caution towards the civil war in Russia. Attlee went out to Spain to show his approval of Spanish democracy; there was an Attlee but not a Churchill Battalion in the International Brigade.

A fortnight later, Churchill expressed unmitigated horror at the bloodshed in Spain. Send charitable aid under the Red Cross to both sides, and for the rest, "keep out and arm" was his advice. Later on, De Valera came to very much the same conclusion about the Second World War. This noninterventionism was quite a new note for Winston Churchill; the brutality and horror of the war in Spain for some unexplained reason appeared to sicken and revolt him. Let us give due credit to Churchill the humanitarian. He seemed to be in favour of keeping out of one war.

Some two weeks after this (September 4, 1936) Churchill's article was entitled "Enemies to the Left" and devoted to the Moscow trials: "Many people unable to be shocked at the long delayed expiation of these miscreants who have bitterly sent uncounted thousands of good men to their doom were nevertheless sickened at the elaborate farce of their trial. What is the effect of this butchery upon Russia as a military factor in the balance of Europe? Clearly Soviet Russia has moved decidedly from Communism. This is a lurch to the Right."

While wondering how a change in Russian policy would affect its position in Europe, he had not yet arrived at the conclusion that from a military point of view, it might be wise to be polite, if not to be friendly, towards the Soviet Union. If Stalin had made "a lurch to the Right" could they not meet on common ground? Perhaps this thought went through Winston's mind, but he certainly did not develop it. He had not yet arrived at the conclusion that anyone who was prepared to kill Germans should be welcomed as a new friend. Everywhere he saw countries getting ready for war. "Everywhere the manufacture of munitions proceeds apace and science burrows its insulted head in the filth of slaughterous inventions. Only unarmed, unthinking Britain nurses the illusion of security."

But was Britain in reality only the dove of peace among the birds of prey? The British navy was certainly strong. Writing fifteen months later, Churchill himself stated that the navy was strong and that "even during the years of disarmament at least £ 50,000,000 sterling was spent every year upon keeping in order the plant and organization already stabilized on the largest scale." Certainly there had never been any disarmament as far as the navy was concerned.

As for the army, as Churchill proceeded to point out, it had to be considered in relation to the French army, which he thought was strong. It had been assumed since 1918 that, in the event of

a war in Europe, we would be fighting on the side of the French, and the plans for the army had been based on this assumption. The air force might have been considered weak in relation to that of the new German air force, but the Tory chief of the Air Ministry maintained that the air force was as strong as they could make it. Later the illusion became general that Britain went into the war almost unarmed. But on January 7, 1938, nearly two years before war came, Churchill boasted, "Money for defence is certainly pouring out in all directions in Britain."

How then could Churchill talk about "unarmed Britain"? Even the Ramsay MacDonald governments had repudiated unilateral disarmament. In fact, disarmament never had been the policy of any British government. Between the wars the British taxpayers spent enormous sums on the army, navy and air force. Whether they got value for their money is a different matter. And if they did not, it was Churchill's party that was largely responsible.

The First Lord of the Admiralty had introduced in 1936 estimates showing an increase of £9,880,000 over the previous year and an increase of more than 6,000 men for the year 1937. Far from favouring disarmament, Mr. A. V. Alexander, former Labour First Lord of the Admiralty, had declared in the Daily Herald (November 7, 1935): "Every one of the twelve battleships is armoured as well as any ship in the world"; and in the debate Lord Stanley, the First Lord, paid a tribute to Mr. Alexander's naval program. He said: "I must pay a tribute to Mr. Alexander because in this matter we are following the lead which he gave when he was First Lord of the Admiralty." This hardly fits in with the theory that under the MacDonald Labour Government we followed a program of unilateral disarmament.

In 1936, the Air Estimates were introduced by Sir Philip Sassoon, who said in his speech:

The estimates that I have the honour of introducing to the House this afternoon at a gross total of approximately £43,000,000 and a net total of £39,000,000 are by far the largest that Parliament has had to vote to the Air Ministry since the war. This is indeed a melancholy reaction from the high aspirations with which the Disarmament Conference opened at Geneva four years ago.

So far from Britain being disarmed in the air in 1936 the first line strength of the Air Force will have been doubled in the short space of two years, I do not think any fighting force has ever been set a comparable task in time of peace.

The estimate provided for 45,000 men for the air force. This was surely not disarmament in the air.

Had the army been so reduced as to be disarmed? Introducing the Army Estimates for 1936, the Secretary of State for War, Mr. Duff Cooper, made an elaborate survey of the role of the British army in any future war and estimated for an army of 158,000 men (excluding India). The Labour Party did not advocate disarmament, but an army of 152,000.

Neither proposal meant disarmament. On the contrary, Mr. Duff Cooper's estimates provided for the mechanization of eight cavalry regiments and the reorganization of the Tank Brigade. The estimates showed an increase of £ 6,000,000. It was the highest for thirteen years.

Nobody who read the Parliamentary debates on the service estimates for 1936 could agree with Churchill's description in September that year of "unarmed, unthinking Britain." She had plunged into the arms race like the Continental nations. That is the main defect of Churchill as an historian; his assertions are so often inconsistent with facts. In his diary in October, 1936, Neville Chamberlain had written: "If we were to follow Winston's advice and sacrifice our commerce to the manufacture of arms we should inflict a certain injury on our trade from which it would take generations to recover, we should destroy the confidence which now happily exists and we should cripple the revenue."

It is true that Churchill was at times critical of his party, but certainly they did not pursue a policy of disarmament. They opposed it at Geneva when the Germans were in favour of Litvinov's famous disarmament plan. The Tories rejected disarmament as a policy when both Germany and Russia had governments which were prepared to agree to it. Both Germans and Russians were later to overtake Britain in the arms race, but this was after she had rejected disarmament proposals under the belief that the Allies who had won the First World War would always be the stronger armed powers.

American military experts have revealed the fact that Churchill's criticisms of alleged British and French lag in armament and his allegations about overwhelming German superiority and activity in armament were utterly without foundation. Churchill repeated them even when he had ample opportunity to know better. Even as late as his post-war book *The Gathering Storm*, Churchill wrote: "It is probable that in this last year before the outbreak, Germany manufactured at least double, and possibly treble, the munitions of Britain and France put together, and also that her great plants for tank production reached full capacity."

An official report submitted to the Secretary of the Army of the United States in October, 1947, entitled *Foreign Logistical Organizations and Methods* exposed the gross inaccuracy of Churchill's figures and charges. The Germans were far from fully mobilized for any protracted war when hostilities broke out in 1939, and British production of airplanes and tanks equalled or exceeded that of Nazi Germany. In 1938, for example, Germany produced only 5,235 military aircraft of all types and 3,340 combat planes. In 1939, Germany produced 8,925 military planes of all types and 4,733 combat planes; England in the same year produced over 8,000 military planes. In the four months after the war started, Germany produced only 247 tanks and self-propelled guns, while the British produced 314 tanks. It is generally believed that most of German industry after 1936 was diverted to war materials. But an American scholar, Dr. Burton Klein, maintained in the *American Economic Review* (March, 1948) that Germany devoted little, if any, more of her production to war preparations than did France and England from 1936 to 1939.

In their pro-Ally and anti-revisionist volume *The Challenge to Isolation*, the American professors William L. Langer and S. Everett Gleason offer the final refutation of Churchill's absurd charges of overwhelming German armament in 1939:

There can now be little doubt that the Germans in 1939 were far from being prepared for a long war on a large scale. Their current war production was inferior to that of the combined British and French and they had remarkably little in the way of reserves. Of the hundred divisions they put into the field against Poland only three were mechanized and none completely motorized. In a word, the Germans were equipped for a two-month Blitzkrieg, such as they waged in Poland. They were by no means equipped for the type of war in which they became involved.

## CHAPTER XXI

### Prophecies and Alarms

**W**HEN Germany and Japan signed the Anti-Comintern Pact, Churchill gave a sigh of relief. In an article (November 27, 1936) he declared: "The danger of a Russo-German arrangement at the expense of the Western Democracies has definitely receded." He was hopeful that the purges in Russia meant a retreat from Communism. Churchill could now write about—

... the great mass of the Russian power with its national spirit, its large, vigorous, well-equipped armies, its desire to be left alone, its resolve to resist invasion or dismemberment. Now surely the time has come when Russia should choose once and for all her path to safety. Stalin with the

chiefs of the Russian Army and the leaders of Russian foreign policy, should disperse and eradicate the Comintern. They should present themselves to Europe as a Soviet Socialist state strongly armed to maintain its national independence and absolutely divorced from any idea of spreading its doctrines abroad, otherwise than by example.

This was a new note of comparative politeness hitherto absent from Churchill's references to Russia. It is instructive to note that Stalin's bloody purges of 1936-38, which were surely far more extensive than those of "Jack the Ripper" Trotsky, did not enrage Churchill. Indeed, they appeared to give him no little comfort and satisfaction. The liquidation of the old Bolsheviks had given him a faint hope that a nationalist Russia with "well-equipped armies" could be of service in the event of a war with Germany. He was prepared to forget if not to forgive. If Stalin would only dissolve the Comintern and provide armies on the eastern front, Churchill was prepared to overlook his "morning budget of death warrants." After all, was not Stalin a much more respectable figure than Trotsky? Stalin had, at least, not written contemptuous articles about Churchill. This prospect of having Russia as an ally against Hitler was certainly worth considering.

By October 15, 1937, Churchill had come to the conclusion that war was not imminent. He wrote:

Three or four years ago I was myself a loud alarmist. I tried to bring home to all the dangers that were coming upon all the world, and to arouse Parliament, and the Government who were misleading Parliament [the Tory Government], to the need of rearming. In those days the danger was distant and the time ample. Now the dangers are more clearly denned and at the same time great exertions are being made to meet them. This, therefore, is not the time to exaggerate dangers. On the contrary they must be faced with courage. In spite of the risks which wait on prophecy I declare my belief that a major war is not imminent and I still believe there is a good chance of no major war taking part in our time.

In his articles he was now patting himself on the back as one of the major political prophets. He cheered himself up for his relapses into gloom over the situation in Europe by recording his satisfaction that hi Britain the tide of Socialism was ebbing:

The largest possible electorates have repeatedly yielded the largest recorded Conservative majorities.----The long series of by-elections and six years of power held by one set of men and forces, have all told the same tale. The Socialist Labour Party, not only in its extreme varieties, but in its most moderate forms, seems to have reached the limits of its expansion.

That was how Churchill summed up the situation in British politics in 1937. He believed that the Labour Party was going to remain in the permanent minority that it had been placed as a result of the scare-and-stunt elections, and that Socialism was "the ebbing tide." His article ended hi the following vein: "The fact that there is really no difference between the political parties and among all classes, upon British rearmament, carries with it the best pledge for the future and the surest hope that the noble ship of freedom will escape the rocks, round the point and sail into the open sea."

Hitler was telling the Germans at the same time exactly the same thing—though in less romantic language. Rearmament was the thing. If you want peace, prepare for war. Germany must be strong. Security depends on who has the most tanks, planes, and the largest armies, and is most prepared for battle. That was what Mussolini said, too. That was what they all said. So they rearmed, explaining to their peoples that this was done because the other nations were doing so. Was there—in spite of Churchill's protestations of faith in democracy—much fundamental difference between the mentality of Churchill and that of Mussolini and Hitler? True, Churchill did not wear a black shirt or a brown one, but he had paid his tribute to the "patriotism" of both the dictators. Italian and German big business backed Mussolini and Hitler because the dictators Bad saved it from Communism. In Britain the technique was different; the Federation of British

Industries and the City of London had no need to back Sir Oswald Mosley so long as the Tories were in power. The Krupps and Thyssen backed Adolf Hitler; the British armament firms were doing well out of the rearmament program urged on the Government by Winston Churchill. For the working classes of Europe this meant less butter and more guns and war at the end of it.

By May, 1938, Churchill's new note of politeness towards Russia had become admiration of her military strength. Writing about Japan's war in China, he said:

Here we must recognise the services which Soviet Russia is rendering in the Far East to civilisation and also to British and United States interests. Russia is holding the best army of Japan gripped upon her front. At the same time, by a wonderful motor road from Russian Turkestan to the Chinese western province of Kansu, and thence on into the heart of China, a constant stream of lorries carry Russian munitions to the Chinese forces. Half a million coolies toil continuously upon this road and some at least of the weapons of modern war are placed in the hands of those who are defending their native soil. It is certainly neither in the interests of the British Empire nor of world peace that this traffic should stop. The Western Democracies should recognise the part Soviet Russia, albeit for her own purposes, is playing in the Far East.

By September 15, 1938, Churchill went so far as to suggest that Great Britain, France and Russia, with the moral sympathy of the United States should present a simultaneous note to Herr Hitler personally, setting forth that an attack on Czechoslovakia should be met by common action, ". . . and if this were done there would be good hopes, if not indeed almost a certainty, of warding off the catastrophe which may so easily engulf our civilisation."

Chamberlain, however, was not in any mood to take this advice. The fate of Czechoslovakia was to be decided without Russia's being invited to the discussions. The Tories still kept Russia at arm's length, even when Churchill was prepared to agree to a plan for common action. Yet Churchill could not refrain from paying another tribute to Hitler:

We must learn to draw from misfortune the means of future strength. There must not be lacking in our leadership something of that spirit of the Austrian corporal who, when all had fallen into ruins about him, and when Germany seemed to have fallen forever into chaos, did not hesitate to march forth against the vast array of victorious nations and has already turned the tables so decisively upon them.

And, if called upon, Winston was ready to supply that spirit. But no call to him from the Tory government was coming yet. The Tories were quite prepared to allow him to continue his role as the growling British bulldog, but they thought that the place of the bulldog was not hi the dining-room but in the kennel outside. Mr. Keith Feiling, Chamberlain's biographer, tells us that the Prime Minister noted in his diary: "Churchill's chances [of entering the Government] improve as war becomes more probable and vice versa."

As long as the Prime Minister was pursuing his policy of appeasement, Churchill could hardly expect to be allowed inside the Cabinet, for he had become one of its most notable critics. He regarded Neville Chamberlain's agreement with Hitler not as a prelude to "peace in our time" but as a major defeat, and said so.

On December 1, 1938, he wrote about "the grey aftermath of Munich" and speculated on the extent to which "the bloodless conquest and virtual absorption of Czechoslovakia have transformed the military position of France. All her system of alliances in Eastern Europe has collapsed and can never be reconstituted, except, perhaps, after a lapse of years and in an entirely different form."

The whole structure of the Versailles Treaty had collapsed like a pack of cards, and to all intents and purposes the 1914-18 war had been fought in vain. The policy of keeping Germany ringed

round with armed force had failed. Churchill had become critical of the ruling classes of France. He wrote. "The reasons why France does not present herself in her full strength at the present time are not to be found among the working masses, who are also the soldiers of France, but in certain strata of the middle class and the well-to-do. Something of this kind can also be seen in Britain."

A fortnight later he discussed the position of Poland, which had temporarily gained at the expense of Czechoslovakia but was obviously to be Hitler's next victim:

Russia is a mystery and a riddle, which none may read. The part Russia has played in the Far East deserves the respect of both Great Britain and the United States. What Russia can do or will in Europe in the event or in the advent of her soil being invaded, no man can tell. He would indeed be foolish to write it down as negligible.

On March 9, 1939, he noted with cordial approval that Mr. Chamberlain— had paid a visit to the Soviet Embassy in London, which betokens the new interest which Great Britain is taking in the possibilities of increased trade and co-operation with Russia. We may look, therefore, with hope to what is happening in the East of Europe, as well as to the growing strength across the Atlantic, as increasing guarantees against a breakdown of civilisation this year.

Not only was he now quite pleased to see the Prune Minister shaking "the blood-stained hand of Bolshevism," he was looking to Russia to prevent "the breakdown of civilisation."

A fortnight later Churchill's hopes had again been dashed by Hitler's invasion and annexation of Czechoslovakia. Chamberlain definitely abandoned his appeasement policy. British guarantees were given to Poland and Rumania, and negotiations were opened with Russia. Churchill wrote:

The power and influence of Russia may well be underrated. The loyal attitude of the Soviets to the cause of peace, and their obvious interest in resisting the Nazi advance to the Black Sea, impart a feeling of encouragement to all the Eastern States now menaced by the maniacal dreams of Berlin.

On May 4 Churchill dealt with the position of Poland. He wrote:

The preservation and integrity of Poland must be regarded as a cause commanding the regard of all the world. There is every reason to believe that the Polish nation intend to fight for life and freedom. They have a fine army, of which now more than a million men are mobilised. The Poles have always fought well, and an army which comprehends its cause is doubly strong.

It is worthwhile at this point to emphasize the fact that Churchill, along with many other British publicists and politicians, had been one of the most outspoken critics of the creation of the Polish Corridor as one of the most unpardonable mistakes of the Treaty of Versailles and one which had to be rectified if peace were to be maintained. In the House of Commons on April 13, 1933, Churchill had said: "Many people would like to see, or would have liked to see a little while ago—I was one of them—the question of the Polish Corridor adjusted. For my part, I should certainly have considered that to be one of the greatest practical objectives of European peace-seeking diplomacy." Hitler's 1939 demand for the return of Danzig and a motor road across the Polish Corridor was actually less drastic than the "adjustment" which Churchill and other English leaders had suggested in previous years.

The Poles in the summer of 1939 were deeply suspicious of Soviet Russia, and Churchill appealed to them to agree to a Russian alliance. He wrote:

It must be vividly impressed upon the Government of Poland that the accession of Soviet Russia in good earnest to the peace bloc of nations may be decisive in preventing war, and will in any case be necessary for ultimate success. One understands readily the Polish policy of balancing

between the German and the Russian neighbour, but from the moment when the Nazi malignity is plain, a definite association between Poland and Russia becomes indispensable.---There is no means of maintaining an Eastern front against Nazi aggression without the active aid of Russia. Russian interests are deeply concerned in preventing Herr Hitler's designs in Eastern Europe. It should still be possible to range all the states and peoples from the Baltic to the Black Sea in one solid front against a new outrage or invasion. Such a front, if established in good heart and with resolute and efficient military arrangements, combined with the force of the Western Powers, may yet confront Hitler, Goering, Himmler, Ribbentrop, Goebbels and company with forces the German people would be reluctant to challenge.

Churchill had been rather late in coming to this conclusion. The wheel had now turned full circle. It was Churchill who had backed Poland in its attack on Russia in 1920 and had written (Evening News, January 28, 1920):

A poisoned Russia, an infected Russia, a plague-bearing Russia, a Russia of armed hordes smiting not only with bayonet and cannon but accompanied and preceded by the swarms of typhus-bearing vermin which slay the bodies of men, and political doctrines which destroy the health and even the soul of nations. If the Bolsheviks do not, for the moment, overwhelm with armies, they can undermine with propaganda. The peasants are roused against the landlords, the workmen against their employers, the railways and public services induced to strike, the soldiers are incited to mutiny and kill their officers, the mobs are raised against the middle classes to murder them, to plunder their houses, to steal their belongings, to debauch their wives, and carry off their children, an elaborate network of secret societies entangles honest political action, the Press is bought wherever possible.----The ruin and collapse of Poland either from external violence or internal subversion, and the incorporation of Poland as a whole in the Russian Bolshevik system, would sweep away the barrier on which so much depends and would bring Russia and Germany into direct and immediate contact.

That had been Churchill's nightmare less than twenty years before; it was still the nightmare of the Polish Government to which Churchill was now making his frantic appeal to welcome the Bolshevik government as an ally in order to save Poland

## **PART FOUR**

### **The Bulldog in the Second World War**

#### **CHAPTER XXII**

##### **Munich—And War**

**I**N the debate on the Munich Agreement signed on October 5, 1938, between Neville Chamberlain and Hitler, Winston Churchill delivered a speech which was in essence a comprehensive indictment of the Tory Government's foreign policy and its attitude towards Hitler. He declared that Britain had to go back to the time of Ethelred the Unready for a precedent for short sightedness and incompetence. He added:

We are in the presence of a disaster of the first magnitude which has befallen Great Britain and France.

When I think of the fair hopes of a long peace which lay before Europe at the beginning of 1933 when Herr Hitler first obtained power, and of all the opportunities of arresting the growth of the Nazi power which have been neglected or squandered, I cannot believe that a parallel exists in the whole course of history. So far as this country is concerned the responsibility must rest on



those who have the undisputed control of our political affairs. They neither prevented Germany from rearming nor did they rearm themselves in time. They quarrelled with Italy without saving Ethiopia. They exploited and discredited the vast institutions of the League of Nations and they neglected to make alliances and combinations which might have repaired previous errors; thus they left us in the hour of trial without adequate national defence and effective international security.

Churchill presumably would have gone to war with Germany at the time of Munich. The reply of Chamberlain's defenders was that this would have been directly against the advice of the French chiefs of staff, and that Britain and France were unprepared for a major European war. In a military sense, Churchill was right this time. Hitler could much more easily have been defeated in 1938 than in 1939. In 1938 he would have had against him not only the forces of Britain and France but also those of Czechoslovakia and the Little Entente, together with the Russian army, if its services would have been accepted. In 1939, Czechoslovakia had disappeared as a military factor and Russia had entered into a treaty with Nazi Germany.

Later defenders of Chamberlain have argued that the planes which saved Britain during the Battle of Britain were not at that time ready and that a war at the time of Munich, before Britain had rearmed, would have been disastrous. The British Ambassador at Berlin, Sir Nevile Henderson, said (The Times, November 25, 1940) that at the time of the Munich Conference, "Goering told me that London had only 14 anti-aircraft guns and nothing to prevent Germany from dropping 1,000 to 2,000 bombs a day on London."

Chamberlain's policy was to keep on negotiating with Hitler and to carry on the policy of appeasement. Churchill was prepared to take the gamble of war whether rearmament had been completed or not. More and more he came to be regarded by the Nazis as their British Enemy No. 1. When it became ever more obvious that Hitler was contemptuously breaking his promises, Chamberlain decided to guarantee Poland in March, 1939.

In the debate following this announcement early in April, 1939, Churchill declared himself "in the most complete agreement with the Prime Minister" over the offer to Poland. It was Lloyd George who protested:

If we go in without the help of Russia we are walking into a trap. I cannot understand why, before we committed ourselves to this tremendous enterprise, we did not beforehand secure the adherence of Russia. I ask the Government to take immediate steps to secure the adherence of Russia to fraternity in an alliance, an agreement, a pact—it does not matter what it is so long as it is an understanding that we will stand together against the aggressors. Apart from that we have undertaken a frightful gamble, a very risky one.

Later on, when Poland had been overrun, Lloyd George, in an article in the Sunday Express (September 24, 1939), wrote: "The Chief of our General Staff was abroad in France when this hare brained pledge was given. I have reason to believe that on his return he and his advisers pointed out that we did not possess the means to redeem it." In this article, Lloyd George blamed the Prime Minister (Neville Chamberlain):

Hitler having fooled him, he felt that he must do something to recover his lost prestige, so he rushed into the first rash and silly enterprise that entered his uninformed mind. He guaranteed Poland, Roumania and Greece against the huge army of Germany.

It looked magnificent, but men who had some knowledge of the problems pointed out to him that it was not war. I was the first to call attention to that obvious fact in the House of Commons. I denounced it as sheer madness to give such a pledge in the absence of military support from Russia.

Winston Churchill, however, had announced his public approval of the guarantee to Poland, with which he was "in complete agreement." It was this guarantee to Poland that plunged us into war in September, 1939. In an article in *John Bull* entitled "The Great Illusions of 1939," Captain Liddell Hart, the eminent military writer and historian, makes the following comment on Churchill's account of the collapse of Poland in his war memoirs:

Describing the collapse of Poland in his memoirs, Churchill says: "Neither in France nor in Britain had there been any effective comprehension of the consequences of the new fact that armoured vehicles could be made capable of withstanding artillery fire, and could advance a hundred miles a day." That statement is only too true, in so far as it applies to the bulk of the senior soldiers and statesmen of both countries. But he fails to mention that it was in Britain, first of all, that these new potentialities had been visualised and explained, publicly and unceasingly, by a small band of progressive military thinkers.

In his latest volume, dealing with the collapse of France in 1940, Churchill makes the notable, if qualified admission: "Not having had access to official information for so many years, I did not comprehend the violence of the revolution effected since the last war by the incursion of a mass of fast-moving heavy armour. I knew about it, but it had not altered my inward conviction as it should have done."

Liddell Hart does not think Churchill's apology convincing. He continues:

It is an extraordinary confession, coming from the man who had played so great a part in sponsoring the tank in the first World War. The admission is honourable in its frankness, but the initial excuse is weak. For he had been Chancellor of the Exchequer up to 1929, while our Experimental Armoured Force, the first in the world, had been formed in 1927 to try out the new theories which the exponents of high-speed tank warfare had been preaching for several years before that. He was fully acquainted with their ideas, and had visited the Experimental Force at work. Even after leaving the Government, he always seemed to have a remarkable degree of "access to official information."

In any case this was not of great importance, since backward ideas prevailed in the higher official circles in the War Office. But during these later years Churchill frequently had talks with the exponents of the fast-tank idea, at any rate with General Fuller and myself, besides having read what we had written.

Lack of comprehension of the new idea of warfare, and official resistance to it, was even greater in France than in England. And greater in Poland than in France. That incomprehension was the root of the failure of both armies in 1939, and of the French again, more -disastrously, in 1940.

The Poles were antiquated in their ruling military ideas, and also to a large extent in the pattern of their forces. They still pinned their trust to the value of a large mass of horsed cavalry, and cherished a pathetic belief in the possibility of carrying out cavalry charges.

Liddell Hart concludes with this devastating comment on Churchill's attitude towards Poland at the time:

The lesson of 1939 can be summed up in two sentences. In the East a hopelessly out-of-date army was quickly disintegrated by a small tank force, which put into practice a novel technique, while, in the West, a slow-motion army could not develop any effective pressure before it was too late.

Dealing with our entry into the war—after describing how we allowed Germany to rearm and then to swallow Austria and Czecho-Slovakia, while at the same time spurning Russia's proposals for joint action, Churchill says in his memoirs:

"And now, when every one of these aids and advantages has been squandered and thrown away, Great Britain advances, leading France by the hand, to guarantee the integrity of Poland—of that very Poland which with hyena appetite had only six months before joined in the pillage and destruction of the Czechoslovak State.

'There was sense in fighting for Czechoslovakia in 1938 when the German Army could scarcely put half a dozen trained divisions on the Western Front, when the French, with nearly sixty or seventy divisions, could most certainly have rolled forward across the Rhine or into the Ruhr. But this had been judged unreasonable, rash, below the level of modern intellectual thought and morality.

"Yet now at last the two Western Democracies declared themselves ready to stake their lives upon the territorial integrity of Poland. History, which we are told is mainly the record of the crimes, follies and miseries of mankind, may be scoured and ransacked to find a parallel to this sudden and complete reversal of five or six years' policy of easy-going placatory appeasement, and its transformation almost overnight into a readiness to accept an obviously imminent war on far worse conditions and on the greatest scale.----"Here was decision at last, taken at the worst possible moment and on the least satisfactory ground which must surely lead to the slaughter of tens of millions of people."

It is a striking verdict on our folly. Churchill himself had, in the heat of the moment, vigorously applauded Chamberlain's pressing offer of our guarantee to Poland. Why? He attempts no adequate explanation.

It is only too evident that in 1939 he, like most of Britain's leaders, acted on a hot-headed impulse, instead of with the cool-headed judgment that was formerly characteristic of British statesmanship.

So we have the conclusion of one of the great contemporary military writers that on this issue Churchill acted on "hot-headed impulse" and not with the cool-headed judgment that is surely required before a great nation is plunged into war. Britain had guaranteed Poland without having come to any agreement with Russia. Stalin, suspicious of the Chamberlain Government, signed the Russo-German Pact with Hitler. Poland was invaded. Britain declared war on Germany September 3.

Churchill passed a hasty and rash judgment on Russia at the time of the Russo-Finnish war. Stalin had made his pact with Hitler, had invaded Poland, and had made demands on Finland for strategic bases which resulted in war. Churchill had now completely changed his attitude towards Russia, to whom he had been referring politely during the previous year. He jumped to the conclusion that, in the light of the first reverses encountered by the Russians in Finland, the Red army was an inefficient fighting machine. In a broadcast speech (January 20, 1940) he showed that he could once again beat the anti-Russian drum as violently as he had done in the late '20's. His recently expressed admiration and respect for the Russian armies had evaporated. He said:

The service rendered by Finland to mankind is magnificent. They have exposed for all the world to see the military incapacity of the Red Army and of the Red Air Force. Many illusions about Soviet Russia have been dispelled by these fierce weeks of fighting in the Arctic Circle. Everyone can see how Communism rots the soul of a nation; how it makes it abject and hungry in peace and proves it base and abominable in war.

We cannot tell what the fate of Finland may be, but no more mournful spectacle could be presented to what is left of civilised mankind than that this splendid Northern race should be at last worn down and reduced to servitude worse than death by the dull, brutish force of overwhelming numbers.

If the light of freedom which burns so brightly in the frozen North should be finally quenched, it might well herald a return to the Dark Ages when every vestige of human progress during two thousand years would be engulfed.

At the time this Churchill oration sounded superb; later events showed that he had underestimated the Russian army as much as he had overestimated the French. He was in favour of sending a military force to help Finland, which was tantamount to declaring war on Russia.

The Chamberlain Government, of which Churchill had now become one of the most influential war ministers (as the new First Lord of the Admiralty), did send aircraft, guns, munitions to Finland and had ready an expeditionary force of 100,000 men, who were to be sent through Scandinavia in March and April. But the war with Finland collapsed suddenly, and the Finnish Government made peace. Had it not done so—and had the Scandinavian countries been prepared to let a British army pass through—England would have been involved with Russia in 1940. In the Swedish White Book we are told how the French informed the Swedish Government that they had made arrangements for the bombing of the Russian oilfields hi the Caucasus from air bases hi the Middle East. The date, March 15, was given.

It was certainly not Churchill's fault that we did not go to war with Russia as well as Germany in March, 1940. In his biography of Neville Chamberlain, Keith Feiling quotes from a letter written by Chamberlain which shows how far the British Government had gone to involve us hi war with Russia in 1940:

The Finns began by asking for fighter planes and we sent all the surplus we could lay hands on. They asked for A.A. guns and again we stripped our own imperfectly-armed home defences to help them. They asked for small arms ammunition and we gave them priority over our Army. They asked for later types of planes and we sent them 12 Hurricanes against the will and advice of our own Air Staff. They said that men were no good now, but that they would want 30,000 in the spring. We assembled—not 30,000, for the railways would not carry the equipment necessary for their maintenance, but a substantial force, very heavily armed.—That is ready to go now but we can't send it unless first the Finns ask for it, and second, the Norwegians and Swedes allow it a passage through their territory. Up to now, being pressed hard by the Swedes, the Finns have declined to ask for it, and the Norwegians and Swedes have flatly told us they won't let us through, the latter explaining they will withdraw their rolling stock and pull up a bit of railway.

Let those who believe hi the foresight of Winston Churchill and his genius as a war strategist reflect on this. They were saved by the refusals of the Norwegians and the Swedes and the collapse of Finland. The Government, in its hatred of Russia, had already sent planes against the advice of the Air Staff; "we had stripped our own imperfectly-armed A.A. defences" hi order to send anti-aircraft guns to the Finnish front.

If the Finnish war had gone on, the invasion program would probably have been carried out, and what would have happened to the fighters and the anti-aircraft guns used for defence in the Battle of Britain then? If war with Russia had developed, it is probable that the British expeditionary force would have been lost hi Finland, and Britain would have had a greater disaster than the Dardanelles. It would in all probability have prevented the later alliance between Russia and the West which ultimately brought about the downfall of Hitler and the defeat of Nazi Germany.

It is important to call attention at this point to the fact that it was Churchill who also suggested an aggressive attack on Norway before the Germans appear to have thought seriously of this plan. Churchill advocated this attack to shut off the supply of Swedish iron ore going to Germany. In the light of the fact that Field Marshal Keitel was hanged and Admiral Raeder was imprisoned for life by the Nuremberg Tribunal for this act of "aggressive war," it is interesting

to reflect upon what might have happened to Churchill if Germany had won the war. This whole subject is admirably treated by Lord Hankey in Chapter Four of his book, *Politics, Trials, and Errors*. Even the British Official History of the Second World War, which came out at the end of 1952, sets forth in detail the plan for the invasion of Norway approved by the British War Council on February 6, 1940. It involved the seizure of Narvik and the occupation by force of northern Norway and Sweden, and the seizure of the Swedish port of Lulea on the Baltic. (The Times summarized the Norway-campaign plan on December 10, 1952.)

## CHAPTER XXIII

### The Bulldog in Downing Street

**T**HE events that followed the German invasion of Norway brought down the Chamberlain Government and resulted in the formation of the National Coalition with Winston Churchill as Prime Minister.

On May 7 and 8, 1940, there was a stormy debate on the Chamberlain Government's conduct of the war. Chamberlain was assailed by prominent members of the Tory Party as well as by the Labour and Liberal opposition. Attlee denounced him as "over-complacent." He quoted from a leading article in the Times which had said that the Prime Minister's weakness has always been his devotion to colleagues who are either failures or need a rest. "In a life and death struggle," added Attlee, "we cannot afford to have our destinies in the hands of failures or men who need a rest. I am not sure that the Times is right in saying that this is the Prime Minister's weakness. I think it is a particular weakness of hon. Members on the benches opposite. They have seen failure after failure merely shifted along those benches either lower down or further up.---I say there is a widespread feeling in this country, not that we shall lose the war, that we shall win the war, but that to win the war we want different people at the helm from those who have led us into it."

A devastating attack on Chamberlain came from Mr. Amery, the arch-Tory imperialist. "We cannot go on as we are," he said; "there must be a change"; and he ended with the famous quotation from Cromwell, "You have sat too long for any good you have been doing. Depart, I say, and let us have done with you. In the name of God, go."

Oliver Stanley, the Secretary of State for War, defended the Government on the first day and Churchill was put up on the second day. A vigorous onslaught on the Tory Government was delivered by Lloyd George. Churchill intervened to say that he accepted "complete responsibility for everything that has been done by the Admiralty, and I take my full share of the burden."

Lloyd George retorted, "The right hon. Gentleman must not allow himself to be converted into an air-raid shelter to keep the splinters from hitting his colleagues." He ended, "I say solemnly that the Prime Minister should give an example of sacrifice, because there is nothing which can contribute more to victory in this war than he should sacrifice the seals of office."

Duff Cooper appealed to the Tories not to be influenced by the "eloquent and powerful speech" which Churchill was going to deliver, and recalled how he had attacked the Government when he was outside it. "He will be defending," he said, "with his eloquence, those who have so long refused to listen to his counsel, who treated his warnings with contempt and who refused to take him into their own confidence."

Churchill, however, ostensibly played the party game and in public loyally stuck by Chamberlain. It was absolutely wrong, said Churchill, to move the vote of censure. Exception had been taken because the Prime Minister had said he "appealed to his friends," "He thought he had some friends," said Churchill, "and I hope he has some friends. He certainly had a good many when

things were going well." To vote against the Government "would be most ungenerous and unworthy of the British character and the Conservative party."

It is doubtful if Churchill's support of Chamberlain was actually sincere in the light of our knowledge of his intense, if not insatiable, desire to become Prime Minister, in which ambition he had been encouraged not only by some English Tories but also very vigorously by prominent Americans like Bernard Baruch. It is probable that Churchill was well aware that Chamberlain was doomed in any event and made a generous public gesture in his support to make his own expected succession to the premiership seem in better taste and less exceptionable.

In the vote that followed, the figures were 281 against 200. Tories like Amery and Duff Cooper voted against Chamberlain. Others abstained. It was a severe blow to the Government. Chamberlain decided to resign. The Labour Party would not serve in a Coalition Government under Chamberlain but were prepared to do so under Churchill. The Labour Party Conference was in session at Bournemouth and endorsed the decision in an emergency resolution by a majority of 2,413,000 to 170,000. Attlee and Harold Laski worked hard to put Labour behind Churchill.

Only a few delegates went to the rostrum to oppose it. The official account of the Bournemouth Conference reports the speech in opposition by Emrys Hughes of the South Ayrshire D.L.P., who said the emergency resolution asked them to pass a vote of confidence in the new Prime Minister, Mr. Winston Churchill:

The resolution says the new Prime Minister commands the confidence of the nation. Even in wartime that is too much for me.

Mr. Churchill's public life had been in opposition to everything the Labour Party has ever stood for. Churchill would tell you honestly that he stands for Imperialism, which this conference is against. In his pamphlet on Peace Aims, Attlee says, "We do not seek the destruction or the dismemberment of Germany. We wish no ill to the German people." Churchill's policy is "We will break their hearts." In that Cabinet you will have two fundamentally irreconcilable points of view. . . . We have been told that when we were in opposition it was all right to oppose the Chamberlain Government but the Chamberlain Government has now suddenly become a democratic Government under the Premiership of Winston Churchill. Churchill is just as much a blatant reactionary as Chamberlain.---We shall have Labour once more making the fatal mistake of taking responsibility without power.



The Labour Party thus became, for the second time in its history, members of a wartime Coalition. They had accepted Churchill as a wartime leader. Attlee, Bevin, and Greenwood were given places in the inner War Cabinet.

In the new Government, Churchill was the dominating personality. The Labour Party had entered the Coalition and had accepted responsibility, but the personnel of the House of Commons remained unchanged. Under the party truce, it had been agreed that when a member of any party died or resigned the seat should go uncontested to a member of the same party. That meant that throughout the duration of the Parliament the Tories retained their huge permanent majority of more than a hundred and twenty. It meant accepting this permanent majority for as long as the war lasted.

In the volume of his war memoirs entitled *Their Finest Hour*, Churchill writes: "I could not but realise that his [Chamberlain's] suppression by me must be very unpleasant to many of them

after all my long years of criticism and often fierce reproach. Beside this, it must be evident to the majority of them how my life had been passed in friction or actual strife with the Conservative Party that I had left them on Free Trade and had later returned to them as Chancellor of the Exchequer."

But by May, 1940, Churchill was regarded by the Tories as the political leader whom the people had come to accept as their wartime mouthpiece. His wireless orations had been full of pugnacity and defiance and anti-German hate, and that suited the popular mood. Neville Chamberlain had come to be looked upon as the man with the umbrella, whom Hitler had duped. He had been cheered frantically by crowds both in Germany and London when they thought that Munich had brought peace. But all that had gone. Churchill was the man for the war. He was the British bulldog.

There was nothing of the mealy-mouthed appeaser about him. He had a remarkable command over the English language, an unlimited capacity for vituperation, a knowledge of what the mob wanted, that Chamberlain never dreamed of. He knew all the arts of the demagogue; he could retort to Hitler and Goebbels in the violent language they understood. He had nearly forty years of training in polishing up his periods and perfecting his perorations.

Churchill could tell a story and unfold a drama, work up to the grand climax and play on all the gamut of wartime emotions, fear, hatred, righteous indignation, patriotism. And a new medium, wireless, had come into being since the First World War. He could sit at his study in Downing Street on a Sunday night and talk into a microphone and know that tens of millions of people all over the world were drinking in every word. He was the British bulldog growling defiance and challenge before a world-wide audience to the dictators, to the Nazis.

Into that word "Nazis" Churchill concentrated all the hate and contempt that he could. He hissed it into the ether. The world had never heard anything quite like this before. Listening in to it, Dr. Goebbels, whose achievements Churchill had earlier warmly praised, became green with envy and Hitler went into paroxysms of rage. They could do the spellbinding stuff; they prided themselves on being masters of all the tricks and arts of propaganda, but what could they produce to equal this?

From another point of view, however, they regarded Churchill's broadcasts as an asset. They quoted the most ferocious passages of the "we-will-break-their-hearts" kind in order to stiffen the morale of the German people and to prove that defeat in the war would lead to national ruin. Just as our Ministry of Information used Hitler's wildest threats to rally the British people to support the war, so Goebbels and his Ministry of Propaganda used Churchill's speeches to rally the Germans to fight valiantly and to the bitter end for the Nazi Government.

In his first speech as Prime Minister, Churchill declared: "I would say to the House, as I said to those who have joined this Government, I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears and sweat!" This rhetorical declaration was not, however, original. In the correspondence columns of the Manchester Guardian various writers pointed out that Livy, Cicero, Ennius, Pizarro and Garibaldi had all promised these things in their orations long before Churchill. They had talked of blood, sweat, toil. It was all to be found in the World's Great Orations. All that the Prime Minister had done was to include "tears" as well.

Military misfortunes were certainly not long in coming. In his writings, Churchill before 1939 had frequently referred with great confidence to "the invincible French army," of which he was a fervent admirer. He now saw the collapse of this army and the fall of France. The people of Britain looked upon Winston Churchill, on the strength of his extensive writings on war, as a great military authority and strategist. He was the one who had led them to believe in the myth of the impregnable Maginot Line. In his description of the Battle of France in his *Their Finest Hour*, he writes of his visit to the French front:

Here were two new factors I had never expected to face. First the overrunning of the whole of the communications and countryside by an irresistible incursion of armoured vehicles, and secondly no strategic reserve.

I was dumbfounded. What were we to think of the great French Army and its highest chiefs? It had never occurred to me that army commanders having to defend five hundred miles of engaged front would have left themselves unprovided with a mass of manoeuvre.----What was the Maginot Line for? It should have economised troops upon a large sector of the frontier, not only offering many sally-ports for local counter-strokes but also enabling large forces to be held in reserve: and this is the only way these things can be done. But now there was no reserve. I admit that this was one of the greatest surprises I have had in my life. Why had I not known more about it even though I had been so busy at the Admiralty? Why had the British Government, and the War Office above all, not known about it?

Churchill is frank enough here. Why had the Tory Government taken the enormous gamble of war without knowing things like this? In his book *The Current of War*, Captain Liddell Hart points out that the Germans succeeded in the Battle of France because they had "realised and exploited the decisive machine power compared with man power. What the German Command has done is to put into practise ideas from which it was not too proud to learn, whereas our own authorities distrusting them as 'untried theories' considered it safer to keep in the familiar rut. There is nothing so unsafe for a nation as military conservatism." Churchill, despite his copious writings on military matters, had apparently not even realized how much warfare had changed through mechanization since the previous war.

The evacuation of the British army from Dunkirk followed quickly on the collapse of France. The British escaped solely because Hitler called off his army and air force several days previously. He ordered a halt to active hostilities at a time when it would have been easy to capture virtually every last British soldier. This he apparently did as a result of his Anglomania and his hope of obtaining the desired peace with Britain more quickly and easily.

Churchill had done everything he could to keep the French in the war; he even went the length of offering the French a common citizenship with Britain, but it was an impossible task. The Germans were ahead with the technique of the tank and had forced the French armies to surrender in spite of the fact that France was supposed to have had a much superior army and had spent enormous sums on military preparations between the wars. Britain had now to hold out alone. Churchill thundered defiance at the Nazis on the other side of the Channel:

Even though large tracts of Europe and many old and famous States have fallen, or may fall, into the grip of the Gestapo and all the odious apparatus of Nazi rule, we shall not flag nor fail. We shall go on to the end. We shall fight in France, we shall fight on the seas and the oceans, we shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength in the air. We shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall never surrender: and even, which I do not for a moment believe, if this island or a large part of it were subjugated and starving, then our Empire beyond the seas, armed and guarded by the British fleet, would carry on the struggle until in God's good time the New World, with all its power and might, steps forth to the rescue and the liberation of the Old.

This defiance of Hitler expressed the national mood on the morrow of Dunkirk. It showed Churchill's determination to carry on the war even if he had to retreat to America to continue the struggle. That he was able to do so was primarily the result of Hitler's extreme Anglomania, his disinclination to move decisively against Britain, and his desire for a peaceful settlement with her. In his book *The Other Side of the Hill*, Liddell Hart tells us how Hitler astonished his generals by the following address to them on May 24, 1940:



He then astonished us by speaking with admiration of the British Empire, of the necessity for its existence, and of the civilisation that Britain had brought into the world. He remarked, with a shrug of his shoulders, that the creation of the Empire had been achieved by means that were often harsh, but "where there is planning there are shavings flying." He compared the British Empire with the Catholic Church—saying that they were both essential elements of stability in the world. He said that all he wanted from Britain was that she should acknowledge Germany's position on the Continent. The return of Germany's lost colonies would be desirable but not essential, and he would even offer to support Britain with troops if she should be involved in any difficulties anywhere.

The Battle of Britain began in August. The German air force was eventually beaten back. Again Winston Churchill voiced the nation's relief and gratitude when he said:

The gratitude of every home in our island, in our Empire, and indeed throughout the whole world, except in the abodes of the guilty, goes out to the British airmen who, undaunted by odds, unwearied in their constant challenge and mortal danger are turning the tide of world war by their powers and their devotion. Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few.

This was the most memorable of Winston Churchill's wartime speeches. Britain was saved from the ordeal of invasion. But it was saved more by Hitler and his strategists than by Churchill. As a result of his Anglomania and his determination to go to war with Russia, Hitler withdrew much of his air force from the bombing of England to hoard and safeguard it for use against Russia in the spring of 1941. The segment of the Luftwaffe left for Goering to use was inadequate for the conquest of Britain. Further, Goering made the mistake of "terror bombing" British cities instead of shrewdly concentrating on the bombing of indispensable utility objectives, such as communications, electric power, and water supplies.

Perhaps an even more important explanation of why Hitler failed to conquer England from the air is to be found in the fact that the Germans had not planned to indulge in strategic bombing—that is, the bombing of non-military objectives, civilians and civilian property. They proposed at the outset to use their bombers only to cover and facilitate the advance of land forces. Hence, they did not arm their bombers before 1941. When they started to bomb England in earnest late in 1940, their unarmed bombers were easy and relatively safe targets for the fighter planes of the Royal Air Force. As British Air Marshal Sir Arthur Harris has explained the situation:

The Germans had allowed their soldiers to dictate the whole policy of the Luftwaffe, which was designed expressly to assist the army in rapid advances.---Much too late in the day they saw the advantage of a strategic bombing force.---In September, 1940, the Germans found themselves with almost unarmed bombers, so that in the Battle of Britain the destruction of the German bomber squadrons was very similar to shooting cows in a field.

Hitler sent over his bombers to attack British cities and towns and industrial centres. In turn the British sent over bombers to destroy the towns of Germany. The innocent women and children of both countries were the victims. Over the ether Churchill and Hitler thundered their threats, their mutual defiance, at each other. Over the wireless the propaganda war went on incessantly. The Germans blasted London, Coventry, Clydebank, Plymouth, the Midlands, South Wales; Britain blasted Berlin, Hamburg, Cologne, Koblenz, Mannheim, the Ruhr, and Dresden. Hundreds of thousands of homes in both countries were demolished or went up in flames, and over 2,000,000 persons lost their lives. We were told over the wireless and in the press how the Germans had destroyed our churches, our schools, our hospitals; they were told of how our bombers were destroying theirs. Both sides were discreetly silent about their mutual massacres of the innocent and helpless. While they talked in their propaganda of the atrocities of the enemy, they turned a blind eye to their own.

Leading British authorities have frankly admitted that it was the British rather than the Nazis who were responsible for initiating the policy of bombing civilians and non-military objectives. This decision had been made by the British Air Ministry as early as 1936. The first foray of this sort was conducted by eighteen English Whitley bombers in a flight over western Germany on the night of May 11, 1940. Down to this time only military objectives or cities in a state of siege had been bombed by either side. Hitler

made repeated efforts to get an agreement not to bomb civilians and non-military objectives, but he met with a stony British refusal in all cases. All this is frankly admitted by such authoritative British writers as Air Marshal Sir Arthur Harris, in his *Bomber Offensive* (1947), by J. M. Spaight, principal secretary of the British Air Ministry, in his *Bombing Vindicated* (1944), and by Liddell Hart in his *The Revolution in Warfare* (1946) and in his article "War, Limited," *hi Harper's Magazine* (March, 1946).

## CHAPTER XXIV

### Tory Party Leader

**A**T the end of September, 1940, Neville Chamberlain's health became worse. He resigned from the Government and also from the leadership of the House.

By this time Churchill had established himself in both the House of Commons and in the country as Britain's wartime leader. He was no longer looked upon with suspicion at the Tory Party headquarters. On the contrary, the Tory political machine decided to cash in on his popular reputation and to make him the dramatic Tory figurehead. It was an astute move, for the Tories were by no means popular in the country. Churchill himself had been one of their most scathing critics in the years just previous to the war, and it was obvious that, while the Tory Government had spent colossal sums preparing for war, the armed forces had not been armed for the kind of war that had arrived. Although the Tory Government had been replaced by the national coalition, the "old gang" still remained, many of them hi office. The Tory M.P.s who had supported Baldwin and Chamberlain against Churchill were still in an overwhelming majority in the House of Commons and, under the arrangement entered into under the party truce, were destined to remain there until the next general election.

Churchill had been recognized as the Prime Minister of a national government, but his acceptance of the leadership of the discredited Tory Party was received with considerable criticism. In his *Their Finest Hour* he writes:

I had to ask myself the question—about which there may still be various opinions—whether the leadership of one great party was compatible with the position I held from King and Parliament as Prime Minister composed of, and officially supported by, all parties. I had no doubt about the answer. The Conservative Party possessed a very large majority in the House of Commons over all parties combined. Owing to war conditions no election appeal to the nation was available in case of agreement or deadlock. I should have found it impossible to conduct the war if I had had to procure the agreement in the compulsive days of crisis and during the long years of adverse and baffling struggle not only of the leaders of the two minority parties but of the leader of the Conservative majority. Whoever had been chosen and whatever his self-denying virtues, he would have had the real political power. For me there would have been only executive responsibility.

From this statement it is obvious that Churchill, in his pre-occupation with the war, still had his eye very much on the possibilities of party politics. Here was his chance to secure the leadership of the Tory Party, the position which his followers thought should have gone to him when

Baldwin had retired. This opportunity was not to be ignored; it might never come again. If the Tory Party chose Lord Halifax or Anthony Eden, what was to happen to him when the national coalition broke up?

True, it was still the same old Tory Party, representing the same old vested interests, not changed in any essentials since he had denounced it as "a conspiracy," not a party. Indeed, what had he not said about it? But the offer was too tempting, and Churchill succumbed. He decided to become the figurehead of the conspiracy himself. And the Tories lost little time in making it clear that they intended to exploit Churchill for all they were worth. In the Sunday Times, Douglas Hacking, the chairman of the Tory Party, broke out into the following ecstasy:

Our secret weapon is Winston Churchill. In this our greatest hour we are fortunate indeed to be fighting under the incomparable leadership of a very great leader. To-day Winston Churchill is not only the embodiment of the spirit of Britain. He is our bulldog leader in whom Britons, nay the whole world of free men, place their implicit trust. In the past ten months Mr. Winston Churchill, to use the language of the cinema, has stolen the picture from the Nazi stars.

There was not very much of "the secret weapon" about Winston Churchill. The Tories were obviously not only thinking of him as a leader against the Nazis; they were obviously going to use him in British politics and economics when the time came. The comment of The Economist was more cryptic: "It is not Mr. Churchill that has captured the Conservative machine; it would appear to be that the Conservative machine has captured Mr. Churchill." The truth of this was to become more and more obvious as the war went on, especially in the way that the coalition dealt with social and economic issues on the home front. A writer in Forward was not so polite. He recalled Churchill's famous definition of the Tory Party at Dundee and his reference to "the open door at the public house," he added:

In becoming the Tory Party leader, Mr. Churchill will take over the pub—the reformed public house under new management.—Is it the same party to-day as it was when Mr. Churchill described it at Dundee?

No, it is now older.

It is suffering from senile decay; it needs a new monkey gland and Churchill is the man who can do it.

When Mr. Churchill has won the war the Tory Party can bask in his reflected glory and with his dynamic leadership under the glorious British constitution the great Conservative Party can resume business as usual. (There turned out to be something in this, too.)

Not only did Churchill dominate the domestic scene in England during the war; he also assumed virtually complete control of foreign policy and usually by-passed the officials in the Foreign Office. This was revealed by Churchill in two of the volumes in his wartime memoirs, *The Gathering Storm* and *Their Finest Hour*. He tells how he and President Roosevelt conducted their negotiations in nearly 2,000 secret private exchanges in the American code, and the diplomatic relations between these two countries were mainly handled in this private, secret and autocratic manner. As he puts it in *Their Finest Hour*, "the chief business between our two countries was virtually conducted by these personal exchanges between him and me."

Tyler Kent, the decoding clerk in the American embassy in London, became alarmed at the manner in which Churchill and Roosevelt were secretly manoeuvring the United States into war, and he made copies of these exchanges to be sent back to the United States for use by American statesmen opposed to President Roosevelt's interventionist policies. He was detected in this strata-

gem and served five years in an English prison for his offence. The American ambassador Joseph P. Kennedy, on the insistence of Mr. Roosevelt, waived Kent's diplomatic immunity. Kent's silence during wartime had to be assured. A law was passed which made it illegal for Kent to reveal the content of these secret messages even after the war was over.

## CHAPTER XXV

### Front Mussolini to Stalin

**W**ITH the fall of France, Hitler became master of Western Europe, and Mussolini entered the war. "That he is a great man I do not deny," Churchill had said of his old friend in one of his pre-war broadcasts, but he now began to speak of II Duce in a different strain. He was no longer "the great man." Broadcasting as France was collapsing, he referred contemptuously to his old hero as Hitler's---little Italian accomplice, trotting along hopefully and hungrily but rather wearily and very timidly at his side---We shall never cease to strike at the aggressor in ever increasing strength from this time forth until the crimes and treacheries which hang round the neck of Mussolini and disgrace the Italian name have been brought to condign and exemplary justice---This whipped jackal Mussolini, who to save his own skin has made of Italy a vassal state of Hitler's Empire, goes frisking up at the side of the German tiger with relish not only of appetite—that could be understood—but even of triumph.

The days had changed since he had dined and wined with Mussolini at Rome and declared II Duce had saved the world from the "foul baboonery of Bolshevism." But the time soon came when Churchill was to talk in different language about Russia too. On June 22, 1941, Hitler's troops marched on Russia and the whole war situation changed.

Churchill has been described as "the architect of victory," but there were few signs of that victory until Hitler embarked upon his fatal campaign against Russia, which eventually brought about his downfall.

Churchill has commented on Stalin and his collaboration with Hitler after August, 1939, as follows: "To do him justice, Stalin tried his very best to work loyally and faithfully with Hitler, while at the same time gathering aE the strength he could in the enormous mass of Soviet Russia." This characterization is only in part true. Stalin did collaborate with Hitler fairly efficiently for a time, especially when it redounded vastly to his benefit. Russia seized half of Poland after Hitler had destroyed the Polish army. And collaboration with Hitler enabled Stalin to gain time to build up his military forces. By the autumn of 1940, however, Stalin appears to have become convinced that he would ultimately have to fight Hitler and decided that the clash had better come while there was an almost certain prospect of British aid and a good chance of the decisive American assistance. He sent Molotov to Berlin to negotiate with Hitler in November, 1940. Although Hitler assigned Russia spoils and spheres of interest in the Near East and in the Baltic provinces that were beyond the dreams of any Russian from Peter the Great to Alexander Izvolski, Molotov brusquely demanded of Hitler further concessions in the Balkans and the Dardanelles, which, he knew, would drive the Fuhrer into a rage and probably lead him into war with Russia. The stratagem worked, and on June 22, 1941, Hitler launched his fatal attack on Soviet Russia.

Hitler's triumphs had gone to his head, and he thought he could achieve a military victory where Napoleon had failed. He deluded himself into believing, in spite of the warning of his generals, that he could destroy the military power of Soviet Russia hi one swift, short campaign.

This was Hitler's greatest strategic mistake. Had he kept the peace with Russia, conserved his armies, armed his bombers and continued his bombing raids on Britain, developed his "doodle bugs" and rockets, and encouraged his scientists to develop their researches into the atomic

bomb (the German physicists were working on this, too) the outcome of the war might have been completely different.

Once Hitler was committed to the task of waging war on Russia, he had undertaken a venture which meant diverting his armies and his manpower to an enormous gamble against colossal odds. It was bound ultimately to involve Germany in what was always the nightmare of the German generals—a war on two fronts—which Hitler had also vigorously condemned in *Mein Kampf*. Spectacular advances and sensational victories there might be, but beyond that there was always the illimitable expanse to which Russian armies could retreat and carry on the war and the terrible Russian winter, which no Blitzkrieg could conquer.

More than one historian has remarked that wars are not won so much by the military genius of the conquerors as by the blunders of their opponents. Cannot this be said with justification of the victors of the Second World War? Britain surely owed its victory mainly to the fact that Hitler plunged into the war with Russia and conducted this military adventure most stupidly. Victory would not have been possible if the Germans had not destroyed themselves and dissipated their military strength and manpower in the Russian snows. Had Hitler not marched east, Winston Churchill might well have ended by broadcasting his "no surrender" appeals to Britain to fight on the beaches, in the streets, on the hills, from the United States or Canada.

Moreover, the time which was taken by Hitler in his attempt to conquer Russia and the greater possibility of defeating Hitler after his attack on Russia both played a vital part in enabling President Roosevelt to bring the United States into the war. Without American intervention and aid, it is doubtful if Britain and Russia could have decisively defeated Hitler even after his blunder on June 22, 1941. But Hitler and Stalin might have fought to a stalemate, which would have fatally weakened both dictators and left the free nations of the West in control of world affairs. This happy outcome was frustrated by Churchill and Roosevelt.

As we pointed out earlier, the British Government had nearly committed the same fatal blunder as Hitler—and indeed, more than a year before he did. In January, 1940, our army had been assembled in Scotland to proceed to the Finnish front, we had sent the Finns planes and guns, and Churchill had, in a wireless oration, begun the propaganda war. We escaped fighting the Russians as well as the Germans, early in 1940, by sheer luck. If Sweden had not barred the way and if Finland had not made peace we should have made the fatal blunder before Hitler. We owe no gratitude to Churchill for keeping us out of war against Russia in 1940. He had been in favour of that gamble, too.

In June, 1941, of course, it was a different matter. The "invincible army of France," of which Churchill had boasted so much, had gone, and Hitler's decision to attack Russia was a gift from the gods. This was the best news that Churchill had had for a long time. It confirmed the information the British Intelligence Service had brought him concerning Hitler's plans. He promptly went to the wireless and broadcast a previously prepared and carefully rehearsed speech in which he announced that—We shall give whatever help we can to the Russian people, we have offered to the Government of Soviet Russia any technical or economic assistance which is in our power and which is likely to be of service to them. Hitler is a monster of wickedness, insatiable in his lust for blood and plunder.---This bloodthirsty guttersnipe must launch his mechanised armies upon new fields of slaughter, pillage and devastation.

He pictured the Russian peasantry, living peacefully on the soil their fathers had tilled from time immemorial, being overrun and crushed by "the dull, drilled, docile, brutish masses of the Hun soldiery plodding on like a swarm of crawling locusts." This 1941 depiction of the Nazi soldiers was almost exactly the same as he had described the Russians in 1940. But circumstances had changed. He would "unsay nothing he had formerly said about Communism" (this would have been difficult in a single broadcast), but Britain would fight with the Russians against Hitler. "Any man or State that fights against Nazism will have our aid.---That is our policy and our

declaration.---We shall appeal to all our friends and allies in every part of the world to take the same course and pursue it as we shall, steadfastly to the end."

This, of course, was a tremendous change-over for Churchill. For a generation he had been denouncing Russian Bolshevism with every adjective he could command: he had tried "to strangle it at birth"; he had assisted its enemies with men, arms and money; he had vilified its leaders; he had denounced them and all that they stood for on a hundred platforms and in innumerable articles. But just as adversity or politics maketh strange bedfellows, so does war.

For four years the Russians were to be our comrades-in-arms; all their alleged crimes and atrocities were to be forgotten; they were to be "our gallant allies"; we were to send them ships, arms, food, every help we could. Forgotten were the stories of the horrors of the planned famines, the Russian prison camps, the tortured priests, the bloody purges, and the mock trials. The great British public, which had for two decades been led to believe that in Russia the churches had been closed down and that the practice of the Christian religion was a criminal offence, was soon to learn that not only were archbishops still going about their business in Moscow but that they were preaching enthusiastic sermons in support of the Bolshevik Government's resistance to the foreign foe, blessing the Red army's bombers and tanks, and raising money for the Soviet Government's War Loan.

Winston Churchill no longer referred to "the foul baboonery of Bolshevism" and "the bestial appetites of Leninism" in his orations. Stalin and the generals of the Red army became "glorious warriors" and "mighty heroes." It is one of the ironies of the history of our times that Winston Churchill who had for more than twenty years led the European crusade against Bolshevism and Communism, became the stalwart friend and ally of Stalin for four years and led the chorus of Hosannas and Hallelujahs as the Red army swept over Poland and East Prussia and established itself in Berlin.



Later on, with his talents for reversing himself repeatedly, Churchill went over to the United States in March, 1946, and at Fulton, Missouri, made the speech that laid the basis for the idea of containing Russia and launching a cold war against her. President Truman put the Fulton idea into action just a year later. Communism and Soviet Russia again became the bogey not only of Churchill but of the so-called "free world." The momentous results of this post-war reversal will be dealt with later on. Suffice it to say here that they ultimately involved the nightmare of a Russian atomic bombing of Britain and produced new armament expenditures

that helped to undermine the British Labour Party and also to paralyse Churchill's program after he again became Prime Minister in the autumn of 1951.

Churchill has been hailed by many as the great statesman of our era. One of the main attributes and requirements of a statesman is to be able to foresee the consequences of his acts and to predict their outcome. In this respect, there was no case in which Churchill more pathetically fell short of the standards of a statesman than in his prediction of the relative status of Russia and England at the close of the war, as the result of Churchill-Roosevelt policies. General Franco, the Spanish dictator, was alarmed at the prospect of the growth of Russian power, and

on February 21, 1943, he gave the British ambassador in Madrid the following memorandum to be transmitted to Churchill:

Our anxiety on account of Russia's advance is not only shared by other peoples, but also by all Europeans who have not yet lost their capacity for clear discernment. Communism is an enormous danger for the world, and now that it is supported by a victorious army, all those who see clearly are alarmed. If the war goes on like this, it is obvious that the Russian armies will penetrate deeply into German territory. If this happens the danger will arise for England of a Soviet State in Germany who will supply Russia with her own military secrets, her engineers, her science, her specialists, and will thus enable Russia to create a monstrous power extending from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

Will there any longer exist in Central Europe, in that mosaic of nations without cohesion, ruined and devastated by war and occupation, any Power capable of opposing Stalin's ambitious plans?

We appeal to the sound instinct of the English people; if Russia gains possession of Germany, no one will be in a position to hold up her advance!

Churchill ridiculed Franco's ominous warning in his answer of February 25:

I hope I can prove to you that your fears are devoid of foundation. You say that Communism constitutes the only real danger for Europe, that a Russian victory will have as its consequences the progress of Communism in other parts of Europe and that this will mean the destruction of European civilisation and of Christian culture.

Our point of view is diametrically opposite to this! Do you really believe that a single nation is strong enough to dominate Europe after this war? And that it will be actually Russia, who is forced, more than other nations, to devote herself to large-scale reconstruction, and who for this purpose will have need of England and the United States? I venture to prophesy that, after the war, England will be the greatest military Power in Europe. I am sure that England's influence will be stronger in Europe than it has ever been before since the days of the fall of Napoleon.

History was to prove Franco a better prophet than Churchill.

On the other hand even Hitler's folly of invading Russia in June, 1941, might not have assured any decisive victory for Britain had not Churchill been able to bring the United States into the conflict.

Down through his campaign for re-election in 1936, Roosevelt had been a resolute "isolationist," although the character of Hitler's rule was obvious to any realistic observer long before this time. The first notable shift in Roosevelt's policy came in his famous Chicago Bridge Speech of October, 1937, in which he maintained that the United States must abandon its isolationism and help to quarantine aggressors. At the same time, Churchill was beginning to show his hostility to Hitler. The programs of the two men soon began to fuse. Then Pearl Harbour and Hitler's second great folly, a declaration of war on the United States, brought that great country and its limitless resources into the war on the side of Britain. In his speech before the House of Commons on February 15, 1942, Churchill correctly appraised the momentous nature of his achievement:

When I survey and compute the power of the United States and its vast resources and feel that they are now in it with us, with the British commonwealth of nations, all together, however long it may last, till death or victory, I cannot believe that there is any other fact in the whole world which can compare with that. This is what I dreamed of, aimed at and worked for, and now it has come to pass.

In his Grand Alliance, Churchill wrote with equal rapture over his accomplishment in bringing the United States into the war:

No American will think it wrong of me if I proclaim that to have the United States at our side was to me the greatest joy. ... I knew the United States was in the war, up to the neck and in it to the death. So we had won after all! ... We had won the war. England would live; Britain would live; the Commonwealth of Nations and the Empire would live. . . . We should not be wiped out. Our history would not come to an end. ... I went to bed and slept the sleep of the saved and thankful.

Had Churchill been as wise in preparing for peace as for war and a crushing military victory, his complacency and assurance about the future might have been justified. But later on it was to become apparent that Churchill's preoccupation with a smashing military victory had the result of placing Britain in greater mortal danger in 1955 than it had been in 1941.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### Appeasing Our Dictators

**O**N July 13, 1941, in London, the representatives of the British and Russian Governments signed the Anglo-Soviet Pact. It stated: "The two Governments mutually undertake to render each other assistance and support of all kinds in the present war against Hitlerite Germany."

This was the first time the words "Hitlerite Germany" appeared in any diplomatic document. The words, explained the diplomatic correspondent of the Daily Telegraph, "had been taken from the Russian draft as showing Stalin's conviction that Hitler is no longer the leader of the German peoples." Churchill, at a meeting at the Guildhall a few days later, speaking of the increased rate of British arms production, said: "We believe it to be in our power to keep that process going on hi a steadily rising tide month after month, year after year, until the Nazi regime is either extirpated by us or, better still, torn to pieces by the German people themselves."

But what was being done to state clearly to the German people that there was hope for a just peace for Germany if the Nazi regime was overthrown? There was a growing demand in this country that a clear statement of exactly what the Allies stood for hi the war should be made. This new mood was expressed by Mr. Noel-Baker, M.P., in the House of Commons debate on the Ministry of Information. He said:

This most serious mistake is that so far we have not given a message of hope and reconstruction to the masses of the people to whom we speak. A Belgian who is not a politician but an officer, who arrived here from Brussels the other day, stated that everyone in Belgium was saying two things. First, they were saying that the Nazi regime was intolerable and must be ended, and second, that they would not go back to the conditions that obtained before the war. In France, Poland and Italy it is the same. Everywhere people want a picture of the kind of world we are going to make. Nowhere is that more true than in Germany to-day, especially since Hitler made his onslaught on Russia. I believe that much of our propoganda to Germany is absolutely sterile, because it carries no constructive hope of any kind. Until we have such a message to give them, we may do more harm than good.

Churchill, however, did not see the common sense of this. He did not seem to realize that if the Nazi regime was to be "torn to pieces by the German people themselves" they might want to know what was to happen to them afterwards. All that our propoganda and our bombs did was to make it easier for Dr. Goebbels and his propoganda machine to proclaim that Britain and



Russia were in an alliance to destroy not only the government of Hitler but to occupy and enslave Germany, too. This unwise and dangerous policy was rendered complete by the adoption of the slogan of "unconditional surrender" by Churchill and Roosevelt at Casablanca in January, 1943, to which more attention will be given later on.

Meanwhile, Churchill himself was displaying some of the tendencies of the dictators. After a debate on the economic situation the News Chronicle (July 26, 1941) commented: "Once again, unfortunately, he showed a tendency to resent criticism which has arisen only from a sense of public duty."

Things were not going too well on the Home Front. There was a demand for a Minister of Production, and the Daily Herald was arguing that Ernest Bevin was the man for the job. But the Tories were not in favor of this. The class interests that they represented were not eager for any extension of government control or anything in the nature of public ownership of industry. The big-business gentlemen behind Churchill had already asserted themselves. In May, the Conservative Glasgow Herald had reported that the Labour Ministers were asking the Government to take—a decisive step towards the complete public control, not only of the railways, but of all transport services. Conservative M.P.s are opposed to this. Nationalisation of Transport is a political question which Conservative M.P.s strongly affirm should not be allowed to introduce itself to disturb the unity which has carried us successfully through a year of great peril. They would be bound very reluctantly to offer a most strenuous opposition.

This was the Tory line. Whenever the big vested interests were threatened, the Tory M.P.s asserted themselves; Churchill came to the conclusion that this was a politically controversial matter which threatened to disturb national unity, and the issue was shelved. Later on, this same tactic was followed in regard to the mines and to the Beveridge Report. While breathing sound and fury on our foreign enemies, Churchill pursued a policy of appeasement to the enemies of economic efficiency and justice at home.

In August, 1941, the country was faced with a coal crisis because of a shortage of miners. In the debate on the question in the House of Commons, Aneurin Bevan declared that there were 50,000 young miners in the army who ought to have been back in the pits months ago. What stopped their return was that the Prime Minister thought about the matter romantically and not practically, and the brass hats had advised him stupidly. These men were all cooling their heels in the army. They all knew that they had not got the weapons they needed. To get them they required more coal, which was not available because they were not there to produce it. This same point was stressed by many other speakers in the debate. Even the Tory Daily Telegraph commented:

The mystery is why the men were allowed to go. In the entire field of our economy there are few calculations capable of being made with a nearer approximation to mathematical accuracy than the amount of coal that will be needed 12 or 18 or 24 months ahead and the number of men necessary to supply the need. This simple calculation was either not made or, if made, ignored. Throughout last winter the authorities watched miners drifting away at that rate of 1,000 a week, without apparently taking any forethought as to where next winter's coal is coming from.

Churchill was romantically interested in soldiers and fighting, but he had not realized that a modern war also requires plenty of an unromantic commodity like coal.

Emanuel Shinwell, M.P., also attacked Churchill's attitude towards his critics in Parliament. At Seaham he said: "Mr. Churchill's resentment of criticism is hard to understand. He was himself the chief critic of his day and generation. Therefore it does not lie in the mouth of Mr. Churchill to complain of criticism." Shinwell had been a Minister of Mines and declared that the Government was muddling the coal problem.

If, however, Labour M.P.s were critical, Tories were appreciative. The value of brewery shares was going up, commented the chairman of Watney, Combe, Reid and Co., "because the Government has expressed a desire that there should be an adequate supply of beer forthcoming."

In August, 1941, President Roosevelt and Winston Churchill met at sea off the coast of Newfoundland to devise a way whereby the United States could enter the war through the Far Eastern backdoor of a war with Japan. As the American historian H. L. Trefousse has shown in his book *Germany and American Neutrality, 1939-1941*, Germany and Italy had consistently evaded the efforts of Roosevelt to induce them to commit an act of war in retaliation against the unneutral conduct of American naval forces in the Atlantic after March, 1941. Roosevelt was also of the opinion that a declaration of war aims would be an effective propaganda weapon against the dictators, and the Atlantic Charter was, accordingly, worked out.

The charter had eight clauses. It declared that Britain and the U.S.A. sought no aggrandizement for themselves, and pronounced against territorial changes except by the will of the peoples concerned. It demanded the right of self-government for all nations, equal economic opportunities, progress and social security, freedom from fear and want, the disarmament of aggressor nations, and the establishment of a permanent international system of security.

The Atlantic Charter was full of excellent sentiments but they all evaporated as the war went on. The Indians asked if it applied to them, for Jawaharlal Nehru and thousands of others who had asked for self-determination for India had been clapped into jail.

Meanwhile our friendliness with Russia increased. "We ought to go down on our knees and thank Providence for the assistance rendered us by Russia," said Shinwell (who later became Secretary of State for War) at a meeting in Glasgow in September.

The same week the Government announced that the railways were not to be nationalized, and the financial columns of the press reported "buoyancy on the stock exchange" as a result. Instead of nationalizing the railways, the Churchill Government decided to pay the companies a sum of £43,000,000 for the duration of the war, and a year afterwards the Daily Herald protested that the Government had struck "a timorous bargain with the railway stockholders, enabling them to earn swollen dividends for meeting the nation's mortal need." According to the *Manchester Guardian*: "----the Government did actually toy with the idea of unification, but Lord Leathers, the new Minister of War Transport, was found not to like it, and so turned the scale in favour of the opponents of unification."

Churchill had appointed Lord Leathers to be Minister of War Transport. He had been the vice-chairman of Wm. Cory and Sons, Ltd., the big coal-distributing company, and was a director of thirteen other companies as well. Naturally he did not favour nationalization. Big business had the final say, and so the Government turned it down.

That was to be typical of Churchill's subservience to big business during the war. While hurling defiance at dictators overseas he obeyed our own big-business dictators throughout the war. Labour was in the Government, and the T.U.C. began to wonder where it came in. It asked for the repeal of the trades-disputes bill. But this, said Churchill, was a controversial subject; the T.U.C. should first negotiate with the Conservative Party.



## CHAPTER XXVII

### Churchill—Beaverbrook Axis

**L**ORD BEAVERBROOK had been invited by Churchill to join the Government, and they were close friends. In October, 1941, Churchill sent Lord Beaverbrook on a special mission to Moscow. Stalin was demanding the opening of a second front in the West, and the British Communists were also in favour of it. Beaverbrook promised Russia "big guns, plenty of good guns, and plenty of ammunition and a big quantity of war materials too." He told the world over the B.B.C.: "Stalin trusts us, Harriman and me. He puts his faith in our pledges." Certainly the Beaverbrook press had turned over a new leaf. The Daily Express had begun addressing the Russians as "comrades." It concluded a leading article (September 6, 1941) with the greeting: "So we shake your hands, comrades, across the foul soil which spawned our mutual foe." But what the Russians wanted was a second front in Europe, and Churchill was not prepared to begin that as yet.

Churchill's idea of the proper strategy in attacking Hitler, aside from the North African campaign, differed greatly from the plans of Stalin, which were later adopted by the American political and military authorities. Stalin and the Americans wished to launch the "second front" attack on Germany through the West by an invasion "of France. Churchill, with more of an eye for Britain's future interests, wished to make the advance from the Mediterranean, penetrating what he called "the soft underbelly of Europe." Whether this would have expedited the actual military conquest or not is still purely a matter of conjecture and opinion. But its vast political superiority for the future interests of Britain cannot well be denied by any sane and informed person. Russia would have been kept out of Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia, and possibly out of the Balkans as well. The horrible mistakes of 1944-45 in Central Europe, with their ominous possibilities for the future, could have been averted if Churchill's plan had been followed.

Beaverbrook returned from Russia enthusiastic about Stalin. He said (November 8, 1941): "Oh, Stalin is a great man. I could feel the pulsating power of that man. The Russians are led well and wisely. I put my faith on that man's leadership."

When Beaverbrook had discussed Churchill with Stalin, Stalin had chuckled and said: "The old war-horse. We have a simple explanation about Churchill. He is our symbol of victory, that is what he is." The Sunday Express dutifully re-echoed Lord Beaverbrook's adoration of Stalin. Its editor, John Gordon, wrote (November 9, 1941):

If Stalin tells me that his armies have inflicted 4,500,000 casualties on the Germans, I believe him.

If he tells me that the morale of his armies in spite of their terrific suffering is higher than the morale of the German armies, I believe him again.

If he tells me he is sure of victory, I do not doubt him. For whatever your past views about Bolshevism may have been, get this clear. Stalin, by his record, has shown himself to have more wisdom, more realism, more ability, and a better perception of the situation than most of the men who have ruled this country in the last twenty years.

This was hardly a compliment to the Tory Party that Churchill now led. No wonder the miners began to take this at its face value and to ask for the nationalization of the mines. Everybody, even the Archbishop of Canterbury, was enthusiastic about the Russians. "Now that the Archbishop of Canterbury has prayed for a Russian victory," remarked Nathaniel Gubbins in the Sunday Express, "he will proudly claim credit for Timoshenko's advance." In January, 1942,

the Archbishop of Canterbury described Russia as "a beacon shining through the clouds of destiny."

In December, Japan attacked at Pearl Harbour and America entered the war. By the end of 1941 the odds had become heavy against victory for the Fascist dictators. When Japan had first attacked China, Winston Churchill had said (February 24, 1933): "British interests required us to keep out of the quarrel which has broken out in the Far East and not wantonly throw away our old and valued friendship with Japan." But now our old and valued ally had become Enemy No. 1 in the Far East.

In a speech at Washington (December 23, 1941), Churchill said that "the Allies should bank on an external knock-out of Germany rather than an internal collapse." This was the line that he took until the end of the war. It expressed itself later in his advocacy of "unconditional surrender" and the "knock-out blow." It kept the German people solid behind Hitler. Journalists like H. N. Brailsford, who knew Germany, opposed unconditional surrender and the knock-out blow. Brailsford wrote in *Reynold's*: "We can shorten the war by a year if we can persuade the German people to believe that we do not intend to subject Germany to dismemberment, starvation, and unemployment." After the war, captured German generals confirmed this view. Churchill's policy of the knock-out blow, repeating Lloyd George's folly of 1916-18, was certainly pugnacity, but it was not international statesmanship. It meant the maximum of blood, toil, tears and sweat for the Allies and, in the end, put the Russians in Berlin.

The events in Russia, where Hitler had been checked, helped to make up for the loss of Hong Kong. Its surrender was inevitable, because the island was indefensible. But it came as a shock to the British public, who had been led to believe that it could be held. Its loss meant that British soldiers were destined to remain in Japanese prison camps until the end of the war. The British military governor had made grandiloquent speeches. "Brooke-Pop-ham's speeches, I suppose," explained the *Daily Express* correspondent, "were intended to bluff the Japanese."

Anthony Eden went to Moscow to discuss future policy with Stalin. The *Economist* asked:

What did Mr. Stalin say to Mr. Eden? Take a note of our opinion in this matter. We believe that Mr. Stalin expressed his conviction that the Russian Army could beat the German Army, and that in such case the Russians would take very good care to arrange for measures to prevent the German militarists ever again harnessing to their chariot wheels the energies of the German people.

This would be arranged as follows: The Eastern half of Germany would be supervised by Russia and the South and West would be looked after by France, where there would be a Communist Government.

We believe that Mr. Stalin did not debate—he spoke. Churchill must have been startled when Eden came home and told him that. Churchill secured a vote of confidence after Hong Kong; 306 Tories voted for him out of a total of 368. Of 160 Labour M.P.s, 101 voted with the Government. The next blow in the East was the fall of Singapore. An enormous sum of money had been spent on Singapore, which had been described as impregnable. But the British public read in *The Times*: "In the first place Singapore was never a fortress at all. The fortress concept arose out of loose thinking, when our propagandists and public speakers were trying to keep the Japanese out of the war by making them think us stronger than we really were. The legend grew and grew but it had little basis in fact."

But £20,000,000 had been spent on it between the wars. It was a lot of money to spend to bluff the Japanese. The *Economist* wondered who was going to win the war. "For at the moment Britain is losing the war. Hitler may be losing it in Russia, too. Russia may be winning it and America may be preparing to win it—but Britain is losing it."

Churchill reshuffled his Cabinet and brought hi Sir Stafford Cripps. He was still an expelled member of the Labour Party. But Sir John Anderson and Oliver Lyttelton, the voices of big business, remained in. It was still a war cabinet of the Right.

The Labour Party rank and file were now getting increasingly restive at the working of the party truce at the by-elections. No Labour Party candidates were allowed to stand, but independent candidates were challenging the Tory nominees. The by-elections showed that the Churchill Government was more popular in the House of Commons than in the country. An independent candidate defeated an ex-Tory Air Marshal at Grandham. Sir James Gregg, the Permanent Secretary of the War Office, had been nominated for a seat vacated by the Tories at Cardiff. Attlee appealed to some of the Labour M.P.s to go to his aid, and they refused. But the English Communists were instructed to support the official Churchill candidate. British politics were indeed developing along unfamiliar lines.

Arthur Greenwood had been removed from the Cabinet. He was understood to have been entrusted with the task of preparing post-war reconstruction plans. It was suspected that this was a move to shelve them as a result of Tory pressure. The Labour Party had become uncomfortably aware that a new Common Wealth Party was ready to fight all Tory seats. And there was a growing feeling in the country against the Churchill Government. The party truce was evidently working out to the disadvantage of the Labour Party.

A group of Tory Party M.P.s had formed the 1922 committee to keep a watchful eye on all political developments or Government plans that looked like Socialism. In May, 1942, it was reported that the Government had a plan for rationing fuel. The 1922 committee met, and it was announced that a hundred Tory M.P.s were prepared to go into the lobby against it. A deputation waited on Sir John Anderson; the plan was withdrawn. "That," explained the Manchester Guardian correspondent, "was how the political setup worked." Plans for the reorganization of the coal industry were also being discussed. There was a Conservative Coal Committee, including coal-owners opposed to nationalization. They were prepared to revolt, too. They were fully aware that the Tory Party was the party of "vested interests"; they knew they had the majority in Parliament and that when they cracked the whip Churchill would come to heel.

Certainly the coal industry was hi a mess, and coal was urgently necessary for the war industries. But the coal-owners had to be considered first. Churchill decided to stage a meeting with a conference of miners' delegates. Miners and mine officials were taken to London by special train and given three pounds a head for expenses. The miners of North Derbyshire refused to attend, believing it to be a waste of time and that the men would be better engaged in production.

There was oratory by Churchill and General Smuts, mass singing led by the band of the Scots Guards—and the oratory was followed not by the questions and discussion that the Daily Herald had called for but by "God Save the King." As an emotional spectacle it certainly was magnificent. Never had Mr. Lawther, the miners' president, "seen our fellows so moved"; and other accounts told how strong men wiped their eyes while others wept openly. The coal-owners' chairman, Mr. Evan Williams, was called upon to move a vote of thanks to Mr. Churchill—this was most appropriate. Mr. Williams did it with great sincerity. He was one of the Tory coal-owner diehards who had addressed the Tory committee before it had brought pressure to bear on the Government to abandon the Beveridge scheme of fuel rationing.

In the same issue of the Daily Express which reported the miners in "tears," the city editor commented: "Official statements that the coal gap is narrowing are causing a mild rush after colliery shares, some of which have risen to around their highest price since the war [of 1914—18]. Buyers are obviously hoping that larger output will be translated into larger profits." On the stock exchange they were transmuting Churchill's emotional oratory and the miners' tears into hard cash. The Investors' Chronicle was satisfied that the coal-owners were winning the war. It declared: "The coal-share list still represents one of the most attractive fields for the

investor." The more the miners responded to Churchill's patriotic exhortations for more output, the better the prospect for the coal-owners' shares. So as long as Churchill was Prime Minister there was no need for anxiety about the nationalization of the mines. That was a controversial issue which had to be shelved in wartime even though the old system was not providing enough coal for the war.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### Pilgrimage to Moscow

**E**ARLY in August, 1942, Gandhi and other Indian Congress leaders were arrested. An Emergency Whipping Order was announced from Bombay. India was obviously not included in the Atlantic Charter, which had declared for self-determination for all nations.

Gandhi's crime was that he was against the war. The British Government's action in India was adversely commented on by democratic opinion in the United States. Was America going to stand for the old-fashioned type of British imperialism in India? Gandhi could not be expected to support Churchill's war policy; they were poles apart. Churchill's attitude toward India provided little support for the Allied claims that they were fighting for freedom and democracy.

Americans wondered when they read of "the Governor of Bombay's stern broadcast warning hi English, Hindustani and Urdu of a renewal of the whipping order which permitted as much as thirty strokes with a cane in the presence of a doctor." Harold Laski wrote to the Daily Herald, asking what the T.U.C. would say if such an order were issued in a strike in this country, and said that the Labour Party had not authorized its members to go into the Government to support anything like this.

Hard on the news that Gandhi had been arrested, the British public were told that Churchill was hi Moscow and had met Stalin in the Kremlin. The two extremes had met at last. It was evident that Stalin was eager for a second front hi the West. The Moscow correspondent of the New Statesman reported:

Day after day the papers continue to quote long passages from British papers calling for a second front and report resolutions of meetings and petitions to Downing Street as examples of British public opinion stirred up by the necessity for action. The following episode is typical of Russian expectations from the Churchill visit.

When the Premier drove off from the aerodrome he gave the "V" sign, which delighted the Russians who saw it, for they interpreted two outstretched fingers as meaning a second front.

When Churchill came back he told the House of Commons (November 12, 1942): "I assure the House I have a solid belief hi the wisdom and good faith of this outstanding man [Stalin]. ... My heart has bled for Russia. It is evident, however, that Russia is at least three times as strong a living organism as she was in the last war."

He had obviously changed his mind about both Stalin and Russia since his broadcast during the Finnish War. Churchill's opinion of Stalin had obviously improved. In his memoirs he has written: "He [Stalin] was indeed from September, 1940, to the moment of Hitler's assault hi June, 1941, at once a callous, crafty, and ill-informed giant." After Churchill returned from his visit to Moscow in September, 1942, he pronounced hi the House of Commons the following eulogy of Stalin, which thoroughly matched his earlier tributes to Mussolini, Hitler, and Franco:

This great rugged war chief ... He is a man of massive outstanding personality, suited to the sombre and stormy times in which his life has been cast; a man of inexhaustible courage and

will-power, and a man direct and even blunt in speech, which, having been brought up hi the House of Commons, I do not mind at all, especially when I have something to say of my own. Above all, he is a man with that saving sense of humour which is of high importance to all men and all nations, but particularly to great men and great nations. Stalin left upon me the impression of a deep, cool wisdom and a complete absence of illusions of any kind.

Churchill must have been converted to the belief that, in June, 1941, Stalin had indeed been born again.

Meanwhile, critical opinion in British politics was wondering whether Churchill was not becoming rather a dictator himself. Sir Stafford Cripps was dropped from the War Cabinet in November and Herbert Morrison taken in. The Manchester Guardian contended that the changes in the Cabinet left too much power hi Churchill's hands:

It perpetuates to a higher degree than any other War Cabinet, either in this or the last war, a vice universally condemned by students of crisis governments

Gone is the Minister of State, gone is the Lord Privy Seal. The effect of this is obviously to increase the power and authority of the Prune Minister and to reduce the amount of independent thinking and study of documents and plans of which the remaining members of the War Cabinet are capable. We are back pretty much where we were months ago when there was all the criticism of control of the war in one man's hands.

By the end of 1942, Churchill had actually become the virtual dictator of Britain. He had far and away the greatest power, role and influence in the running of the war. But on the home front the Tory .caucus asserted its authority when it thought the power of the private vested interests was in danger. That was to be clearly demonstrated with the publication and shelving of the Beveridge Report on social insurance and relief.

## CHAPTER XXIX

### The White Flag at Home

**C**HURCHILL had already yielded to the railway magnates and the coal-owners. Faced with the issue as to whether or not the Government should adopt the proposals contained in the Beveridge Report, he retreated before the insurance companies. At every stage he was following a policy of appeasement to the Tory vested interests on the home front. After Sir John Anderson had outlined the Government's attitude toward the Beveridge plan the News Chronicle (March 17, 1943) remarked:

It is this passage in Sir John Andersen's speech which is specially disconcerting, for the insurance companies have notoriously been busy organising opposition to the Report. That the Government should hoist the white flag before a single shot has been fired in Parliament is a very bad sign indeed.

It suggests that the Government is even more amenable than was supposed to the pressure of vested interests—that it has cheerfully gone to meet its Munich in the sphere of social reconstruction rather than put up any semblance of a fight.

The Beveridge Report was part of the post-war reconstruction program that had been initiated by Arthur Greenwood. When Greenwood had entered the Cabinet at Churchill's invitation, great hopes-had been entertained that the coalition was going to plan ahead for post-war problems at home as well as in foreign affairs. The Tory promises were being broken. Greenwood had been removed from the War Cabinet and the Beveridge Report was shelved.

This was too much for the Parliamentary Labour Party. It put down an official motion declaring "dissatisfaction with the now declared policy of His Majesty's Government towards the Beveridge Report" and urged the reconsideration of that policy "with a view to the early implementation of that plan." It was pressed to a division, and 121 M.P.s voted against the Government. The rank and file were in revolt against the Labour Ministers who voted with Churchill. This was the beginning of the rift in the lute which was to become wider. In a Sunday-night broadcast speech on March 21, 1943, Churchill dealt with the prospects of the war. He said: "It is our duty to peer through the mists of the future to the end of the war, and to try to do our utmost to be prepared by ceaseless effort and forethought for the kind of situations which are likely to occur." He said that he imagined "that sometime next year—but it may well be the year after—we might beat Hitler, by which I mean beat him and his powers of evil into death, dust and ashes." After that we would make war on Japan. Then he dealt with the home front and outlined a four-year plan. He was all for national insurance but did not commit himself to carrying out the Beveridge Report:

You must rank me and my colleagues as strong partisans of national compulsory insurance for all classes for all purposes from the cradle to the grave.

Every preparation, including, if necessary, preliminary legislative separation, will be made with the utmost energy, and the necessary negotiations to deal with worthy existing interests are being actively pursued, so that when the moment comes everything will be ready.

Here let me remark that the best way to insure against unemployment is to have no unemployment. There is another point. Unemployables, rich or poor, will have to be toned up. We cannot afford to have idle people. Idlers at the top make idlers at the bottom. No one must stand aside in his working prime to pursue a life of selfish pleasure. There are wasters in all classes. Happily there are only a small minority in every class. But anyhow we cannot have a band of drones in our midst, whether they come from the ancient aristocracy or the modern plutocracy or the ordinary type of pub-crawler.

As he proceeded, it was obvious he was trying to make out a case for the continuation of the coalition after the war and outlining a vague social-reform program. But there was a dig at Greenwood, who had used the unfortunate phrase that "pounds, shillings, and pence are meaningless symbols." That blunder was obviously going to be filed for a future election.

Churchill was clearly out to continue the coalition as Lloyd George had done after the First World War. It would suit him; it would suit the vested interests, and it would dish the Socialists. The political journalists took it as a threat to the Labour Party M.P.s who were restive lest there might be a general election. A. J. Cummings, in the News Chronicle, said there was "an electioneering echo" in the speech. William Barkley in the Daily Express said that "if the Socialist Party were to withdraw from the coalition there would be a general election in June or July," and added: "The numbers of private Socialist M.P.s returned in these circumstances could all be accommodated in a medium-sized transport plane. Mr. Greenwood, their leader, might be left as in 1931 on a stricken field, wrapped up this time in the banner with the strange device '£ s. d. are meaningless symbols.'"

It was obvious what was in Churchill's mind. He thought that, if necessary, he could persuade the Labour Ministers to do a MacDonal on the Labour Party and work the patriotic-coalition trick that Lloyd George had played in 1918. He was thinking of the next election as well as the war. Harold Laski made the pertinent comment in Reynold's: "Mr. Churchill wove a skilful web; it would be the end of the Labour Party if it allowed itself to be enmeshed in it. But its leaders must believe in its future, if they are to fight a victorious battle."

As the summer went on, the fortunes of war were turning heavily in the Allies' favor. Mussolini's hold on Italy had weakened. The power of the Axis had begun to crack. But what had the Allies



to offer Italy in place of Fascism? In his diary (August 12, 1943) Captain Harry Butcher, General Eisenhower's aide-de-camp, noted:

What had appeared to be a quick collapse of Italy has disappeared into uncertainty, with the definite knowledge that the Italians are solidifying their opposition to us and are really fighting. Around headquarters, we are inclined to attribute this to the hard-boiled attitude of the Prime Minister and the President, who publicly insisted upon "unconditional surrender" as soon as Mussolini was out. No surrender was ever made without some conditions: the main need is to have the Italians realize and admit and act as if they have been defeated.

The slogan of "unconditional surrender" was prolonging the war.

In May, 1943, Churchill had gone to America and delivered an address to the American Congress. He was now the hero of the United States and had mesmerized its people with his oratory and his broadcasts.

At the Labour Party Conference, Arthur Greenwood, rejected by Churchill, was chosen as treasurer in place of Herbert Morrison, his successor in the Government. The Conference was, however, in no position to challenge Churchill, who was now at the height of popularity. It agreed to the continuation of the party truce and the coalition.

By July, 1943, the Allied forces were in Italy. On July 27, in a speech in the House, Churchill was able exultingly to announce the downfall of his old hero, Mussolini: "The House will have heard with satisfaction of the downfall of one of the principal criminals of this devastating war. The end of Mussolini's long and severe reign over the Italian people undoubtedly marks the close of an epoch in the life of Italy."

The Liberal press both in Britain and in America said that it was time the Allies clearly define their war aims. The News Chronicle said:

There has been no sign that the Allies have an agreed policy and certainly none that they have one that will commend itself to the waiting millions of Europe.

We stand at a turning point in history. Europe's future is being determined now by events in Italy and Allied reactions to them.

Britain can and must take the lead in shaping the new Europe. What is its foreign policy?

But there was no attempt by Winston Churchill to outline a post-war policy for Europe. His only reply to the waiting millions was to advocate, like Lloyd George in 1916, the knockout blow and unconditional surrender. This short-sighted policy came in for criticism from military men as well as Liberal journalists. Major General J. F. C. Fuller, the eminent military expert of the Sunday Pictorial, expressed the view: "By demanding the unconditional surrender of Italy the politicians have committed the greatest act of unwisdom of the war.----Unconditional surrender is the negation of the Atlantic Charter; it is the negation of our gospel of the new way and the good life: for instead of fostering the idea of freedom it breathes forth an invincible servitude."

This policy kept the enemy armies together and made the soldiers fight on; at Casablanca, in January, 1943, Churchill had committed his country irrevocably to the fatal slogan and policy of unconditional surrender, which had been casually announced by President Roosevelt and his intimate advisers.



## CHAPTER XXX

### Unconditional Surrender

**I**T was not until July 21, 1949, that the British people were told how lightly they had been committed to the fateful slogan and disastrous policy of unconditional surrender. In a debate on foreign affairs, Mr. Ernest Bevin had been criticized rather patronizingly by Mr. Harold Macmillan, who had opened the debate for the Conservative Opposition and had blamed him for conditions in Germany. Mr. Bevin referred to the chaos that he had inherited from Churchill's wartime slogan. Here is what followed, as reported in Hansard, July 21, 1949:

**MR. BEVIN:** I must go back for a moment to the declaration of unconditional surrender made at Casablanca, on which neither the British Cabinet nor any other Cabinet had a chance to say a word. It was in the middle of a war and it was just made. But it left us with a Germany without law, without a constitution, without a single persons with whom we could deal, without a single institution to grapple with the situation, and we have had to build right from the bottom with nothing at all. We have had to build a state which has over twenty million displaced persons scattered about it, and we had to build it. while something like five million people were being driven out of one-part of the country into the other. Believe me, although I do not want to go into it now, on looking back, although I cannot raise my hat to-them in this House, I cannot pay too great a tribute to the military commanders and political advisers who were left with a shambles out of which they had to create a new Germany.

**MR. MICHAEL FOOT** (Plymouth, Devonport): May I interrupt my hon. Friend? Is he saying that, on the subject of unconditional surrender, the position was that the British Cabinet never had notice of the matter at all?

**MR. BEVIN:** The first we heard about it was in the Press.

**MR. CHURCHILL** (Woodford): The first time I heard that phrase used was from the lips of President Roosevelt.

**MR. BEVIN:** That justifies what I am saying. I do not complain, I assure the right hon. Gentleman, and he will admit that I took my share of every decision of the Coalition Cabinet whether I thought it was right or not. I say that I never heard of that phrase until I saw it in the Press, and that, if it had been put to me, as a member of the British Cabinet, I would never have agreed to it. I do not complain about it: I took it as it was, but it is rather hard for leaders of the Opposition to criticise me now when they left me with such a shambles to take on.

Mr. Churchill rose to intervene. He said: The statement was made by President Roosevelt without consultation with me. I was there on the spot, and I had very rapidly to consider whether the state of our position in the world was such as would justify me in not giving support to it. I did give support to it, but that was not the idea which I had formed in my own mind. In the same way, when it came to the Cabinet at home, I have not the slightest doubt that if the British Cabinet had considered that phrase, it is likely that they would have advised against it, but, working with a great alliance and with great, loyal and powerful friends from across the ocean, we had to accommodate ourselves. I am by no means inclined to think that great harm flowed from this phrase. [Interruption.] It is indifferent to me whether hon. Gentlemen agree with me or not: I am only telling them that, in my own mind, I have not at all satisfied myself that it did in fact produce some evil consequences, although I do not think it was the phrase which we or our Government would have used.

From this interchange it seems that both Mr. Bevin and Mr. Churchill were agreed that the policy of unconditional surrender had been unwise. Mr. Bevin put the blame on Mr. Churchill; Mr. Churchill blamed it on President Roosevelt, who was dead. Mr. Bevin said later in the debate:

I assumed responsibility, when the right hon. Gentleman was the Leader of the Government at that time, for the decisions that were taken. When the right hon. Gentleman reported to us that it had been done, I accepted responsibility, and I never went back on it, but I think it is rather regrettable, seeing that those responsible in the days of the Coalition Government had reached the decision, and that we have to reap the whirlwind, that the representatives of the Opposition do not take that into account. That is all I have to say. Really, many of the difficulties that have arisen, in remodelling Germany, have unfortunately come in part from that very grave decision. Mr. Churchill rose again and said: I should not have risen at all had it not been that the right hon. Gentleman felt so uneasy about those criticisms on the two points I have mentioned that he floated back across the years into the history of the war, and touched upon some large and important matters affecting our relations with the United States, with a view to throwing some invidious burden upon me personally: because otherwise there would have been no point in his doing so. [HON, MEMBERS: "No."] I was a person very responsible in these matters, and I must say that the phrase of "unconditional surrender" was not brought before me to agree to in any way before it was uttered by our great friend, our august and powerful ally, President Roosevelt. But I did concur with him after he had said it, and I reported the matter to the Cabinet, who accepted the position. Whether if we had all discussed it at home we should have proposed such a settlement is another matter. Still, they did accept the position, as I, in my turn, on the spot, thought it right to do. I cannot feel that there can be any separation of responsibility between us in the matter, having regard to the long years in which we subsequently acted together.

President Roosevelt, however, had his defenders. The following appeared in a letter in the Observer the following Sunday from the Australian publicist, Chester Wilmot:

Did the President draw up this joint statement without consulting the Prime Minister with whom he had been in the closest consultation for a week? The President's son Elliott, who was acting as his father's aide, says "No." He had declared (As He Saw It, page 117) that on January 23rd—the day before the press conference—his father brought out the phrase while lunching with Mr. Churchill, Harry Hopkins and Elliott himself, who reports, "Churchill, while slowly munching a mouthful of food, thought, frowned, thought, finally grinned and at length announced, 'Perfect, and I can just see how Goebbels and the rest of 'em'll squeal.' "Elliott says further that the nightcap toast proposed by Mr. Churchill that evening was to "unconditional surrender." Are these instances the invention of Elliott Roosevelt? They could hardly have been, for Elliott could then have had no idea that Mr. Bevin and Mr. Churchill would later dispute over the matter. Chester Wilmot added that he thought that later Churchill had got in touch with the War Cabinet. "The records of the War Cabinet would show. Was there any reason that they should be kept secret now?"

Considerable discussion followed these revelations. Mr. Churchill again returned to the subject in a foreign-affairs debate on November 17, 1949. He replied to Mr. Bevin's assertion that the Cabinet had not been consulted at the time:

The right hon. Gentleman raised this matter without giving me any notice, and on the spur of the moment I said that the first time I heard the words "unconditional surrender"—in regard, of course, to the late war—was when the President used them in his speech to the press conference at Casablanca. This was the impression which had been left in my mind and which I had expressed to Mr. Robert Sherwood three years before when he raised the point with me in connection with his biography of Mr. Harry Hopkins. This impression was confirmed in my mind by what President Roosevelt said himself on the point, which is quoted in the Hopkins biography. This is the quotation:

"Suddenly the press conference was on, and Winston and I had no time to prepare for it, and the thought popped into my mind that they had called Grant 'Old Unconditional Surrender,' and the next thing I knew, I had said it."

However, there is great danger in quoting from memory when all these things crop up about the tumultuous past. We all remember the advice which the aged tutor gave to his disciples and followers on his deathbed when they came to him—"Verify your quotations." At any rate, I have now looked up the telegrams and records of the occasion, and I find that undoubtedly the words "unconditional surrender" were mentioned, probably in informal talks, I think at meal times, between the President and me. At any rate, on 19th January, 1942, five days before the end of the Conference, I sent the present Prime Minister, then Deputy Prime Minister, the following message as part of a long telegram on other matters:

"We propose to draw up a statement of the work of the Conference for communication to the Press at the proper time. I should be glad to know what the War Cabinet would think of our including in this statement a declaration of the firm intention of the United States and the British Empire to continue the war relentlessly until we have brought about the 'unconditional surrender' of Germany and Japan. The omission of Italy would be to encourage a break-up there. The President liked this idea, and it would stimulate our friends in every country."

To which the Prime Minister and my right hon. Friend the Member for Warwick and Leamington [Mr. Eden]—he is not here to-day; he is absent in his constituency, as many hon. Members have to be in present circumstances—replied on the 21st:

"The Cabinet were unanimously of opinion that balance of advantage lay against excluding Italy because of misgivings which would inevitably be aroused in Turkey, in the Balkans and elsewhere. Nor are we convinced that effect on Italians would be good. Knowledge of rough stuff coming to them is surely more likely to have desired effect on Italian morale."

It is clear, therefore, that the right hon. Gentleman was mistaken, I have no doubt quite innocently—and I was in my own way, though not in such an important aspect—in saying that the Cabinet had not been consulted but had expressed a very decided opinion. Also, I think he was mistaken in saying that he was not a party to that opinion before the President's speech was given to the Press.

It will be seen that the opinion of the Cabinet was not against the policy of unconditional surrender. They only disapproved of it not being applied to Italy as well. I did not want this, because I hoped—and the hope has not been unfulfilled—that Italy, freed from Mussolini's dictatorship, might fight on our side, which she did for several years of the war, with lasting beneficial result to the state of Europe. I have the strong feeling that I cooled off on the point because I did not want to bring Italy into this sphere; and I thought that that would influence the President, too. This is borne out by the agreed communique which was drafted by the Combined Chiefs of Staff and approved by both of us, and which contains no mention of unconditional surrender.

As the issue was raised in debate by the right hon. Gentleman in his very responsible position, and as my own memory was at fault on the subject, I felt it my duty to place the true facts on record in the journals of the House if only in justice to the memory of President Roosevelt. I apologise for this digression which I think was necessitated by what had already occurred in the House.

Mr. Bevin did not reply to this. What did emerge from the discussion was that, surveying the aftermath in Europe nearly seven years later, both men, in retrospect, were doubtful whether unconditional surrender had brought permanent peace to the

world. When the war was over and the shouting had died down, Mr. Bevin was ruefully contemplating the chaos and ruin in Europe and reflecting on how short-sighted the sponsors of the slogan had been.

Did it hasten the end of the war or prolong it? Light on what General Eisenhower thought of the "unconditional surrender" slogan is given by Captain Harry C. Butcher, Eisenhower's aide-de-camp, in his book *Overture to Liberation*. In his diary, April 14, 1944, he noted:

Ed. Stettinius told me the President was far from well and that he is becoming increasingly difficult to deal with because he changes his mind so often.

There have been discussions with him as to the meaning of "unconditional surrender" as applied to Germany. Any military person knows there are conditions to every surrender. There is a feeling that, at Casablanca, the President and the Prime Minister, more likely the former, seized on Grant's famous term without realizing the full implications to the enemy. Goebbels has made great capital with it to strengthen the morale of the German Army and people. Our psycho-logical experts believe we would be wiser if we created a mood of acceptance of surrender in the German Army which would make possible a collapse of resistance similar to that which took place in Tunisia. They think if a proper mood is created in the German General Staff, there might even be a German Badoglio. To accomplish the proper mood, there would need to be a new American-Anglo-Russian statement to define "unconditional surrender." Then we could tell the German people by radio and pamphlet the methods of demilitarization we propose; the fact that we intend to purge Nazis from the government machine; that we maintain the right to seize and try war criminals; that there will be orderly transfers of population; that there will be restoration of freedom of religion, and for trade-unions. After the three governments had agreed and announced such definitions, our Staff feels that the Supreme Commander should make a declaration after the landings to the German commander in the west, reciting in soldierly language the principal points of surrender terms. It is believed that this would shorten the war. General Ike strongly advocates this view and asked Ed. Stettinius to transmit it to the President.

General Eisenhower's appeal, however, did not have the required effect. Unconditional surrender remained the Allied policy and the war went on. Indeed, in the White House Papers it is stated that Mr. Churchill was furious because "the psychological warriors in North Africa" had been assuring the Italians (by radio) that their prisoners of war would be returned if they would surrender "honourably."

When Hitler's generals were in captivity in Britain, Captain Liddell Hart spent some time discussing with them the political and military strategy of the war. He has given an account of what they told him in his book *The Other Side of the Hill*. The following excerpt well summarizes their attitude:

They [the German generals] were tied to their posts by Hitler's policy and Himmler's police, but they were praying for release. Throughout the last nine months of the war they spent much of their time in discussing ways and means of getting in touch with the Allies to arrange a surrender.

All to whom I talked dwelt on the effect of the Allies' "unconditional surrender" policy in prolonging the war. They told me that but for this they and their troops—the that was more important—would have been ready to surrender sooner, separately or collectively. "Black-listening" to the Allies' radio service was widespread. But the Allied propaganda never said anything positive about the peace conditions in the way of encouraging them to give up the struggle. Its silence on the subject was so marked that it tended to confirm what Nazi propaganda told them as to the dire fate in store for them if they surrendered. So it greatly helped the Nazis to keep the German troops and people fighting—long after they were ready to give up.

There was a heavy casualty list during the last nine months of the war. More German towns were reduced to rubble by the Allied bombing. Millions of people were driven on to the roads. They were the innocent victims of "unconditional surrender." Europe paid heavily for the lack of wisdom shown by the Allied leaders.

The attitude begotten by Churchill's ferocity in regard to unlimited violence and destruction in conducting the war was well reflected in the report of a British war correspondent which was printed in the English newspapers on Christmas Eve, 1944: "Aachen is the biggest German town in our hands. It is the most exhilarating sight I have seen for years. This town of some 170,000 inhabitants has not now a single habitable house left in it. I have never seen such destruction.-- Ten thousand inhabitants are living like rats in cellars among the debris. One air raid alone has caused 3,000 civilian deaths.---And it is good to think that what happened in Aachen happened, and goes on happening, in almost every German town." The German reaction to all this lingered to handicap British statesmen after the war when they desired to rehabilitate Germany as the one substantial Continental bulwark against Soviet land power.

Lord Hankey, a member of Mr. Churchill's wartime Cabinet, has in his book *Politics, Trials, and Errors* expressed the view that the unconditional-surrender formula was a major blunder. He tells us that General Eisenhower was against its application to Italy, where it embarrassed General Badoglio and prolonged the war. He writes:

While these interminable delays, due largely to "Unconditional Surrender," were taking place, and while the Allied politicians were continuing to harass, by their meticulous insistence on a barren formula, the man who had risked his life in carrying out their own advice, the very man from whom they had most to expect, the Germans were pouring divisions into Italy and building up step by step the defence that caused such terrible losses to the Allies and such dreadful destruction to the fairest land in Europe. What had been called the "soft" underbelly was thus turned by Unconditional Surrender into fortified positions. The time lost was to cost us dear.

In addition by that insistence, in the case of a country from which we had much to gain by kindness and consideration, we had given to Germany and Japan the clearest warning that in no circumstances would we listen to any terms that might be put forward short of the disastrous formula of Casablanca.

The insistence on unconditional surrender in Italy had been observed in Germany. Lord Hankey continues: After the scurvy treatment of Marshal Badoglio and Italy it is not surprising that the Germans held out to the last possible moment. They intended to hold out longer still behind the mountain barriers of Bavaria, Austria, and North Italy, and General Eisenhower records that the object of this desperate expedient was to try and secure better terms than Unconditional Surrender. Fortunately the General foiled this plan but the episode shows the desperation to which the phrase had driven our principal enemy. Apart from that, this unfortunate phrase prolonged the war for the German people to the last extremity of human endurance.

Later on in his book, Lord Hankey sums up the result that unconditional surrender had in prolonging the war in Germany:

It embittered the war, rendered inevitable a fight to a finish, banged the door to any possibility of either side offering terms or opening up negotiations, gave the Germans and Japanese the courage of despair, strengthened Hitler's position as Germany's "only hope," aided Goebbels's propaganda, and made inevitable the Normandy landing and the subsequent terribly exhausting and destructive advance through North France, Belgium, Luxemburg, Holland and Germany. The lengthening of the war enabled Stalin to occupy the whole of eastern Europe, to ring down the iron curtain and so to realise at one swoop a large instalment of his avowed aims against so-called capitalism, in which he includes social democracy. By disposing of all the more competent administrators in Germany and Japan this policy rendered treaty making impossible after the war and retarded recovery and reconstruction, not only in Germany and Japan, but everywhere else. It may also prove to have poisoned our future relations with ex-enemy countries. Not only the enemy countries, but nearly all countries were bled white by this policy, which has left us all, except the United States of America, impoverished and in dire straits.

Unfortunately also, these policies, so contrary to the spirit of the 'Sermon on the Mount, did nothing to strengthen the moral position of the Allies.

Lord Hankey's comment on the Churchill-Bevin encounter on unconditional surrender is—The main difference between the two is that Mr. Churchill takes a less dim view than Mr. Bevin of the results of unconditional surrender, but here Mr. Bevin is the responsible Minister immediately affected. In these circumstances it seems unlikely that a policy of unconditional surrender is likely ever again to be adopted in the middle of a major war and Mr. Bevin may have rendered a great and lasting service to mankind.

Mr. Bevin, looking back on what had happened, had at least recognized that it had been one of the big mistakes of the war—perhaps the most disastrous mistake of all. (The disastrous results of the unconditional-surrender formula of Casablanca for the course of the Second World War, and it's even more ominous implications for the future, have been ably set forth at great length by the Czech military expert Colonel F. O. Miksche, in his book *Unconditional Surrender*, which bears the appropriate, if sinister and foreboding, subtitle: "The Roots of a World War III.")

Almost equally fatal in prolonging the war and losing the peace was Churchill's acquiescence in the adoption of the so-called Morgenthau Plan for the post-war treatment of Germany at the Quebec Conference of September, 1944. This plan was a brutal and vengeful program of destroying German industry and converting Germany into a pastoral and agricultural country, even at the cost of starving many millions of Germans. It was vigorously opposed in the United States by Secretaries Hull and Stimson, but President Roosevelt strongly supported it. When the plan was originally shown to Churchill he indignantly rejected it, saying that he regarded it as "being chained to a dead German for life." That night he was offered the lure of a great post-war loan to Britain and forthwith accepted the Morgenthau policy, which was applied to Germany for some years with only slight changes. This caused untold suffering and billions in expense to Britain and the United States, to say nothing of intense bitterness on the part of the German people. This folly, along with the partition policy, still plagues the world and may yet prove a potent cause of a third world war. (The fateful story of this vindictive policy and its results has been told by Freda Utey in her able book *The High Cost of Vengeance*.)

## CHAPTER XXXI

### Appeasing Stalin



**R**ELATIONS with Russia now became more cordial than they had been since the "Russian steamroller" days of 1914. A number of prominent personalities in British public life followed the Prime Minister's example and made pilgrimages to Moscow. Among them was the Archbishop of York. He returned to tell with enthusiasm of how he had seen a crowd of 10,000 people in Moscow Cathedral and to express the view that "Premier Stalin is a wise statesman. He recognizes that religion is inherent in the Russian people."

St. Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus was hardly more instantaneous than the conversion of the Archbishop of York on the road to Moscow. The "Red" Dean of Canterbury—the Rev. Hewlett Johnson—was now able to chuckle. He had become quite a respectable figure

and was in great demand. He could now strike an I-told-you-so attitude and reflect that the days of miracles were not past. Mrs. Winston Churchill became President of the Red Cross Aid for Russia and did admirable work appealing for funds to aid Russia.

On January 18, 1944, General Eisenhower prophesied, "We shall win this year." The Allies were on the highroad to victory. The Red army entered Poland, and the Poles looked hopefully to Winston Churchill to guarantee their independence. The more nationalist-minded of them asked if Churchill was going to do a Munich with Stalin and allow the Russians to control Poland. After all, had not Britain gone into the war in 1939 because the British Government had guaranteed Poland?

In the Sunday Pictorial, Major General Fuller declared that "something more than a bloody campaign is needed and that we must break the German will to resist by disclosing our plan for Europe." The Big Four had met at Teheran in November-December, 1943. The pictures of Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin were on the front pages in the United States, the U.S.S.R., and Britain. From America, Time reported: "Prime Minister Smuts of South Africa set the week's best Teheran story in motion. His version: 'Winston Churchill suggested to Stalin the possibility of the Pope's being associated with some of the discussions taken.' 'The Pope,' said Stalin, thoughtfully, 'the Pope, how many divisions has he?'"

Churchill and Stalin seemed to be getting on like brothers. But everything was not as smooth as it seemed on the surface. As Elliott Roosevelt reveals in his book *As He Saw It*, Churchill and Stalin clashed on several important matters at Teheran, notably the question of the invasion of Germany through France or through the Balkans and Italy, and the method of disposing of Nazi leaders as they were captured. Stalin wished to shoot the Nazi leaders as soon as they were caught, in the tradition of Genghis Khan and Tamerlane. Stalin had set the precedent for this procedure by murdering some 15,000 Polish officers and leading landlords, businessmen and officials in the Katyn Forest and elsewhere some time before June, 1940. Churchill preferred to kill off the Nazi leaders "legally" through war-crimes trials. Stalin wished a second front across the Channel. Churchill wanted to invade through "the soft underbelly of Europe" in order to keep the Russians out of Central and South-eastern Europe.

Teheran had many disastrous results, such as the invasion through the West, with the resulting Russian domination of Eastern Europe, the preliminary plans for destroying and partitioning Germany, and the proposal of war-crimes trials, which, as Lord Hankey, Montgomery Belmont and, especially, F. J. P. Veale in his *Advance to Barbarism*, have made clear, assure the greater barbarization of war in the future.

On the political front at home the political truce was being broken by independents who were capturing Tory seats at by-elections. Churchill and the Tory head office were annoyed. Reporting the mood of the electors at a by-election in West Derbyshire, A. J. Cummings of the *News Chronicle* wrote: They are largely indifferent to the appeals not to let the Premier down.



It is almost as if the people are really beginning to make an intelligent distinction between Churchill, the war leader, and Churchill, the chairman of the Tory Party, between the voice of the nation and megaphone calls on behalf of privileged but effete institutions.

It may be that the party calculators who think that these resounding broadcasts at a victory General Election will do the trick will have to revise their ideas.



The British people were showing more signs of political intelligence than Churchill and the Tory headquarters gave them credit for.

In February, 1944, Churchill told Parliament that Russia was to get a slice of territory from Poland and that the Poles were to be compensated with territory from Germany. The Member for Cambridge University rose after him and said that he was puzzled about the Atlantic Charter and how this new territorial carving-up could be reconciled with it. But nobody, certainly not Churchill, was worrying about the Atlantic Charter now. It had become a forgotten scrap of paper. There was heartburning among the Poles. Churchill's stock with them was going rapidly down. They were asking bitterly what they had been fighting for. Was it necessary for Churchill to go so far in a policy of appeasement towards Stalin? But the Poles' importance and popularity in Britain were receding. The Russians were the heroes now. Churchill's new line of policy was sharply criticized in the *Economist*, which said: "His speech leaves a great vacuum into which Goebbels will pour unimagined horrors to stimulate German resistance. Now that the Atlantic Charter has been disposed of for the German people, the Allies' urgent need is to substitute at least as clear a statement of the terms of surrender." To this Churchill turned a deaf ear. Like Lloyd George in 1917 and 1918, all that he was concerned about was a spectacular military victory.

The *Economist* had now become one of his principal critics, protesting strongly at Churchill's secret diplomacy and the way he was agreeing to the carving up of Eastern Europe "without open discussion or any consultation with public opinion," and acquiescing in the partition of Germany, which meant "sowing the certain seeds for an inevitable third German war." Churchill, however, ignored these sober voices. He preferred to listen to men like Lord Beaverbrook. Victory was at hand, and he was Britain's hero.

Though an historian of a sort, Churchill apparently learned few lessons from history. There was one that he might well have learned from the period during his own intense personal experience; the disastrous results of Lloyd George's "knockout victory" program and his rejection of a negotiated peace. As early as September 29, 1916, Lloyd George had told Roy Howard of the *United Press* that the "fight must be to a finish—to a knockout." The result was the whole series of mistakes and misfortunes from 1916 to 1939 that led through a "twenty-year armistice" to the Second World War. By concentrating on "the destruction of Hitler" and acceding to the unconditional-surrender folly of Roosevelt Churchill made possible all the colossal miseries and mistakes that led from Casablanca to Teheran, Yalta and the cold war, with the grave possibility of an early launching of a completely devastating third world war. By failing to have a peace policy, Churchill and his associates lost the peace even more rapidly than it was lost after Lloyd George's khaki election of 1918. Churchill himself has dramatically immortalized his failure by the very title of the final volume of his war memoirs, *Triumph and Tragedy* (1953). His short-sighted and temporary military triumph led to the more lasting tragedy of losing the peace that victory might have made possible.

While Churchill was flattering the Great Dictator on the Left, he was also appeasing the leading remaining dictator on the Right, General Franco of Spain. Stung by criticism of this by radicals and liberals, Churchill revealed his utter lack of ideological integrity or logic by declaring that his sole test of the fitness of an ally was the possible military and material aid that he might give at the moment, whether he be monarchist, Fascist or Communist—presumably even a cannibal. This, coupled with Churchill's lack of any war ideals or post-war plan, shows the complete fraud in his pretensions to leading a great crusade for a "free world." It was an attitude comparable to Stalin's much criticized query as to how many divisions the Pope could put into the field.

At a press conference in Washington in May, 1944, a woman correspondent asked Mrs. Roosevelt what she thought about Mr. Churchill's disposition to look cordially on Spain. The Washington correspondent of the *News Chronicle* (May 31, 1944) reported her as saying: "Mr. Churchill has been thinking a certain way for sixty years and she did not think he wanted to

change that way of thinking now. His speech had reflected the way he thought on Spain." This observation showed that, whatever her other excellences and talents, Mrs. Roosevelt did not qualify as an expert historian of Churchill's thinking. Few men have changed their thinking more frequently than Churchill. His unflagging devotion to personal political ambition and his enthusiasm for blood and iron were about the only matters on which his thinking remained consistent down to 1950.

The Labour Party, however, began to get more restless about how the end of the war might affect both the domestic and foreign scene. On June 21, 1944, a Labour M.P., Mr. William Leach of Bradford, wrote in *Forward* an article pointing out that Churchill wished Labour Ministers to remain in the coalition, and prophesied that if Labour refused it would be defeated in the general election. It was regarded in the Labour movement as a kite flown in favour of continuance of the coalition. The editor of *Forward* analysed the possibilities in detail and argued that this would be a fatal policy for the Labour Party. Mr. John Parker, M.P., the chairman of the Fabian Society, replied to Mr. Leach, declaring that the overwhelming majority of the rank-and-file Labour M.P.s were against coalition and that if Labour accepted the coalition "it would commit suicide." There was very little response to Mr. Leach's coalition kite. Opinion in the Labour Party was hardening against continuation of the coalition. By September, it had definitely made up its mind. However much some of the leaders were inclined to toy with the idea, the rank and file were determined they were not going to be caught walking into the Churchill parlour.

In the years since the end of the war, as it has become more and more apparent that we are losing the peace, it has been fashionable in some circles (mainly among friends of Churchill in Britain and detractors of Roosevelt in the United States) to blame Roosevelt as a fuzzy-minded idealist taken in by Stalin and deceived into believing that wartime co-operation would continue after the war. Churchill is portrayed as a hardboiled "realist" who was convinced that the men in the Kremlin were unreliable, but he was frustrated in acting on his own views by Roosevelt's naive faith. But it seems that Churchill could be optimistic too; in his House of Commons address of May 24, 1944, he said: "Profound changes have taken place in Soviet Russia. The Trotzkyite form of communism has been completely wiped out. The victory of the Russian armies has been attended by a great rise in the strength of the Russian state and a remarkable broadening of its views. The religious side of Russian life has had a wonderful rebirth."

And even later, when he returned from Yalta he reported to the House: "The impression I brought from the Crimea ... is that Marshal Stalin and the other Soviet leaders wish to live in honourable friendship and democracy with the Western democracies. I feel that no government stands more on its obligations than the Russian Soviet Government."

## CHAPTER XXXII

### Losing the Peace

**A**NEURIN BEVAN, M.P., had become known as one of Churchill's most frequent critics in the House and in the country. In Glasgow he said: We see the personality of Winston Churchill paraded on the radio, in the Press built up to gigantic dimensions until everybody around him looks like Lilliputians. When a man is in a very big position the bigness of his position comes to be described as the bigness of the man. Because water comes through a tap it doesn't follow it comes from it and many of the merits of the Prime Minister belong to the office and not to the man. We have seen a number of these big men one after another and each one appeared to be indispensable until everyone says, "What would happen if he went?"

Why this nonsense of "unconditional surrender"? It is a silly schoolboy phrase. It never did mean anything. We forced Italy to unconditional surrender and what did Churchill then proceed to do? He tried to get Victor Emmanuel back on the throne again and he failed because the

Italian working class wouldn't have it. ... Do not be deceived. Kick out these extraordinary men. Get rid of the Nazis of Germany and the Nazis of Britain and put in power in Britain those people who have a common heritage with us all.

An article in the Tribune in December, 1944, by H. G. Wells was headed "Churchill Must Go." Wells wrote:

Winston Churchill, the present would-be British Führer, is a person with a range of ideas limited to the adventures and opportunities of British political life. He has never given evidence of thinking extensively or of any scientific or literary capacity. Now he seems to have lost his head completely.

When the British people were blistered with humiliation by the curish policy of the old Conservative gang in power, the pugnacity of Winston brought him to the fore. The country liked fighting and he delighted in fighting. For want of a better reason he became the symbol of our national will for conflict, a role he has now outlived---His ideology, picked up in the garrison life of India, on the reefs of South Africa, the national home, and the conversation of wealthy Conservative households, is a pitiful jumble of incoherent nonsense. A Boy Scout is better equipped. He has served his purpose and it is high time he retired upon his laurels before we forget the debt we owe him.

The Labour Party held its conference in December, 1944, with Harold Laski in the chair. He urged a peace without revenge and a constructive policy for Europe. "No British Socialist," he said, "can be happy while India remains a vast prison house of which the keys are kept in Downing Street." Laski's exhortation was a challenge to everything that Churchill stood for.

In Greece, however, Churchill was backing reaction. He was backing the Right whenever he could. The Economist said: It is indeed one of the most incomprehensible elements in the conduct of British foreign policy to-day that it is the Prime Minister who seems to be possessed of an especial weakness for kings and princelings. It is contrary to all common-sense that a statesman who is such a convinced believer in democracy at home should have a positive preference for discredited dynasties abroad. But so it seems to be.

In Italy, Churchill had tried to bring pressure on Count Sforza to bring back King Victor Emmanuel. The count protested strongly. Churchill was trying in the chaos and aftermath of war to restore regimes which no longer had profound or popular support.

The war dragged on into 1945. The Germans fought on, desperately afraid of unconditional surrender and what it might mean. There was nothing in the Allies' policy to help to create the conditions for an alternative government to that of Hitler. The war correspondent of the Daily Mail wrote an article headed: Why Nazis Fight Like Furies. Follow Our Lead. He reported a conversation with a captured German who told him: "We Germans are doing exactly what you people in Britain said you'd do. You said you'd fight on the beaches and in the streets. You did not believe you were beaten. Nor do we now."

The editor of the Economist kept stressing the futility of Churchill's unconditional surrender slogan: "Goebbels has persuaded enough Germans that in any case a fight to a finish is better than the kind of peace the Allies will impose. Responsibility for the success of this propaganda rests with the Allies themselves."

The Big Three, Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin, met at Yalta in the Crimea in January and February, 1945. In a statement from there they declared: We have agreed on common policies and plans for enforcing the unconditional surrender terms which we shall impose together on Germany after German armed resistance has been finally crushed.

These terms will not be known until the final defeat of Germany is accomplished.

It was to be a fight to the finish and a conqueror's peace. Bernard Shaw commented in *Forward*: As to re-bridging the rivers the Allies have made impassable, rebuilding the cities they have reduced to heaps of rubble, replacing the locomotives they have smashed, training craftsmen and professionals to do the work of those they have slain, feeding the millions they have left destitute; in short repairing the damage by which war has reduced itself to absurdity, not a blessed word. Nothing but fairy tales.

Pass on to something real. We know the names of the Three in One. But who was the One in Three? Clearly Uncle Joe. On the Polish question he was first and the rest nowhere.

Lublin has beaten London hands down: and Washington has looked on, not knowing what to say.

This was the war which was begun to guarantee Poland. In the East Uncle Joe had won. Shaw was certainly right. Churchill appeared to have underwritten Stalin's peace. At Yalta, Uncle Joe seemed to have had everything his own way. A decent peace for Germany was doomed and Communist domination in the Far East assured.

The fighting dragged on until April, 1945, and the cornered Nazis made their last stand in Berlin. Thanks to the unconditional-surrender policy, there was no German Government to take their place. The victors were left with the task of fatally dividing up conquered Germany into zones and administering the new Germany themselves. Much of Germany was by now a wilderness and a cemetery. And across the newly drawn frontiers the victors began to glare at each other in suspicion and distrust.

Winston Churchill delivered another great radio oration on May 13, but its concluding passage was both prophetic and ominous: "There would be little use in punishing the Hitlerites for their crimes if law and justice did not rule and if totalitarian or police government were to take the place of the German invaders."

After the First World War, the victors had been able to talk of the conflict as a "war to end war," and many of them believed what they said, even if the Treaty of Versailles had laid the foundations for another war. But, in 1945, there was talk of World War III before the fighting had been concluded. Mr. Kingsley Martin, the editor of the *New Statesman and Nation*, was in America. He cabled home (May 12, 1945) to say that—The U.S. Navy Department and American businessmen now talk almost openly of war with Russia.

In this hour of victory with every prospect of a formally successful Conference many of us doubt whether anything real is being accomplished.

We had won World War II and Winston Churchill was on top of the world. But what had Churchill's great victory and the unconditional surrender of Germany brought to Europe? Liddell Hart, whose life had been spent writing about wars and victories, summed up the situation at a Liberal meeting at Kendal. He said:

We went to war, six years ago, to maintain the independence of Poland. It should now be clear that Poland will only survive as a puppet-state, under the control of the power that struck her from behind in September, 1939, and joined with Germany in dividing her territory. It is plain that we cannot fulfil our pledge. We have strained ourselves as never before in any war, to redeem our honour, yet have failed in the end.

You may say, however, that our real aim was to prevent one great power dominating the Continent—a ruthless totalitarian power that enslaved the individual to the state. That domina-

tion was a serious possibility, if Germany had not been checked. But the result of absolute victory over Germany is that Russia, another totalitarian power, is established as predominant on the Continent. The larger half of Europe is now directly under her control, whilst the other half contains no state of comparable strength. As General Smuts has pointed out, Russia is "the new Colossus that bestrides this Continent," holding "a position which no country has ever occupied in the history of Europe."

All our main wars have been fought to maintain the balance of Europe, and prevent any one power becoming supreme. By destroying Germany so completely, we have automatically defeated our long-term aim—the vital principle of our policy throughout the centuries since we beat off the Spanish Armada.

This war was won—in the only real sense of the word—when the Germans' aggressive power was crippled. That result was achieved over two years ago. Since then we have been fighting on, blindly, to smash the Germans' defensive power—and, with it, their capacity to act as a buffer for the West. That result brought glory at a heavy price, but meant losing the peace.

Britain's leader was too excited by the battle to look ahead, and see the inevitable consequence of the smashing victory for which he thirsted. It makes no sense. In the gallant but short-sighted pursuit of that unreal victory we have reduced ourselves to the point of bankruptcy. We have sold out most of the overseas investments which helped to pay for our imports, and maintain the living standard of our people. We made ourselves economically dependent on America. For the last few years we have been living on her charity. The position of a poor relation is always awkward, as we are finding.

We are left, like the jam in a sandwich, between two huge mechanised powers, whose economic systems and policies differ so clearly as to foreshadow the danger of a conflict. Our intermediate position is the more precarious because, while we have become economically dependent on America, we are strategically on the wrong side of the Atlantic. Beyond these consequences lies the fact that the war has fostered a general spread of dictatorial regimes—of the fundamentally anti-liberal spirit for which "Fascism" and "Nazism" are but two of the many names."

Winston Churchill had been so excited about the battles that he had almost forgotten what the war was about. While Churchill was giving his V sign and making his great orations about victory, more sober-minded and thoughtful people were looking at the new situation in the world and asking, like Liddell Hart, "What have we won?"

The devastating horrors of all of the mistakes of Churchill and Roosevelt during the war were reaped at the Yalta Conference of January-February, 1945. There it became clear that Soviet Russia would dominate Central Europe, the Balkans and the Far East; that China would be communised; that Poland would be betrayed and put under Soviet domination; that Germany would be partitioned and devastated further in peacetime; that the liquidation of the British Empire would be inevitable; and that a cold war of indeterminate duration would follow close on the heels of the hot war which had been won. The bitter fruits of Yalta were sealed and delivered at the Potsdam Conference in the following July. Thus was the war won and the peace lost.

The great tragedy was that the Yalta concessions were completely unnecessary. Roosevelt had received decisive news from General MacArthur before he left for Yalta that the Japanese military power was broken and that the Japanese asked for peace on much the same terms that were accepted seven months later. Walter Trohan published these Japanese peace proposals of January, 1945, in the McCormick-Patterson papers on the Sunday following V-J Day. Their authenticity has never been officially challenged. Russia took no active part in the final conquest of Japan. The atomic bombing was completely unnecessary from a military point of view, and it created a new and terrifying military spectre for the human race.

When all is said and done, it must, however, be admitted that Churchill's record for international statesmanship in the Second World War should be rated considerably higher than that of President Roosevelt. Churchill was at least not the author of the Casablanca formula of "unconditional surrender," the supreme Allied mistake during the war, even if he did not vigorously oppose it. His stand at Teheran was sounder than that of Roosevelt. Churchill demanded that Hitler be attacked from the south through the Mediterranean, which would have prevented subsequent Soviet occupation of Central Europe and the Balkans. At Quebec, Churchill bitterly opposed the vicious Morgenthau plan to turn Germany into a pastoral economy, even if it meant the starvation of many millions of Germans. He only acquiesced after being bribed by the promise of a vast and much-needed American loan to Britain. And at Yalta Churchill did not, like Roosevelt, have Japanese surrender terms (virtually the same as those accepted on V-J Day) in his hands, sent by General MacArthur, before Roosevelt left for the conference. Hence, Churchill could not know as fully as Roosevelt the striking folly involved in bribing Stalin to enter the war against Japan, when Stalin's assistance was not needed in the slightest to assure the quick defeat of Japan, and in using the atom bomb on Japanese cities.

In what was, however, probably the greatest folly of the war, Churchill and Roosevelt stood on virtually equal terms of responsibility—their joint decision to throw in everything behind Stalin unreservedly after June 22, 1941. It would have been far better if Britain and the United States had remained neutral and had permitted the two great totalitarian states to wear each other down to relative impotence, thus assuring the post-war domination of the world by the democracies.

Certainly, the achievement most commonly advanced in behalf of Churchill's claim to immortal fame, that he saved England from the Nazis, cannot be conceded by any honest and informed historian. The last thing that Hitler ever wished to do was to conquer or debase England, provided he could collaborate peacefully with her in repressing Communism and maintaining the British Empire intact as the main bulwark of white domination throughout the planet. Hitler was one of the most slavish Anglophiles and Anglo-maniacs in modern times. He had hoped to crush Poland in 1939 without involvement in war with Britain. Even after Dunkirk, he told his amazed generals that, if England would make peace, the Nazi forces would uphold Britain's interests throughout the world. Nothing rated higher in Hitler's emotions and aspirations than British good will and peace with England. The British Empire today would surely be much more intact and secure if Britain had never gone to war with Nazi Germany.

It can be argued that Nazi Germany was a menace to the world and needed to be destroyed. If this view be accepted, then surely Churchill can be said to have played a vital role—perhaps the most powerful one—in destroying Nazidom. But this is something quite different from the claim that he saved England and the British Empire from destruction at the hands of the Nazis. Surely, England in 1939 was much more safe from ruin at the hands of Nazi Germany than she is today from destruction by Soviet Russia. As one eminent American publicist has written: "Hitler only wished to 'crash' the Carlton Club; Stalin wished to smash it." So far as the interests of the world are concerned, it is doubtful whether they have been promoted by supplanting a potential, if doubtful, Nazi-British hegemony over the old World by an actual Soviet hegemony.

As noted above, the best guarantee of security for the democratic nations would have been a stalemate and the exhaustion of both Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia, after a long-drawn-out conflict. This was clearly at hand after June 22, 1941, but such a solution, advocated by many farsighted British statesmen and publicists and by Americans as far apart politically as Senators Taft and Truman, would have ended the glamour of Churchill as a wartime Prime Minister and would have denied Roosevelt his great ambition to be a wartime President, assured of indefinite tenure.

It should always be borne in mind that, although the war brought plenty of "blood, toil, tears and sweat" to the British and American people, especially to the former, it brought little of the kind to Messrs. Churchill and Roosevelt. They both had "the time of their life" during the war. Even

at the "horror meeting" of Casablanca, where the doom of Western civilization may have been sealed, Roosevelt wrote to King George that he and Churchill "had lots of fun together, as we always do."

In conclusion, it should always be clearly recalled that the peace was not lost because there was no plan which would have assured a decent peace. The Atlantic Charter of August, 1941, had it been seriously regarded by its authors and kept foremost in their minds throughout the conflict, would have guaranteed an approach to peace which could have been effectively implemented by a statesmanlike peace conference after the war. But the Atlantic Charter was as quickly forgotten as the Fourteen Points set forth by President Wilson on January 8, 1918, had been. During the war and after, the Atlantic Charter was all but completely repudiated. After the First World War, there was at least a bad peace treaty. Now, nearly a decade after V-J Day, there is no comprehensive peace treaty, nor is there any likelihood that one will be provided in any predictable future.

The most complete and devastating indictment of Churchill's role in losing the peace through his campaign of violent hatred for all things German and his absorption in the task of complete military defeat for the Axis powers, while repudiating the Atlantic Charter and failing to provide any substitute as a workable peace policy, has been set forth by Captain Russell Grenfell in *Unconditional Hatred: German War Guilt and the Future of Europe*. It was published in America, and thus far no English publisher has dared to defy Churchill's wrath and libel threats by printing the book. Aside from prolonging the war and losing the peace, Churchill's wartime violence against the Germans made it all the more difficult later on to induce the British people to deal reasonably with Germany when Attlee and Churchill wished to do so in the post-war period.

The renunciation of aggressive war in the Kellogg-Briand Pact of 1928 had been followed by an almost unprecedented flock of wars. Churchill and Roosevelt promised the world that all aggression would be ended when the Axis aggression was utterly crushed. But, as Captain Grenfell so clearly points out, exactly the opposite has been the reality:

The declared aim of President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill to end aggression by destroying the German capacity for it was, in fact, one of the greatest failures in history. Never before, perhaps, have so many aggressions been crowded into so short a time as have taken place in the few years since Germany's defeat: the Russian aggressions in Europe, the aggression by some person or persons unknown which drove the Dutch out of Indonesia, the Indian aggression against Hyderabad, the Chinese aggression against Tibet, the North Korean aggression against South Korea, the French aggression against Germany over the Saar, the Chinese aggression against the United Nations in Korea, and probably several others that I have overlooked. A pretty good score for any similar period of years, and especially those immediately following the hanging of the German "butcherbird's" corpse on the wire.

In an article in *Punch*, December 9, 1953, Malcolm Muggeridge presents the following obviously satirical commentary on the final volume of Churchill's war memoirs, *Triumph and Tragedy*, which sets forth the Prime Minister's version of the reasons why the peace was lost. Unfortunately, this satire is not entirely a fantasy. Many might well regard it as a better interpretation of the reasons why triumph developed into tragedy than Mr. Churchill's ponderous volume:

Molotov arrived first at the morning conference, and announced that after due consideration Marshal Stalin had decided to accede to the new, comprehensive Statement of Human Rights drafted by President Roosevelt. This represented a large concession, particularly in view of the Marshal's cool, if not hostile, attitude when the matter was originally raised. We thus embarked upon the thorny question of Poland in high good humour.

I attempted by means of matchsticks to show the Marshal how Poland might be expected to provide a permanent and effective buffer between Germany and Russia. "Do not let us," I said, "stuff the Polish goose too full of German food or she will suffer from indigestion." There was a general laugh, and with a roguish look the Marshal added: "Better indigestion than undernourishment."

Our own Poles, it must be admitted, were decent enough, but feeble. They kept pressing me to bring up the Katyn affair, and the disappearance of some of their representatives who had come to Russia under safe conduct to discuss relations with the London "Government." In the course of a private talk I had with Marshal Stalin I mentioned the matter of the missing delegates. He said he would look into it, adding, with a merry twinkle in his eye, that his subordinates sometimes were liable to get out of hand. Looking hard at Eden, I said I was in a like case, and there, on this friendly note, the matter ended.

It was, the Marshal insisted, the weakness of Poland which had enabled the Nazis to invade Russia so easily in June, 1941. At this point someone in President Roosevelt's entourage was heard to say in a loud whisper that Poland's weakness at that time was due to the partition and joint occupation of the country arranged between Hitler and Stalin. I saw the Marshal scowl when the remark was officiously translated to him by Molotov, and a heavy storm looked like blowing up. However I returned to my matchsticks, and gradually, as I humorously expounded their arrangement, the Marshal's brow cleared, and the storm was averted. In the end we agreed to recognize the Lublin government and to accept the Curzon Line in return for an undertaking on Stalin's part that he would be content with only three seats at the United Nations for the whole Soviet Union.

That evening it was my turn to entertain the other delegates to dinner. It was a particularly genial occasion. Toasts were drunk to the Red Army, and to the British and American forces. Proposing Marshal Stalin's health, I spoke of the valiant career which had carried him to his present unquestioned leadership of his people.

He had outdistanced all his rivals, if not, I added slyly, eliminated them, and both at home and abroad, led his people with a subtlety and courage beyond compare. The whole free world, I concluded, to the accompaniment of rapturous applause, breathed more freely because of the very existence of such a leader, on whose pledged word implicit reliance could be placed.

One curious exchange in the banquet which followed deserves mention. The Marshal was talking about German prisoners, and mentioned casually that, in his view, all the non-Communist ones should be shot out of hand. With mock solemnity, I said that, as signatories of the Geneva Convention, we could not assent to such practices. President Roosevelt, winking broadly, agreed.

With such good-humoured raillery, and with toast following toast, this convivial occasion ran its course far into the night. It seemed clear that the three of us—the President, Marshal Stalin and myself—bound together in lasting amity, would be able to shape the destinies of a distracted world into calmer paths. Alas, it was not to be. Death was soon to strike down the President; an ungrateful electorate was soon to dismiss me from office at the moment of victory, and only Marshal Stalin would remain, in the fastness of the Kremlin, to pursue his own wayward course.





## CHAPTER XXXIII

### Exploiting Victory

**W**INSTON CHURCHILL decided that he and the Tory Party would cash in immediately on victory. The Tory managers remembered how successfully the khaki election had been for them after the Boer War, and how the Lloyd George coalition had won the "hang the Kaiser" election of 1918. Winston remembered it all, too. Hitler was no more. The Nazis had been defeated and utterly discredited. Now the Labour Party would be Enemy No. 1. He decided to hold the general election in July. In its leading article the Manchester Guardian said:

The unreality of the whole affair comes out most blatantly in the Prime Minister's refusal of the Labour and Liberal request for an autumn election.

Here he is acting entirely as the servant of his party. The present [May] register is notoriously bad; that of October will be much better and give far more people the chance of voting.

A July election jeopardises, if it does not destroy, some important legislation that is now on the Statute Book. Five months may make a good deal of difference in clearing up the European situation and in adjusting Anglo-American relations with Russia.

Mr. Churchill, without rebutting these points, merely says that an autumn election would not be in the "National" interest. For "National" we are probably meant to read "Conservative."

There was no "probably" about it. Since Labour had rejected Churchill's earlier plan to arrange a post-war Coalition Government which he and the Tories could dominate, the only thought that was in Churchill's mind was how to dish the Labour Party, snatch political victory while the country was still emotionally drunk, end the coalition, and get the old Tory gang back into complete power again. The Tory press set out to use Churchill's war reputation for their own election purposes. Lord Beaverbrook announced: "Mr. Churchill has set us on the threshold of the door that leads to the temple of peace. He shall be the keeper of that door." "But," asked the editor of Forward, "who is behind the door and who is going to keep the key?"

The moment the coalition was ended and the Labour Ministers had left the Cabinet, Churchill turned with all his oratorical ferocity upon his erstwhile Socialist colleagues who had sat with him in the Cabinet and, indeed, made him Prime Minister. He could not very well accuse them of being Bolsheviks, for he had still to work with Stalin. Since the Red bogey could not be brought out, he thought of another. A victory for the Labour Party would be one for the Gestapo. "Gestapo in Britain if Socialists Win" was to be his slogan. It was the theme of his election broadcast to the nation on June 5, 1945. He denounced "the Socialist policy as a dangerous challenge to liberty and to the credit of the nation":

No Socialist Government, conducting the entire life and industry of the country, could afford to allow free, sharp or violently worded expressions of public discontent. It would have to fall back on some form of Gestapo, no doubt very humanely directed in the first instance. And this would nip opinion in the bud; it would stop criticism as it reared its head and it would gather all the power to the supreme party and the party leaders rising on stately pinnacles above their vast bureaucracies of Civil Servants, no longer servants and no longer civil. And where would the ordinary simple folk—the common people as they liked to call them in America—where would they be once this mighty organism had got them in its grip?

My friends, I must tell you that Socialism is abhorrent to British ideas of freedom. The State is to be the arch employer, the arch planner, the arch administrator and ruler, and the arch caucus boss.

Socialism is inseparably interwoven with totalitarianism and the abject worship of the State. Then came the attack (carefully saved up) on Greenwood's "£. s. d. as meaningless symbols" speech. He was obviously out to scare the people out of their wits as the Tories had done before in 1924 and 1931. The Beaverbrook press took up the theme and played countless variations on it. In a leading article, the Daily Express asked the fearsome question: "After ripping the Gestapo out of the still-beating heart of Germany will you stand for a Gestapo under another name at home? Were you shocked to learn from Mr. Churchill that State control leads to Fascism?"

The Tory candidates throughout the country followed in full cry. A vote for the Socialists was a vote for the Gestapo! They were out to stampede the British electors and to scare and frighten them into voting Tory. But Winston had overdone it this time; he had painted too lurid a picture and had beaten the alarmist political drum too loudly. Shaw remarked of Churchill's broadcast: "It certainly was a fiasco, in Italian slang—a flop." On the next night, Mr. Attlee wiped the floor with Churchill and raised his own reputation. "People may suspect," was the Manchester Guardian's comment, "that when politicians spend their time trying to create panic it is because their own case is too weak to stand on reason."

Lord Moran, Winston's doctor, explained why Stalin liked Churchill. In an interview with the Daily Express he said: "It is not easy for anybody to get into Stalin's mind but as far as one can make out Stalin thinks that the Prime Minister is a broth of a boy. Stalin doesn't like a man who lives on nuts and soda water." It was surely a strange state of affairs when English Tories could think that approval of Churchill by Stalin was a strong campaign argument in behalf of electing a Tory Prime Minister.

As the campaign proceeded, another villain was discovered—Harold J. Laski. The return of a Labour Government would mean a Laski dictatorship! Professor Laski became chief villain of the election overnight. Writing in Reynold's News, Tom Driberg explained why he had been singled out for attention: "It is in my view certain that the ridiculous stunt about Laski would never have been so played up if his name had been Smith or Brown. The anti-Semitism lurking in this campaign came out clearly in the hecklers' adaptations from it. It was the most despicable and de-graded campaign that even Fleet Street has ever sunk to—'a street,' as somebody remarked recently, 'consisting almost entirely of gutters.'"

In the country the Tories exploited Winston Churchill in a way that disgusted even many of his wartime supporters. His photograph covered the hoardings as "The Man Who Won the War" and "The Man Who Must Finish the Job."

Winston Churchill's personal appeal to vote for the Tory candidate was sent to every elector through the post. A great national triumphal tour from south to north was arranged. He went from town to town and to constituency after constituency perched on the top of his car waving his hat, giving the V sign, smoking his big cigar and making little speeches through the microphone to great crowds which in turn were photographed and the pictures placed on the front pages to show how Churchill and the Tory Party were carrying all before them.

It was just the same kind of spectacle that Goebbels formerly staged for Hitler. The British people were called upon to follow their Leader, their Great Man. The Tory press played up Churchill in every possible way. Even the sober Glasgow Herald declared in a leading article: "In position and prestige and in variety of genius, Winston Churchill is a unique phenomenon. Nature, we may be certain, will not reproduce him." Mr. Stanley Holmes, the National candidate for Jarrow, sent a desperately appealing telegram to Winston Churchill which read: "Tyneside would like to touch the hem of your garment on Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday of next week."

The Churchill campaign annoyed the Manchester Guardian. It wrote: "What he wants is a rubber-stamp Parliament pledged to support him blindly and uncritically. And since he has let

out his political management to the Conservative Central Office this means a Conservative Parliament. It is a pity that men like Lord Woolton and Sir John Anderson should be lending themselves to the fraud."

Winston was confident that his triumphal tour would end in a sweeping political victory. In Glasgow he said: "I knew the working class of Glasgow would be on our side." "When his party was approaching Oldham," reported the Oldham Chronicle, "it was preceded by a Conservative loud-speaker van proclaiming 'Here comes Winnie—watch the third car—the greatest man on earth—the greatest statesman in the world.'"

There were few people in Britain, even among the Labourites, who prophesied that the general election would result in the defeat of Winston Churchill and the Tories. The odds seemed to be overwhelmingly against Labour. On the day of the poll the Daily Express "Centre of Public Opinion" declared under the headline Socialist Chances Remote: "Mr. Churchill's National Government assured of a 70-seats majority."

It never seemed to have dawned on Churchill himself that he could be defeated. He was stunned when the results were all known. The Tories had lost the election in a landslide against them. No less than 393 Labour M.P.s had been returned. There were only 198 Tories. The country had made it clear they had rejected Churchill as their peace leader. A total of 11,992,292 votes had been cast for Labour as against 9,058,020 for the Tories. Britain for the first time had voted for a Labour Government with a clear, even large, majority.

## CHAPTER XXXIV

### Leader of the Opposition

**T**HE election was indeed a great blow for Churchill. He had never dreamed of defeat. He had expected a striking electoral triumph and a national vote of thanks. This was base ingratitude indeed. For this new Labour Government would be in power for five years. Whatever they might have thought of him as a wartime leader, the people rejected him for the peace. Winston Churchill would no longer be one of the Big Four and Stalin would be chuckling up his sleeve. The Russians could not have got rid of him as easily as this.

Actually, the British nation was rather sorry for Churchill on the morrow of his defeat. But, after all, he had asked for it; it had been his rush election; he had wanted the electorate to give their decision for a Conservative Government and himself, and they had done it emphatically and overwhelmingly with unexpected result.

Many of his admirers hoped that he would now retire from party politics. He was still regarded as a national figure. He could become an Earl like Lloyd George and make his orations with dignity and give his advice to the nation and the world from the calmer atmosphere of the House of Lords.

But Winston Churchill did not wish to go to the House of Lords. He had lost none of his old political pugnacity and the love of parliamentary battle, and he was not going to be removed from the conflict in the House of Commons, in which he had been such a prominent personality for so long. He would show them that there was life in the old dog yet—and he did.

But it was a very different House of Commons. Opposite him were his Socialist colleagues of the wartime Cabinet, whom he had tried with all his power to oust. Behind them were rows and rows of Socialists, young and old, who had fought his candidates at the election and now regarded him as their political Enemy No. 1. The Socialist Front Bench made him angry, too. He looked over the dispatch box at them incredulously; he could hardly persuade himself that he was no longer Prime Minister. There was the unobtrusive, self-effacing Attlee, who had little

parliamentary glamour, in his place. Bevin, Cripps, Greenwood; they were all there. Herbert Morrison, who had been too clever for him at the election, was the Leader of the House, treating him with ostentatious respect and yet always ready with the quick cockney wit and retort that deflated him. Worst of all, sitting across there as Minister of Health was Aneurin Bevan, who had been a thorn-in-the-flesh critic of Churchill during the war years and had learned how to be as agile and effective and pugnacious in parliamentary debate as Winston himself.

It was not going to be a happy Parliament in which Winston Churchill would continue to dominate the scene. The Tories had no other leaders of the heavy Churchill class. The Edens, the Macmillans, the Butlers, were lightweights. The big-business men like Sir John Anderson and Oliver Lyttelton were more fitted for the City. No other picturesque personality was on the horizon. The Tories who had survived were on the whole a dull lot. Churchill remained the mountain because the surrounding Tory country was so obviously flat. He was still their greatest asset in the country—which retained a certain affection for him even though it had rejected his party.

So Churchill remained the leader of the Tory Party, to appear on the great occasions to make orations in the country, to intervene in debate when he thought he could score against the Government, and to bide his time. But he was not very effective, even though his capacity to rouse the House to fury and to turn a debate into a Donnybrook remained. The Socialist Ministers were his equals when they were not his masters. And they knew his past. When he arrived to make passionate protest against their legislation to limit the power of the House of Lords they turned up his old speeches and read them out. The Tories behind him looked glum; the Government benches laughed heartily, and the country was amused. He could no longer sway by-elections. The Tory machine's attempts to parade him round at the eve-of-poll demonstrations met with no success. So Parliament saw him less and less. He had no time for the day-to-day routine. He was busy on his memoirs; he preferred to write history and immortal prose. The lesser Tory lights could do the drudgery work.

Abroad, however, Churchill was still regarded as the best-known British political personality. Foreigners did not realize that he was no longer Prime Minister and that his influence in Britain had waned. America, especially, continued to think of him as the great war leader and the man who could make the great orations. In 1946 he paid a lengthy visit to the United States and was warmly received by President Truman and his old wartime friends. The President referred to him as "one of the great men of the age." In a speech at Fulton on March 5, 1946, which fired the first gun of the cold war, Churchill dealt with the international situation. It was broadcast to America and relayed to Britain. In a passage which attracted world-wide attention he referred to Russia:

A shadow has fallen upon the scenes so lately marked by the Allied victory. Nobody knows what Soviet Russia and its Communist inter-national organisation intends to do in the immediate future, or what are the limits, if any, to their expansive and proselytising tendencies. I have a strong admiration and regard for the valiant Russian people and my war-time comrade, Marshal Stalin. There is sympathy and goodwill in Britain—and I doubt not here also—towards the people of all the Russias, and a resolve to persevere through many differences and rebuffs in establishing lasting friendships. We understand the Russian need to be secure on her Western frontiers from all renewal of German aggression. We welcome her to her rightful place among the leading nations of the world. Above all we welcome constant, frequent, growing contacts between the Russian people and our own people on both sides of the Atlantic. It is my duty, however, to place before you certain facts about the present situation.

He went on to argue that Eastern Europe had now become completely dominated by Soviet Russia. He continued: "Whatever conclusions may be drawn from these facts—and facts they are— this is certainly not the liberated Europe we fought to build up. Nor is it one which contains the essentials of permanent peace." That was a confession that the Second World War

had neither brought security to the world, ended totalitarianism, nor saved democracy. On the contrary, we were apparently already on the way to World War III:

In France and Italy and other countries, there is the influence of Communism where the Communist parties or fifth columns constitute a growing challenge and peril to Christian civilisation.

These are sombre facts for anyone to have to note on the morrow of a victory gained by so much splendid comradeship in arms and in the cause of freedom and democracy. And we should be most unwise not to face them squarely while time remains. . . . Our difficulties and dangers will not be removed by closing our eyes to the facts, nor by merely waiting to see what happens, nor by a policy of appeasement. What is needed is a settlement, and the longer this is delayed the more difficult it will be and the greater our dangers will become. From what I have seen of our Russian friends and allies during the war I am convinced there is nothing they admire so much as strength, and nothing for which they have less respect than for military weakness. For that reason the old doctrine of a balance of power is unsound. We cannot afford, if we can help it, to work on narrow margins, offering temptations to a trial of strength. If the Western Democracies stand together in strict adherence to the principles of the United Nations Charter, their influence for furthering their principles will be immense and no one is likely to molest them. If, however, they become divided or falter in their duty, and if all these important years are allowed to slip away, then catastrophe may overwhelm us all.

Churchill had not attempted to outline what he meant by a settlement with Russia. What he had stressed was the idea of preparing for war. It was the old familiar theme. If the West accepted it, America and Britain were invited to increase their armed forces because Russia respected and admired armed force. The security of the West depended on armed strength. There was also lack of military experts in Russia who argued in the same way. If Russia respected and admired military strength, Churchill did too. The same argument could be used with the same justification by Stalin. If Russia was to be secure she must be strong on sea, land, and in the air, like the West. That was how the Russian military leaders reacted to Churchill.

It was the old familiar fallacy: the more armaments you have, the stronger you are and the less likely you are to be attacked. The Kaiser, Lord Fisher, Hitler, Mussolini, the Japanese war lords, had all told their people this. At Fulton, Churchill made no constructive suggestions likely to convince the Russians that he had any proposals that could form a basis of a settlement of the estrangement that had come about between the wartime Allies. Only to be prepared for war—and the Russians could do that too!

Stalin also had a grievance against the United States. They had been allies in the war against Japan. They had sat together at their conferences, but the Russians had not been told about the atom bomb that was to be dropped on their mutual enemy. That was one of the reasons why the war had ended in a mood of tense suspicion. If the Russians had dropped the atom bomb without informing the Allies that they had it, what would have been said in Britain and America? Indeed, the eminent American financier and publicist, Robert R. Young, suggested in the *Saturday Review of Literature*, March 8, 1947, that the atom bomb had been used more as a threat and challenge to Russia in the future than as a means of bringing Japan to her knees, since Japan was begging for peace before the bomb was used on her cities.

The Russian reaction to the Fulton speech was to dub Churchill as a warmonger—the advocate of a policy that would lead to a third world war. But the speech had the warm approval of the anti-Russian American press.

By his Fulton, Missouri, doctrine Churchill showed that he was even more talented in making backflips and ideological somersaults in the foreign field than in that of domestic politics. In the latter, he had only changed from Tory to Liberal to Tory. In regard to Soviet Russia, his record

his political gymnastics was far more impressive. He had been a violent critic of the Bolshevik Revolution of October, 1917, and had been the leading spirit in promoting the Russian civil war designed to overthrow the Bolsheviks. Thereafter, for twenty years he had unceasingly vilified the Soviet Union and its leaders. Then, following June 22, 1941, he warmly espoused the Russian cause against Hitler and showered encomiums on Stalin—"this great rugged war chief---of massive outstanding personality." Next, in 1946 he instigated the Allied reaction against Soviet Russia and suggested the cold war. Later still, in 1953-55, frightened when Russia obtained the atomic bomb, he sought to check American ardour in following to dangerous extremes the policy he had suggested at Fulton.

Churchill still had his admirers in Europe. He had been the symbol of the resistance to Hitler and was popular in France and the other countries of Europe that had been occupied by the Nazis. As the movement for the union of Western Europe grew, he became one of its principal supporters and was identified with the European Parliamentary Conference at The Hague. When the program took a more official form and the shadowy Council of Europe met at Strasbourg, Winston Churchill was the personality from Britain whom the Continent knew best. He was the hero of the occasion. He had another great spectacular triumph when he received the Freedom of Strasbourg; once more he was on the front pages of the world; once again cinema audiences all over the world saw the familiar figure and heard his voice.

## CHAPTER XXXV

### The Decoy

**A**FTER Strasbourg, Churchill returned to move a vote of censure on the Government following the devaluation of the pound. It was a typical Churchill rhetorical onslaught on his Socialist foes, full of sound and fury, with an eye on the general election that was coming. For he was still the undisputed leader of the Tory Party; he had received the usual well-staged ovation at the Tory Party Conference, an ovation only equalled by that given to a delegate who declared that he was a gas worker with eight children and had come there to oppose the nationalization of gas. Churchill declared: "The devaluation of the pound is the result of four years' government by the Socialist Party.

They are ranged around the fallacy of Socialism which is in principle contrary to human nature and which I believe can only be enforced upon nations in its entirety in the wholesale fashion of Communism."

When he demanded a reduction of national expenditure, James Griffiths, Minister of National Insurance, asked "On what?"

Churchill evaded the question, which was repeated from many Members on the Government benches. "Hon. Members," he said, "should ask the Chancellor that. He has the power to answer that question, and the duty to answer the question."

An hon. Member: "It is your duty, too."

"I am as good a judge of my duty as the hon. Member is," he retorted. But he did not answer the question. What he was concerned with was not explaining Tory policy but in scoring as many election points as he could against the Government. He was obviously exploiting the financial difficulties of the country for the benefit of the Tory Party.

Sir Stafford Cripps, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, was the main target of the attack, for "it will be impossible in the future to accept with confidence any statements which he may make as Chancellor of the Exchequer from that box." When Attlee came to reply he said: "The right hon. Gentleman, the Leader of the Opposition, can be a very big man or a very small man. I am

always sorry, as one who has seen him in great and generous moods, when he descends to that kind of pettiness and meanness which he displayed yesterday. It did not injure my right hon. Friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but it will devalue the right hon. Gentleman."

But it was the speech of Aneurin Bevan that was the more devastating reply to Churchill. He began by welcoming "the opportunity of pricking the bloated bladder of lies with the poniard of truth." He continued:

I welcome the opportunity of confronting the right hon. Gentleman with the facts. He is known as a very great stylist and one who reads his prose with delight. A reason why he moves gracefully across the pages is because he carries a light weight of fact.

He sub-edits history, and if there is any disagreeable fact, overboard it goes. This has always been characteristic of the right hon. Gentleman and it has had a most unfortunate effect on the party opposite because now they have begun to think in phrases as well.

With a wealth of facts the Minister of Health showed how Britain was recovering from the war. He went on to reproach the Tories for exploiting the difficulties of then: country for their party purposes: We were obviously getting into difficulties and those difficulties were added to by the most vicious campaign of misrepresentation that British newspapers have ever indulged in. In fact, it was so bad that it produced a reaction; it cured itself; and even the newspapers that had been indulging in it became contrite, realising the immeasurable damage that they were doing to the credit of Great Britain. I cannot understand why Tories should behave in this way. Other nationals do not denigrate their own country abroad. I have not heard the French doing it. The only people in the world who have used this present situation to undermine the credit of their own country have been the British Tories. They did not care what was the effect upon the fortunes of their country so long as they could reap some party glory.

The Tories ceased to interrupt; they sat there as if they had been mesmerized by the burning and scornful eloquence of the indictment. Bevan went on: Those are the people the right hon. Gentleman would ask the country to send back. You see, Sir, they are the same ones. The right hon. Gentleman thinks that he is the Leader of the Conservative Party. He is not. He is their decoy. There is a little disturbance going on at the moment inside the Conservative Party as to whether the right hon. Gentleman is a liability or an asset. It is a very considerable disturbance. The rumbles have reached us. Now, he of all men ought not to be caught, because he has had great experience. He ought to know that the Conservative Party have always tried to find a false face. They have always tried to find people who have endeared themselves to their fellow countrymen, in order to bring the Conservative Party back once more into power.

The right hon. Gentleman should know what they did with the right hon. David Lloyd George. He should remember what they did with J. Ramsay MacDonald. If he capitalises the reputation he still has in the affections of the British people to get them, the Conservative Party, once more back to power, he will not be in office long himself. They will fling him aside like a soiled glove. When the right hon. Gentleman tells the House of Commons about his accomplishments as a Minister, does he not remember that, although he was himself one of the most brilliant Parliamentarians of the day, a crowd of mediocrities kept him out of office for nine years, and that when eventually, in the war years, it became necessary to have a leader from that side of the House—because it had to be from that side of the House—with unrivalled gifts of speech and of evoking courage, it was the Labour Party that virtually made him Prime Minister?

I do beg and pray the right hon. Gentleman to realise that. It was one of the most vivid of my parliamentary experiences to see those two great Parliamentarians, two great men—Lloyd George and the right hon. Gentleman—sitting in the House of Commons, with unsurpassed gifts, kept out of office by a crowd of people who were doing nothing but undermining the

industrial fabric of Great Britain. But I need do no other than read his own description. In 1938 the right hon. Gentleman made this speech:

"When I think of the fair hopes of a long peace which still lay before Europe at the beginning of 1933 when Herr Hitler first obtained power, and of all the opportunities of arresting the growth of the Nazi power which have been thrown away, when I think of the immense combinations and resources which have been neglected or squandered, I cannot believe that a parallel exists in the whole course of history. So far as this country is concerned the responsibility must rest with those who have the undisputed control of our political affairs. They neither prevented Germany from rearming, nor did they rearm ourselves in time. They quarreled with Italy without saving Ethiopia. They exploited and discredited the vast institution of the League of Nations and they neglected to make alliances and combinations which might have repaired previous errors, and thus they left us in the hour of trial without adequate national defence for effective international security." [Official Report, 5th October, 1938; Vol. 339, c. 366-67.]

But those are the people he would lead back. There they are. Those are the guilty men—all of them. They are the ones that he, day after day, was indicting in the House of Commons. Does he think the nation would be grateful to him if he could persuade the nation to put that lot of bankrupt intelligences back into office again? The right hon. Gentleman has a great historical sense. Surely he must realise what history would say about it if he succeeded in doing that. Even his great services during the war would not compensate for such a calamity.

Bevan's speech was one of the most deadly and terrific counterattacks on a leader of the Opposition who had moved a vote of censure that Parliament could recall. It was a brilliant summing-up of the role Winston Churchill had played in British postwar politics

## **CHAPTER XXXVI**

### **Britain and the Atom Bomb**

**I**N the General Election of 1950, Winston Churchill hoped that the Tories were going to win and that the Socialists would be defeated. Then 1945 would be avenged, and he would again be back as Prime Minister at 10 Downing Street, in the front of the political and international limelight again as Britain's Strong Man.

The Tory Party once again used him for all it was worth. They calculated that he was still the national hero of the wartime years. Since 1945 the Tory Party had greatly improved its electioneering organization throughout the country. Lord Woolton had become its chairman. As the head of the big distributing concern of Lewis's he had learned a great deal about mass salesmanship, and big business had placed at his disposal an immense fund; he had as much money as he required.

The old Tory electioneering machine had been completely overhauled, and its appeal to public opinion, in which it stressed its democratic and progressive outlook in catchy slogans and vague phrases, was meant to convey the impression to the British electorate that the Tory Party had been born again and was no longer the party of the "great vested interests" which Churchill had denounced so scathingly in his Liberal days.

Winston Churchill used all his power of oratory, his radio technique, his appeal to wartime emotions, in order to win the election for the Tories and himself. He was completely reckless in his promises. In one breath he demanded policies that implied increased expenditure on armaments; in the next he called for reduced taxation. The dominant theme of his electioneering oratory was hatred of Socialism. The violence of his speeches roused deep resentment. Harold Laski wrote:



Frankly I deeply regret that so great a man as Mr. Churchill has decided once more to lead the Tory Party to defeat. I hope this time that both he and the world will understand that what the voters in Great Britain regret is not the grand war leader of 1940-45 but the bitter and reactionary partisan behind whom there have been mustered some of the most powerful vested interests in this country, and who has himself only too often associated himself fully with the most indefensible of their claims. Unlike his father, Mr. Churchill has become little more than the old war horse of obsolete privilege, shouting his contempt for most of the social improvements he used to defend so eagerly in his Liberal days, jealously guarding every obsolete tradition in our domestic life and passionately seeking like Samson to pull down the pillars of the new temple.

It ought, I think, to be said at once that for all the millions he has collected for the Tories directly and indirectly, Lord Woolton seems a pretty poor substitute for the role of the original Delilah.

Churchill always regarded a general election as something of a gigantic circus, and in his carefully organized triumphal tour throughout the country, he played every trick he knew. Yet he did not quite succeed in pulling down the Labour Government in February, 1950. By the narrowest of margins, with a majority of seven over the Liberals and Tories combined, Labour just won the election and Clement Attlee became Prime Minister again, with Churchill leading a much larger Tory Party in the House of Commons. His ambition for the Premiership had been denied him by only a handful of votes.

The bulldog had again just missed the bone. He was to show his chagrin over and over again in the Parliament that followed. It was clear that Winston Churchill was living only for the purpose of bringing the Labour Government down, getting the hated Socialists out, and recapturing the office of Prime Minister for himself.

He was prepared to make political capital out of every international incident, exploit every national grievance, and attribute everything that went wrong in Britain and out of it to the fact that we had a Socialist Government in office, the only one, as he used to say gleefully, "left in the English-speaking world." Yet, at the same time in his perorations he posed as the patriot, not as the partisan. In the Parliamentary conflicts Churchill was Troublemaker No. 1, ever looking for some new stick with which to beat the Government, always ready to rush in to make every difficulty for the ministers, whether they were to blame or not.

It was during the election campaign in a speech at Edinburgh that Churchill first threw out the suggestion that, his view of the deterioration in relations with Russia, the time had come for a meeting between the leaders of the West and Stalin. He said: "I cannot help coming back to this idea of another talk with Soviet Russia upon the highest level. The idea appeals to me of a supreme effort to bridge the gulf between the two worlds so that each can live their life, if not his friendship, at least without the hatreds of the 'cold war.' "

The Foreign Secretary, Mr. Bevin, the Prime Minister and other Labour Party leaders showed no anxiety to respond to this suggestion. They thought it a bit of electioneering on Churchill's part and declared against the Big Four conception of diplomacy and in favor of the less dramatic but more conventional methods of international negotiation. Referring to the matter later in a speech in a foreign-affairs debate in Parliament on March 28, 1950, Churchill said:

I was answered by the Foreign Secretary that all this was a "stunt." Whatever this American college slang, as I find it is described in the dictionary, may have implied, it did not seem to me to completely dispose of the subject which had been raised.

He also said that through the United Nations must be found our only process and recourse. But three days later, on 17th February, at a Press Conference at Lake Success, Mr. Trygve Lie, the Secretary General of U.N.O., said he was in favour of great power negotiations. . . . Those who are responsible, as the right hon. Gentleman and his colleagues are, must not fail to seize any

opportunities. We cannot go on with a policy of hesitation and drift. Every day is precious if the chance occurs.

What were the reasons behind Churchill's suggestion that there should be a new approach to Stalin? It was clear from a later passage in this speech that what haunted his mind was the fear that Britain might be atom-bombed. He had prophesied in the previous Parliament that it would be four years before any other power except the United States would possess the atomic bomb. But that period had already gone by, Russia had the bomb, and Churchill declared: "Our position is definitely worse than it was in this matter both as regards our own safety and as to the conditions which are I believe effective in preserving the peace of the world." The atom bomb was no longer the monopoly of the United States. He went on:

Of course, there is an interlude between the discovery of the secret and the effective large-scale production of the article and that also has to be borne in mind. Of course, the United States have their "stockpile" as it is called and it will be only by a gradual process that anything similar can be built up in Soviet Russia. The atomic bomb, though preponderating, is only one of the factors in the military situation before us, but it is the dominating factor. If, for instance, the United States had a "stockpile" of 1,000 atomic bombs—I take the figure as an illustration merely; I have no knowledge of any sort or kind of what they have—and Russia had fifty, fearful experiences far beyond anything we have ever endured, would be our lot—I believe.

Therefore, while there is time for a further effort for a lasting and peaceful settlement I cannot feel that it is necessarily a long time or that its passage will progressively improve our own security. Above all things, we must not fritter it away. For every reason, therefore, I earnestly hope that we shall hear from the Foreign Secretary a clear exposition of the facts and policy of His Majesty's Government upon matters graver than anything which human history records.

It was a notable speech and it concluded with an eloquent peroration: All is in his hand. He has only to conquer his last and worst enemy — himself. With vision, faith, and courage, it may still be within our power to win a crowning victory for all.

The drastic change in the official British attitude towards indiscriminate air bombardment of cities, civilians and civilian property after it became well established that Soviet Russia had acquired an impressive stockpile of atom bombs is well described in an editorial by George Morgenstern which appeared in the Chicago Tribune, December 8, 1953:

Reports from London a week or so ago said that Prime Minister Churchill would bring to the Bermuda conference a British proposal that, in any future war, atomic bombs and shells be employed only against enemy troops in the field. Perhaps Mr. Eisenhower's speech today will confirm this thesis.

The British view, it was said, was that atomic shells shot from a cannon would be more useful than bombs dropped from planes. It is suggested that, because of the risk of retaliation, atomic bombs might never be used against cities. Britain is understood to have reached the decision that American bombers based in Britain should never be allowed to take off with atomic bombs.

The British can be counted on to strike a noble pose in advancing these views, representing themselves as pleading at the bar of humanity to save civilian populations from unimaginable horrors. The fact is, of course, that Britain knows that it will be singularly exposed to atomic devastation if a war should develop with an enemy which boasts that it has both the atomic and hydrogen bombs. There is also the danger that atomic weapons can be lobbed into Britain from submarines.

It is a further fact, witnessed by many eminent British military writers, that no humanitarian scruples prevailed to deter Britain in World War II from launching the program of mass or

saturation bombing against enemy civilian centers and industrial works. British propaganda assiduously laboured to put the onus on the Germans for beginning this process of terrorization from the air, but the evidence to the contrary is undeniable.

The official admission that Britain started this campaign came with the publication in April, 1944, of a book entitled *Bombing Vindicated*, the author of which, I. M. Spaight, was principal secretary of the British air ministry. Publication was permitted at that time because the German air force by then had become paralyzed by lack of gasoline and the issue of the struggle was no longer in doubt. Mr. Spaight made the revealing statement: "Because we were doubtful about the psychological effect of propagandist distortion of the truth that it was we who started the strategic bombing offensive, we have shrunk from giving our great decision of May 11, 1940, the publicity which it deserved. That, surely, was a mistake. It was a splendid decision."

Britain put this program into operation the night of the 11th with an attack by eighteen Whitley bombers on Freiburg in Baden. Thus, according to Spaight, "we began to bomb objectives on the German mainland before the Germans began to bomb objectives on the British mainland."

Germany's air force at the time was "tethered," as Spaight says, to the ground army, and its use was as "artillery for fast-moving troops." Air Marshal Sir Arthur Harris also testifies that the leaders of the German air force, in not providing themselves in time of peace with armed bomber planes designed for attacks on an enemy civilian population, were guilty of an omission that cost them the war. The "almost unarmed" German bombers which participated in the battle of Britain, said Harris, were destroyed as if the British were "shooting cows in a field."

Had Britain not begun this indiscriminate bombing, Spaight admits, there was a reasonable probability that London and such industrial centers as Coventry, Birmingham, Sheffield, and Southampton would never have been attacked. Hitler, he says, was genuinely anxious to reach an agreement with Britain "confining the action of aircraft to the battle zones." Britain would have none of it, and its decision was premeditated. Spaight states that the policy originated with "a brain-wave which came to British experts in 1936."

Despite the acknowledged facts, British propaganda represented the "blitz" on Britain in 1940 as proof positive of the innate wickedness of the Nazi regime. As F. J. P. Veale remarks in *Advance to Barbarism*, "It is one of the greatest triumphs of modern emotional engineering that, in spite of the plain facts of the case which could never be disguised or even materially distorted, the British public, throughout the blitz period, remained convinced that the entire responsibility for the sufferings it was undergoing rested on the German leaders."

Although the stock apology put forward by British propaganda was that British saturation bombing was only a reprisal for the German bombing of Warsaw and Rotterdam, Spaight and the British military writer Liddell Hart both acknowledge that when these cities were bombed, German armies were at their gates. They concede that bombing them was "an operation of the tactical offensive" which "conformed to the old rules of siege bombardment." Rotterdam, in fact, was not bombed until three days after the British attack on Freiburg.

So much for the moral preoccupations of the British in suggesting that, just among us gentlemen, it would be a good idea not to drop any atomic bombs on cities in the next war.

The pious hope that atomic bombs of all types may be withheld in a third world war, or that at least they will not be used to bomb cities, is probably vain and futile. This was rendered almost certain by the war-crimes trials after the war at Nuremberg and elsewhere, a process of which Churchill was a principal author.

In the light of history Churchill's proposal for trying the Nazi leaders as war criminals was not altogether farsighted. After all, it was the trial of the defeated by the victors. Monstrous and

inhuman as their crimes were shown to be at Nuremberg, there were many Germans who took the view that they were sentenced not because they were guilty but because they had been defeated.

Hardly had the war ended before Churchill discovered that "the Nazi menace to civilization" had become "the Communist menace to civilization." If Dr. Goebbels had been able to make his comment from the shades it would undoubtedly have been, "I told you so." Indeed, if the Nazis had won the war Churchill would have been arraigned as one of the principal war criminals for the loss of lives of civilians in the bombed German cities. Field Marshal Bernard L. Montgomery understood this well enough when he stated in Paris on June 9, 1948: "The Nuremberg trials have made the waging of unsuccessful war a crime: the generals on the defeated side are tried and then hanged."

Hence, it is evident that in the wars to come the leaders cannot afford to withhold any possible methods of winning, however horrible, for fear of retaliation in kind. Since they would be doomed to defeat in any event, no device which might possibly win a victory can be held back and expose the defeated to liquidation or enslavement. All this has been set forth with shocking clarity and logic by Lord Hankey in his *Politics, Trials, and Errors*, by Montgomery in his *Victor's Justice*, and by F. J. P. Veale at much greater length in his *Advance to Barbarism*, which has recently appeared in a greatly expanded American edition with a commendatory Foreword by the famed Dean William R. Inge of St. Paul's.

Churchill's speech of March 28, 1950, from which we have cited the more important passages, was certainly his best speech in the 1950-51 Parliament. Indeed, many who heard it said it was the best speech that Winston Churchill had delivered since the war. Observers of the parliamentary battle wondered that the man who could talk like this could be the same bitter, truculent verbal swashbuckler, who would return insult for insult, push out his tongue at the interrupters opposite, and on the slightest provocation turn the House of Commons into a bear garden or a nursery quarrel.

Yet this was more often than not the role he played during the second Labour Government as he snarled and shouted across the table at the men whom, he seemed to think, were in the position which should be his by Divine Right. One felt a sense of humiliation at seeing the old man behave without the slightest sign of dignity or self-restraint, shouting at the top of his voice to drown the jeers from the other side until he became inarticulate and livid with rage. He could not hide his emotions. There was somebody else Prime Minister—in his place. On every possible occasion he forced divisions in the House, even against the advice of some of his own Tory colleagues. As he saw power almost within his grasp, his one objective was to bring down the Government in the division lobbies and so force Attlee to resign.

The Labour Government was, however, more tenacious and the Socialist M.P.s harder to defeat by obstructive and wearing-down tactics than Churchill anticipated. Over and over again, his votes of censure were voted down, often by only the narrowest of majorities. Even in the prolonged all-night struggles over the committee stages of the finance bill and on the "prayers against Government regulations" all the Tory shock tactics were of little avail. Only on minor issues did the Tories score on snap divisions.

Yet Churchill kept on hoping. In the all-night sessions he would turn up to vote, create a scene and plunge the House into turmoil, retire to his room to snatch some sleep and later reappear to do the same thing all over again. After the division figures were announced, he would ask the chief Tory whip what they were (he had become more and more deaf) and make his exit, growling and muttering and grumbling and showing his disappointment on every feature of his face.

In the debates on the votes of censure on the nationalization of steel he was bitterly pugnacious. The act to nationalize the big steel concerns had gone on the statute book in the previous Parliament, but the appointed day for taking over had not been fixed by the Minister. The Liberals had opposed nationalization of steel, too, and Churchill hoped by their combined votes that he could yet prevent the legislation from becoming effective. The big steel combines which were being taken over, of course, were deeply concerned. With rearmament increasing, they had a lot to lose and they saw enormous economic power passing out of their hands at a time when it meant prospects of big profits.

In Parliament, Churchill was their champion. Lord Woolton had obtained substantial sums for the Tory Party funds from them. They were powerful influences behind the political scenes. Churchill put the interests of the steel barons before those of the nation. Just as the Krupps and Thyssens financed Hitler, so the British steel magnates backed with their money and their newspapers the Tory Party's campaign to bring the Labour Government down. Churchill fought for them as the medieval mercenaries had fought for the merchants and bankers who found the money. There was precious little patriotism in this. They paid the piper and they called the tune.

## CHAPTER XXXVII

### Partisan or Patriot?

**D**URING the period of the Labour Government (from 1945 to 1950) Winston Churchill had on the whole refrained from any fierce criticism of its foreign policy. He attacked most of the other ministers, but he rarely had anything to say against Ernest Bevin during his term as Foreign Secretary. This was because he regarded Bevin, who had been a loyal member of his wartime Cabinet, as a sort of Labour "John Bull" who was carrying out the traditional British continuity of foreign policy and one whom the permanent staff of the Foreign Office had well under control. Besides, Ernest Bevin was bitterly anti-Communist and deeply distrustful of everything that he thought had been inspired by Soviet Russia. This suited Churchill after 1945.

Churchill also openly boasted in the House of Commons that he himself had been the first to advocate the rearmament policy for which the Labour Government became responsible. Speaking in the House of Commons on March 28, 1950, he said: "I remember that in the last Parliament, not to go too far back, I made a speech at Fulton which became the object of a Motion of Censure signed, I think, by more than 100 Members of the Socialist Party. But shortly afterwards, the policy I had advocated was adopted on both sides of the Atlantic and by all parties in this House."

Foreign policy was one of the issues on which Churchill tried to take the non-party line, and he was always ready to assure the Government that it could rely on the Opposition when there were rumours of trouble from the Socialist Left. He had supported the £3,600,000,000 defence program when it was launched in September, 1950. But by February of the following year, the feeling between the parties had become so tense and the clashes between Churchill and the Government Front Bench (especially with Shinwell, the Minister of Defence, and John Strachey, the Minister of War) were so acrimonious that Winston Churchill was in the mood to make even the rearmament program, of which he claimed to be prophet and inspirer, the subject of a vote of censure. The Government had only the tiniest of majorities, and there was the pacifist and Socialist Left that was opposed to rearmament. Could not the Labour party be brought down on this issue? Churchill threw all his patriotic scruples to the winds; he was prepared to abandon his pose of the nonpartisan war leader and elder statesman in another effort to defeat the Government in the division lobbies. The Government had placed on the Order Paper the motion: "That this House approves the policy of His Majesty's Government relating to Defence contained in Command Paper No. 8146."

Churchill found it difficult to vote for the direct negative to the policy outlined in the Government White Paper, so he tabled the folio whig amendment: To leave out from "House" to the end of the Question and to add instead thereof:—"While supporting all measures conceived in the real interest of national security, has no confidence in the ability of His Majesty's present ministers to carry out an effective and consistent defence policy in concert with their allies, having regard to their record of vacillation and delay."

His speech was an all-out dialectical onslaught on the Government in which there were several stormy interludes. He had wholeheartedly approved of the £3,600,000,000 defence program six months previously but now he declared:

Evidences and examples of the ineptitude and incompetence of the Government are brought almost daily glaringly before us. We are convinced that the mismanagement exhibited in civil and domestic affairs extends also to the military field, and that that is the growing opinion of the nation. Therefore, we feel it impossible to do as we did in September and are bound to place on record an Amendment which sets forward the exact position which we occupy.

Churchill denounced the Government because there were not enough soldiers in the Army; he blamed the Government because of Britain's failure to produce atom bombs. At this point there was a stormy exchange with the Defence Minister, Shinwell, who asked if he was not "giving satisfaction to the enemy," and Mr. Attlee interrupted to point out that the decision taken during the war that atom bombs were to be made in United States was taken when Churchill was Prime Minister. Churchill went on to expound his views on the rearming of Germany. He said: "There is no doubt that a European army will be formed as part of the Atlantic Army and I trust that a German contingent will take its place in the European Army on honourable terms."

When he attacked the Government Z call-up scheme, Shinwell shouted, "The right hon. Gentleman is talking a lot of nonsense," and there followed another scene, which resulted in the Speaker calling for order. Churchill asserted that the danger of war was not diminishing. He continued: "The Minister of Defence said yesterday that the danger of war had become less acute in the last few months. I follow these matters as closely as I can and I am not aware of any facts which justify this assertion." Churchill ended his comprehensive indictment of the Labour Government's defense policy with these words:

We are witnessing a process of gradual education of those who ought to know best and have all the power but who have to reach agreement by an endless series of compromises among themselves and with their military advisers. All we are dealing with here today is a new state of mind in those who have so long held our fortunes in their hands. It is hard to imagine a situation which gives fewer chances for the British nation to make the best of its resources and authority, and thus play the great part which might be open to us of preventing the drift into a third world war with all its indescribable, immeasurable, unimaginable perils.

If half of what Churchill had said about the Labour Government's handling of defence had been true, the ministers responsible deserved not merely to be removed but to be impeached. The vote of censure was, however, defeated by 308 votes to 287. Much as the Labour Left disliked rearmament, they disliked the prospect of a Churchill Government still more.

Before the year 1951 was over, Churchill was Prime Minister and Defence Minister himself. Shinwell was out and Churchill was in. In his very first speech as Minister of Defence he proceeded to pay a tribute to the Labour Government's policy. He said: "Let me first of all make my acknowledgments to the late Government for several most important decisions about our defence policy which they took during their six years of office and which form the foundation on which we stand today." There was conscription, the Atlantic Pact, and the establishment of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. In all this, the late Ernest Bevin had "played a distinguished part." They had launched the tremendous rearmament program, "upon which they and

the former Minister of Defence led us and has enabled us to stand beyond question second only to the United States in our share of the measures upon which our hopes of a lasting peace were made."

Had Churchill not known all this when he had moved his vote of censure just nine months before? Compliment followed compliment. But the climax was reached late in the evening after Shinwell, about whom he had previously spoken so scathingly, had wound up the debate for the Labour Party. In February, Shinwell had been Churchill's principal target. He had demanded Shinwell's dismissal. In December, he thought it appropriate to pay a tribute to Shinwell's "sterling patriotism and to the fact that his heart is in the right place where the life and strength of our country were concerned." He concluded: "I am so glad to be able to say tonight, in these very few moments, that the spirit which has animated the right hon. Gentleman in the main discharge of his great duties was one which, hi peace as well as in war, added to the strength and power of our country."

Why, then, had Churchill made the vitriolic attack on the Labour ministers earlier in the year? The explanation was that in February he was prepared to say anything and do anything if it could bring down the Labour Government. That was characteristic of Churchill's whole attitude during the Parliament of 1950-51. At the beginning of the year he could denounce the Government for its "incompetence and ineptitude" and at the end of it he could afford to be magnanimous and say how well the Government had done. The Tories had taken over. The partisan had again become the patriot.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII

### Prime Minister Again

**A**TTLEE decided to appeal to the country in October, 1951. His second administration had survived all Churchill's shock tactics, but it was almost impossible to carry on with so slight a majority, and the leaders of the Labour Party thought there was a fighting chance of getting returned with a larger one. On the other hand, Churchill was confident that the Tories could capture power, and Lord Woolton and his Tory machine felt assured that they would be elected with a comfortable majority.

Following the rearmament program and the war in Korea, the cost of living had steadily increased, and the Tories reckoned that this and high taxation would bring the Labour Government down. Churchill was confident that his chance had come again. Surely the Socialists would go out this time, and after six years of disappointment and impatient waiting he could once more be Prime Minister.

But there was one development which the Tories had not reckoned on. The dispute over Persian Oil had entered a critical stage during the late summer, and in the House of Commons Tory M.P.s had called for strong British action and for sending armed forces to Abadan. Knowing that the general election was coming up, the Tory Front Bench in the House of Commons was critical but cautious, but the Tory back-benchers were advocating policies which clearly meant sending British soldiers into Persia—a course which would have meant that the Russians, in accordance with their treaty rights, would have been entitled to move in from the north. The Labour Government had done its best to protect the interests of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, but it was not prepared to take the risks of plunging into a large-scale war. Besides, the Americans were against employing the methods of nineteenth-century imperialism in Persia, and they were also interested in Middle East oil.

There was a growing feeling in the country that there was a prospect of war over Persia, and with the possibilities of a war on the horizon, a large section of British public opinion thought

that it would be wiser to keep Churchill and the Tories out. The leaders of the Labour Party sensed this and emphasized it in their speeches. They did not accuse Churchill of wanting war, but he was not the man to be given power at this time. And the back-bench Tories were more reckless than Churchill on the war issue.

The Tories began their election campaign believing that the crisis in Persia would help them. But they soon realized that there was no jingo mood in the country and that a belligerent line over Persia would lose votes, they switched their campaign back to the cost of living and indignantly denied that they were warmongers.

At Scarborough, Herbert Morrison, the Foreign Secretary, nettled at some of Churchill's criticism of his handling of Persia, had asked the blunt question, "Should we have gone to war?" In a speech at Loughton on October 6, 1951, Churchill replied rather evasively: "Mr. Morrison has asked me whether in my judgment we should have gone to war with Persia or not. He had no right to ask me that! The responsibility is entirely that of the Socialist Government, who alone had the power and should have had the knowledge. He is only asking the question to gain acceptance for the falsehood that he and his associates—I can hardly call them friends—are spreading that the Conservative Party wants another world war." Churchill and the Tories were intensely alarmed lest they would be regarded as the war party. In the same speech he said:

The Daily Mirror coined a phrase the other day which is being used by the Socialist Party. "Whose finger," they asked, "do you want on the trigger, Attlee's or Churchill's?" I am sure we do not want any fingers on the trigger. Least of all do we want a fumbling finger on the trigger. I do not believe a third world war is inevitable. I even think that the danger of it is less than it was before the immense rearmament of the United States. In any case it will not be a British finger that will pull the trigger of a third world war. It may be a Russian finger or an American finger or a United Nations Organisation finger but it cannot be a British finger. Although we would certainly be involved in a struggle between the Soviet Empire and the free world, the control and the decision and the timing of that terrible event would not rest with us.

Asked if he would invite Mr. Truman and Mr. Stalin to a conference to get things straightened out, he said that he was convinced that a friendly talk between the heads of the Governments such as they used to have during the war could not do any harm and might conceivably "lift this load of anxiety from our shoulders." At another meeting he argued that, if the suggestion he had made at Edinburgh in the 1950 election campaign that a meeting with Stalin should be arranged had been carried out, the Korean war might have been avoided.

There were two dominant themes in Churchill's election speeches, his familiar tirades against Socialism and the "spendthrift incompetent Government" and the appeal that he should be returned to work to prevent a third world war. Then there was the old note harking back to the war-coalition days of calling for national unity. This frequently followed some tart attack on the leaders of the Labour Party. After one of these came an equally acid reply from the Foreign Secretary, who expressed what many Socialists were thinking. In a speech at Manchester, on October 21, 1951, Morrison said:

In many ways we all like Mr. Churchill: I do: and in his more reasonable moments I believe he likes me. But really he is the limit for one-sidedness, and if I may say so, sheer cheek. He has persuaded himself that if he leads a Conservative Government, with a certain number of hangers-on, preferably chosen by himself, it will be a nice, non-party affair which will upset nobody. On the other hand, he asserts that a Labour Government has been unduly partisan and has almost completely forgotten the public interest.

Who has taken a very full part in stirring up party and domestic strife in this election and indeed throughout the life of the last Parliament? Who encouraged his people to play the fool by keeping the House up night after night with their artificial fighting about various economic



control orders? Who obstructed the Finance Bill? Who got so worked up with partisan passion that from his place in Parliament he put his tongue out at his opposers? It was Winston: dear, kind, non-party Winston himself.

The Tories did their best to make Aneurin Bevan the bogey man of the election, and in his speech at Newcastle, Churchill joined in with a bitter personal attack on Bevan. Said he:

Houses to him were nothing. To bring the vicious, spiteful, malevolent motives which inspire his every word and action and the foolish principles which dominate him into play on a large scale was all he seemed to care for. If he could not produce houses in accordance with motives which give vent to his political disclosures he would rather there should be fewer houses.

There is the dominating situation of the housing shortage—from which we are all suffering now—and there is the guilty man.

At Woodford on October 9, 1951, he said: A Bevan-coloured Government and even a Bevan-tinted Government might lead to Britain being left in the front line of danger without her fair share of influence upon the course of events. I warn you solemnly that the mass growth of the Bevan covenant inside the Socialist Party may make the return of a Socialist Government a real blow to our hopes of escaping a third world war.

Later on in the year, when he became Minister of Defence, Churchill admitted that Aneurin Bevan had been right in arguing that the rearmament program could not be carried out in three years. But this was after the election had been won. Churchill knew that a considerable portion of the electorate were scared out of their wits about Bevan, and Churchill played on this fear for all he was worth.

As the election campaign drew near its close and the Tory Party headquarters became more and more alarmed that the charge of being "warmongers" was losing them votes, Churchill's speeches became more and more pacific. This reached a climax when he spoke for his son Randolph Churchill, who was contesting Plymouth. According to The Times report (October 23, 1951):

Mr. Churchill said that the Socialists somewhat shamefacedly and the Communists brazenly made the charge that he was a warmonger: "This is a cruel and ungrateful accusation. It is the opposition of the truth. If I remain in public life at this juncture it is because I, rightly or wrongly, but sincerely, believe I may be able to make an important contribution to the prevention of a third world war and to bringing nearer that lasting peace settlement which the masses of the people of every race and in every land fervently desire. I pray, indeed, that I may have this opportunity. It is the last prize I seek to win."

The suggestion by Mr. Shinwell that he wanted to have a third world war to show off his talents was mean and shabby to the last degree.

No pacifist could have sounded a stronger anti-war note than that. Two days afterwards Britain went to the polls. The Tory headquarters had confidently predicted that they would get a comfortable working majority of anything from fifty to a hundred and fifty. But, as the results came in, it was clear that Labour's strength in the country had not been shaken nearly as deeply as had been predicted. Churchill had won the election, but only with a small majority. The ratio of the parties was—

<b>Conservative and associates</b>	<b>321</b>
<b>Labour</b>	<b>295</b>
<b>Liberal</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Irish Nationalists</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Irish Labour</b>	<b>1</b>

Churchill was Prime Minister again. But it was not "the stable Government" he had asked for. Far from being overwhelmed, the Labour Party had not lost any of its prominent front-bench figures. It had polled 13,948,385 votes, as against the Tory total of 13,724,418, thus having a majority of the popular vote.

Churchill and the Tories had been given power with all its responsibilities and with a strong critical public opinion against them waiting to see how they intended to fulfil their election promises to provide more food, reduce taxes and the cost of living, build 300,000 houses a year, do away with controls, set British industry free, increase production, and deal with the problems and grievances that the Tories had so unscrupulously exploited at a time when the huge costs of rearmament were leading inevitably to financial and economic crises.

## CHAPTER XXXIX

### Statesmanship or Salesmanship?

**A**LTHOUGH Churchill had repeatedly stressed the urgent need of a highest-level conference with Stalin, he showed no great anxiety to arrange a meeting when he had once again become Prime Minister. The presidential elections were approaching in the United States, and President Truman had no desire to be associated with any more of what might be described by his political opponents as "appeasement of Stalin." Churchill put this idea, like his other election pledges to the electorate, in cold storage. Instead, he decided to make one of his much publicized and dramatized expeditions to Washington.

Of course, Churchill's Government had every need to seek financial and economic aid from the United States. Britain was quickly drifting into bankruptcy and urgently needed raw materials, especially steel for rearmament and for its export industries. Churchill's popularity was still great in the United States, and if he could bring off a deal, it would temporarily ease the situation in Britain and help the Tory Government to deal with the political problems which were now crowding upon it. Despite the Marshall Plan (E.C.A.), the dollar gap was getting worse and the sterling area, with Britain as its centre, was in danger. The Tory Government, instead of being able to fulfil its pledges of providing the British people with "more red meat and a greater variety of food," had been forced to cut imports and announce substantial cuts in the social services and to forecast others which inevitably meant a considerable reduction in the national standard of living.

Clement Attlee, when he was Prime Minister, had also gone to the United States in 1950, but he had done so quietly and unobtrusively, as was his wont, and without the huge entourage that Churchill thought necessary. Attlee had gone to point out the danger to Britain's economy brought about by America's stock-piling and the cornering and forcing up of the prices of the metals and materials upon which Britain depended. There was no reason, early in 1952, to believe that the Americans were not fully aware of British shortages and needed a Winston Churchill to tell them what was happening. Attlee had also gone to warn Washington that the British Labour Government was opposed to the MacArthur policy of spreading the war to China and that British public opinion was genuinely alarmed at the threats to blockade the Chinese coast and atom bomb the Chinese bases in Manchuria and the populous Chinese cities.

What change would be brought about by the return of Winston Churchill and a Tory Government in Britain? That was the question which was being widely asked in Washington. Winston Churchill, who had lived in the limelight of the wars and was known throughout the world for his truculence and pugnacity, was an entirely different person from Attlee, the head of a Socialist Government which, while it had joined in what it thought was a war against aggression under the auspices of the United Nations in Korea, had been enlightened in its attitude toward

India and other Far Eastern countries, had recognized Communist China, and had shown marked reluctance to adopt any policy which might result in World War III.

Churchill had four meetings with President Truman, after which an official communique was issued. The Churchill-Truman communiqué of January 9, 1952, was vaguely worded and much of it written in Churchill's characteristic style. It began:

During the last two days we have been able to talk over on an intimate and personal basis the problems of this critical time. Our discussions have been conducted in mutual friendship, respect and confidence.

Each of our governments have thereby gained a better understanding of the thoughts and aims of the other.

The free peoples of the world are resolved to unite their strength and propose to ensure peace and security.

We affirm the determination of our governments and peoples to further this resolve in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. The strong ties which unite our two countries are a massive contribution to the building of the strength of the free world.

About the American atom-bombing bases in Britain it said: Under arrangements made for the common defence, the United States has the use of certain bases in the United Kingdom. We reaffirm the understanding that the use of these bases in an emergency would be a matter for joint decision by His Majesty's Government and the United States in the light of circumstances prevailing at the time.

We share the hope and determination that war with all its modern weapons shall not again be visited on mankind. We will remain in close consultation on the developments which might increase danger to the maintenance of world peace.

Our two governments will continue to give their full support to the efforts now being made to establish a European defence community and will lend all assistance in their power to bringing it to fruition.

We believe that this is the best means of bringing a democratic Germany as a full and equal partner into a purely defensive organization for European security.

Agreement had also been reached about an exchange of steel for aluminium: "We have considered how our two countries could best help one another in the supply of scarce materials important to their defence programs and their economic stability. The need of the United Kingdom for additional supplies of steel from the United States and the need of the United States for supplies of other materials including tin and aluminium was examined." Under an agreement arrived at on January 18, 1952, Britain and the United States made arrangements by which Britain was to receive 1,000,000 long tons of steel in return for 55,100,000 pounds of aluminum and 20,000 long tons of tin.

As for the new .28-caliber rifle which British army authorities had declared to be the best in the world, the American point of view prevailed. The communique said: We have reviewed the question of standardization of rifles and ammunition in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Neither country thinks it wise at this critical time to take the momentous step of changing the rifle.

In the interests of economy both in time and money we have agreed that the United States and the United Kingdom will continue to rely upon rifles and ammunition now in stock and currently being produced.

In the interests, however, of eventual standardization we have also agreed that both countries will produce their new rifles and ammunition only on an experimental scale while a common effort is made to devise a rifle and ammunition suitable for further standardization.

Did Churchill and Truman come to any other agreements—or disagreements—not mentioned in the statement that was issued to the outside world? When Churchill proceeded to make his oration to Congress, there were passages in it which were widely quoted as evidence that there had been a marked change in British policy since he had come into power. The Labour Government had strongly disapproved of American policy in Formosa. But a passage in Churchill's speech was obviously designed to placate members of Congress:

I am very glad that, whatever diplomatic divergences there may be from time to time about procedure, you do not allow the Chinese anti-Communists on Formosa to be invaded and massacred from the mainland.



**Foster Dulles, Churchill, Bernard Baruch and Winthrop W. Aldrich, ambassador-designate to the Court of St. James, in Baruch's home in New York.**

We welcome your patience in the armistice negotiations and our two countries are agreed that, if the truce we seek is reached only to be broken, our response will be prompt, resolute, and effective. What I have learnt over here convinces me that British and United States policy in the Far East will be marked by increasing harmony.

What did that mean? It soon became evident that on one side of the Atlantic it was understood to mean one thing and on the other something very much different. In the *New York Herald Tribune*, Joseph and Stewart Alsop wrote that "the British and the American governments have decided to go to war, or come very close to going to war, with Communist China under certain circumstances that are quite likely to arise. This is a substantial, if somewhat appalling first fruit of the Churchill-Truman talks which were originally billed to produce no results whatever. The firming of American policy, the sharp change in emphasis in British policy, are so important that they need to be spelled out in greater detail." After doing this the article concluded:

There has been friction in the Churchill-Truman talks about whether the Japanese should semi-recognize Chiang Kai Shek, since John Foster Dulles promised the Japanese would be left free to choose. But here the British have accepted our policy. On the issue of recognition, the British have in contrast refused to rescind their action, while hinting that they wished it had never been taken. But on the real problem, of what to do about the dangers looming in the Far East, there has been full, solid practical agreement. This is all that matters and no greater political gain could be imagined.

In the *New York Times*, James Reston wrote: After Mr. Truman and Mr. Churchill agreed on the principle of mutual co-operation on Tuesday, they asked Mr. Acheson and Mr. Eden to get together and apply the principle to several specific problems. One of these was the future of Japan. Mr. Acheson asked that the British agree to allow Generalissimo Chiang Kai Shek's Chinese National Government to sign the Japanese Treaty for Formosa.

Mr. Eden was opposed to this on a number of grounds. First, the United States and Britain had an agreement, negotiated last summer, under which Japan would be left free to negotiate—or not to negotiate—a peace treaty with either the Chinese Nationalists or the Chinese Communists.

Mr. Eden did not ask that the Chinese Communists be brought into the Treaty. He merely asked that the Anglo-American agreement be honoured. He argued that it was in the best long-term interests of the West's relations with Japan if the Japanese be left free to decide this question for themselves.

Nevertheless Mr. Acheson pressed his point on the score that the Senate would ratify the Japanese Treaty more willingly if Chiang Kai Shek were allowed to participate. In the last analysis the British felt there was very little they could do. They could not break with the United States on the issue. They needed the financial and military help of the United States, so their tendency when this was written was to go along even if they felt the decision was fundamentally wrong. In short, the things that were not discussed or announced were as important as the things that were.

In Britain, the all important question was "What has Winston Churchill committed us to now? As a result of the commitments he has entered into at Washington, are we not nearer to war?" In the debate in the House of Commons on January 5, 1952, Clement Attlee put some searching questions in a highly critical speech.

On coming back he made a short statement last week which, we understood, was to be amplified. The general opinion about that statement is this, that everyone was struck by the difference of tone of the statement which he made to Congress. The New York Times, on 31st January, said: "Prime Minister Churchill gave a good demonstration of how to say the same thing in two different ways.----Like a good salesman with different customers he displayed his wares to their best advantage, first in Washington and then in London."

But the question we are asking is whether they were the same wares. It may be good salesmanship, but I do not think it is good statesmanship. The right hon. Gentleman made two statements on the same matter which are interpreted differently in two different countries, although the entire object of the visit was to try to promote mutual understanding. There is no doubt about it that that was the impression given in the United States. The speech made by the Prime Minister was interpreted as being a sharp change in policy.

"Prompt, resolute and effective action was widely interpreted here"—says an American writer—"as a willingness to join the United States in such measures as bombing Manchurian airfields and block-aiding Communist China. The Labour Party Opposition in Britain also construed the pledge in the same way." And not only, I may say, the Labour Opposition. It goes on:

"They were told yesterday that, while it was agreed that a violation of a truce would lead to a very serious situation, there had been no definite or formal commitment."

Now we ought to know here whether there has been this definite change of attitude. The New York Herald-Tribune says: "Britain will lend full support to that kind of direct attack on Chinese centres of strength which Britain so much opposed when MacArthur advocated the idea."

The Kansas City Star described that as "a notable shift in the position." The result was that there has been grave disquietude here over the speech of the Prime Minister.

When the right hon. Gentleman comes back here, he makes a speech in an entirely different key, and tells us there has been no change whatever. The question is: Is this only a change of salesmanship methods, or is there a difference? I am bound to say that, reading his speech, the

general attitude struck me as one that he was, quite naturally, trying to please his audience. But I cannot but think that in doing so he tended to represent us as an ally, even a comparative minor ally, in an American war.

It is significant that he only mentioned the United Nations once in the whole of that speech, and that was only very much in passing,

mainly to emphasise the fact that physical action was being taken on the largest scale by the United States for a moral action of the United Nations. Thereafter, with that passing glance at the United Nations, it got no more reference at all.



### **Churchill and Eisenhower as White House Guest**

One might have thought that this was purely a quarrel between the United States of America and the Communist Government of China. That was an unfortunate impression to give. Then the Prime Minister said, "We take our stand at your side." That is all very well, but we were taking our stand also at the side of other nations. The stand we were taking was on behalf of the United Nations with other nations. Here again, the emphasis was wrong. When they came to discuss what the next step should be it looked almost as if the decision should be that the United States and we should agree; and the question of the fact of this being action taken by the United States and other nations on behalf of the United Nations entirely slips out of the picture.

There are those various currents of opinion in the United States of America. It is most important to do everything to support the people who want an armistice and who believe in limiting this war, and not to give any occasion to think that there is any support whatever for the people who take the other view.

Among our people there are various sections. There are the violent anti-Communists, and then there are the impatient people who say, "Let us get it cleared up." There are people who have their eyes more on the East than on the West. There is that danger that we might be dragged into a war which nobody wishes, and, as was said on the other side and has been said by the Prime Minister—I think we have all said it—it would be a great strategic mistake to get bogged down in a China war.

Attlee was obviously afraid that Churchill had committed himself to a very different policy—and a far more dangerous one—than that which had been followed by the Labour Government.

Churchill and Eden were so unconvincing in their explanations that the Labour Party decided to put down a motion of censure. The debate was interrupted by the announcement of the death of King George VI, but was resumed a fortnight later.

It fell to Mr. Winston Churchill to make the official announcement of the death of the King to the House of Commons, a duty which he had performed over forty years before when he was the Home Secretary in the Liberal Government. This was an occasion for one of his great sonorous orations. Cynics in the House of Commons remarked that he enjoyed every minute of the long-drawn-out funeral ceremonies, which lasted a week. For he was the Prime Minister of Great Britain, and this was one of the historical occasions appropriate for the conventional rhetoric of which he was the acknowledged master. Over the wireless and in the House of Commons his voice vibrated with emotion as he spoke of King George VI and his place in history. In the House of Commons he said:

With the end of the Victorian era we passed into what I believe we must call "the terrible twentieth century." The first half is over and we have survived its fearful convulsions. We stood erect both as an island and the centre of a world-wide Commonwealth and Empire after so much else in other lands had been shattered or fallen to the ground and been replaced by other forces and systems.

No British monarch in living memory had had a harder time than King George VI--- The late King lived through every minute of the war with a heart that never quavered and a spirit never daunted. But I, who saw him so often, knew how keenly, with all his full knowledge and understanding of what was happening, he felt personally the ups and downs of this terrific struggle and how he longed to fight in it, arms in hand, himself. Then passed these remarkable years of his reign. Victory again crowned the struggle. Our own island, more than any other country hi the world, and for a longer period, had given all that was in it. We had victory with honour, with the respect of the world, victor and vanquished, friend and foe alike.

This was not only a fulsome tribute to the King; it was an indirect eulogy of himself. Speaking of the new Queen he continued:

A fair, a youthful figure, a princess, wife and mother, is heir to all our traditions and glories, even greater than in her father's day and to all our perplexities and dangers, never greater in peacetime than now.

She is also heir to all our united strength and loyalty. She comes to a throne at a time when tormented mankind stands uncertainly poised between catastrophe and a golden age. That it will be a golden age of art and letters we can only hope.

Science and machinery have their parts to play. But if a true and lasting peace could be achieved and if the nations would only let each other alone, immense and undreamed-of prosperity and culture and leisure, ever more widely spread, could come, perhaps even easily and swiftly, to the masses of the people in every land.

Let us hope and pray that the accession to the English Throne of Queen Elizabeth II may be the signal for such brightening hopes for the human scene.

Nobody in British public life could compete with Winston Churchill in this kind of eloquence. Connoisseurs of parliamentary oratory declared it to be worthy of the event, one which would go down into history as yet another masterpiece well worthy of inclusion in an anthology of Winston Churchill's immortal speeches.

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A fair, a youthful figure, a princess, wife and mother, is heir to all our traditions and glories, even greater than in her father's day and to all our perplexities and dangers, never greater in peacetime than now.

She is also heir to all our united strength and loyalty. She comes to a throne at a time when tormented mankind stands uncertainly poised between catastrophe and a golden age. That it will be a golden age of art and letters we can only hope.

Science and machinery have their parts to play. But if a true and lasting peace could be achieved and if the nations would only let each other alone, immense and undreamed-of prosperity and

culture and leisure, ever more widely spread, could come, perhaps even easily and swiftly, to the masses of the people in every land.

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Nevertheless, the fact remains that Churchill was the John the Baptist of the cold war and took full credit for this role so long as the advantages of the cold war to England seemed to outweigh its disadvantages. And, for a time, the immediate gains were very real and considerable. England received loans and other financial grants in excess of \$6,000,000 from the United States in 1946. Later on, she received many more billions in the way of Marshall Plan (European recovery) aid and extensive grants under the rearmament program launched through the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, which took final form in the European Defence Community (E.D.C.).

But ultimately the price exacted from Britain by the cold war proved too heavy for her to bear. This fact was first pointed out by Aneurin Bevan and other Left Wing members of the Labour Party, at first greatly to the annoyance of Mr. Churchill as well as of Mr. Attlee. But in due time Mr. Churchill was forced to admit the bitter truth, especially after he had to assume the responsibility for governing England in November, 1951.

The cost of the vast rearmament program demanded by the cold war proved staggering to a country that had been drained and impoverished by war and that carried a heavy burden of non-military services, such as social insurance of a comprehensive nature. These military costs equalled or exceeded the direct aid Britain received from the United States. Moreover, after all that had been spent on armaments, Churchill was compelled to admit in 1953 that there was not one well-equipped combat division on duty in England.

Perhaps even more serious was the loss of trade produced by the cold war and the Korean war, the latter a direct outgrowth of the former. There was little market for English goods in Western Europe; the North American market, including Canada, was restricted by the high American tariffs, and there was fierce competition for the limited trade with South America, which was further hampered by the political policies of certain South American leaders. The main potential market for British manufactured products was to be found among the hundreds of millions in Central and Eastern Europe and in Asia. But this great source of potential trade for Britain was all but closed off by the cold war and the Korean war. The trade crisis became so serious that even the Conservative Chancellor of the Exchequer, Robert A. Butler, produced the slogan "Trade, Not Aid," as the solution for England's industrial and financial problems. Butler's budget speech of April, 1953, was hailed as showing considerable improvement in England's economic situation, but there was nothing that indicated that any major economic problems had been solved or that England was about to turn the corner to permanent prosperity.

The risks of the cold war, which might incite Soviet Russia to make a surprise attack on the NATO countries, were even more alarming than economic decline or the trading stalemate. Russia demonstrated that she had the atom bomb in September, 1948, and it was known that she had made much progress in producing impressively destructive guided missiles and in preparing



for bacterial warfare. By 1953, reliable experts estimated that Russia had accumulated a sufficiently large stockpile of atom bombs to launch a terrifyingly devastating surprise attack upon its enemies. And in the summer of 1953 it became known that Russia had mastered the hydrogen bomb. Since Britain is the outstanding A-bomb base of the United States in Europe, it was logical to expect that, in the event of a powerful Russian surprise attack, it would be concentrated on Britain. A leading British authority on military strategy, Captain B. H. Liddell Hart, for whom Mr. Churchill has much respect, confirmed this view in some trenchant articles in British newspapers. Hence, in the event of a third world war ushered in by a surprise Russian attack, it had become evident that England would be the first victim, and probably a tragic one. The fact that the United States might retaliate later on would be small comfort to a devastated Britain, which could suffer far more in one night from Russian atomic bombing than she did as a result of years of Nazi bombing.

Nobody knew better than Churchill the utter fallacy and gross misrepresentation in Secretary of State Dean Acheson's farewell assurance to the American Congress early in 1953 that the NATO forces in Europe were adequate to the task of holding back any attempted Russian invasion of Western Europe. Churchill realized fully that these forces could not really fight a respectable delaying action against a Russian move by land. England's fighting forces were all deployed in Asia and in Africa. She did not even have a single efficient combat division to defend her home grounds against a parachute attack. France, which quickly crumbled before the Nazi invasion in the spring of 1940, although then manning the Maginot Line with about one hundred well-equipped divisions, had most of her forces bogged down in the Indo-China war and had not more than ten imperfectly equipped divisions, with dubious morale, to place at the disposal of NATO. Italy was almost negligible as a military quantity, and the political obstacles to arming Germany effectively seemed almost invincible. It was unlikely that the scattered and relatively slight American forces in Western Europe could turn back the Russian "steamroller" of more than a hundred divisions, in fighting trim, ready to move through the Iron Curtain at a moment's notice, with hundreds of other divisions available for service when needed. Churchill concluded that the risk of further provocation of Russia by the cold war was too great for Britain to continue if there was any hope whatever of warding off the threat of war.

Another important aspect of the situation was that the British people were beginning to turn toward some hope of peace. The austerity continued by the cold war, the growing burden of armament, and the mortal fear of Russian atomic bombing all served to increase this feeling. Churchill did not dare to give the Labour Party any monopoly in heading up and exploiting this growing trend to desire some pacific settlement of the increasing world tension. Although a war leader throughout his life, Churchill now had to assume the role of the crusader for peace and diplomatic adjustment.

It was undoubtedly for these reasons that Mr. Churchill, when campaigning for the parliamentary election of October, 1951, based one of his strongest pleas for the election of the Conservatives on the assertion that the time had come for a high-level talk with Stalin to consider what steps could be taken to prevent another world war, which might bring ruin to Britain. But as we have seen, after the Conservatives won in 1951 and Mr. Churchill was installed as Prime Minister once more, he seemed less concerned about this high-level meeting. He took no initiative in arranging the conference with Stalin that he had urged so eloquently in his pre-election orations. Members of Parliament from the Labour benches questioned him concerning his unexplained delay. In the meantime, Stalin, in answer to questions put to him by a representative of the New York Times, had expressed his general approval of a top-level conference on world relations.

On February 9, 1953, Churchill was asked by the author of this book "... whether his attention has been drawn to the official statement of Mr. Stalin that he still believes that war cannot be regarded as inevitable and that he is favourable to a meeting of leaders of states to discuss the international situation; and what steps he now proposes to take to bring about such a meeting?"

Churchill replied: "I am, of course, always ready to consider any proposals which would effectively reduce international tension, but the attitude of the Soviet Government, in regard to those issues which are outstanding between us, does not encourage me to think that a meeting of the kind suggested would, in present circumstances, lead to this result." The official parliamentary report gives the questions and answers that followed:

**MR. EMRYS HUGHES:** Has the Prime Minister forgotten that in at least half a dozen important speeches on the eve of the last election he pressed for a meeting with Mr. Stalin? Is he aware that earlier in this year Mr. Stalin declared himself favourably towards a meeting? Why does the Prime Minister now run away? Why does he not unite with Mr. Stalin, and invite President Eisenhower?

**THE PRIME MINISTER:** I think we must try to understand the general position as it moves. We in this country would feel very severe domestic preoccupations, making it difficult to have conversations with heads of governments, if, for instance, so many of our best doctors were being charged with poisoning so many of our best politicians.

**MR. SHINWELL:** As the attitude of the Soviet Government is apparently no better nor no worse than it was when the right hon. Gentleman made his original suggestion about meeting Mr. Stalin, why is he running away from the proposal to meet [him]?

**THE PRIME MINISTER:** I was not aware that I was running away from anything.

**MR. SHINWELL:** You are, as fast as your legs will carry you.

**THE PRIME MINISTER:** I think there was a better moment two years ago, and more than two years ago, than is presented now for such conversations.

**MR. SHINWELL:** Is not the fact this—and why does not the right hon. Gentleman at least own up to it?—that he raised the matter merely because he was in opposition, but now he is in Government he has changed his mind?

**THE PRIME MINISTER:** The imputation of motives is always questionable and in this case can be treated with disdain.

**BRIGADIER MEDLICOTT:** Bearing in mind some of the things that were said about my right hon. Friend during the Election, is it not clear that the two Questions and his reply are a well-merited tribute to the Prime Minister's powers as a peacemaker?

**MR. EMRYS HUGHES:** Is the Prime Minister now telling us that the reason why he objects to this meeting is that he does not want to be treated by a Soviet doctor? Is he aware that if he did go to Moscow and were treated by a Soviet doctor we would bear whatever followed with our customary fortitude?

**THE PRIME MINISTER:** If all the other difficulties were swept away I could easily take my own medical adviser with me.

For several weeks after this interchange, Churchill was closely questioned by Labour members but he refused to take any initiative. It was assumed that he was reluctant to take any action that might not be approved in America, where the top political leaders were known to be against any such move.

Down to the time of Stalin's death, on March 6, 1953, Churchill made no effort to arrange a meeting with the Soviet chief. Churchill even allowed the death of Stalin to pass without making any public reference to the event. This was a most unusual thing for him to do on the occasion

of the passing into history of any of the great war personalities with whom he had been associated. He made no reference to "this great rugged war chief---a man of massive, outstanding personality, suited to the sombre and stormy times in which his life has been cast," as he had characterized Stalin in September, 1942.

When some weeks after Stalin's death, his successors relaxed somewhat the Iron Curtain policy and made definite overtures, whether sincere or not, for a more pacific understanding with the West, Churchill was impelled to take action in line with his campaign assurances of October, 1951. On May 11, 1953, he made what was undoubtedly his greatest post-war speech on foreign policy. He proposed that there be held "a conference on the highest level---between the leading powers, without delay. There should be no rigid agenda, jungle of details or armies of officials. The conference should be confined to the smallest number of powers and persons possible. There should be a measure of informality and a still greater measure of privacy and seclusion." He suggested that the principles of the Locarno Treaty of 1925 be applied to both Germany and Russia. The NATO powers would line up with either against the aggressor in the event of an attack.

Perhaps the most remarkable item in Churchill's speech was its repudiation of the idea of "unconditional surrender" in dealing with Russia—a policy which President Eisenhower seemed to continue, at least by implication, in his reply to the Russian overtures. Said Churchill on this point: "It would, I think, be a mistake to assume that nothing can be settled with the Soviet Union unless or until everything is settled."

While Churchill held out no hope that a complete accord could be reached with Russia in a first top-level conference, he expressed the belief that better feeling might be generated thereby and the foundation thus laid for later and more effective discussions of the problems involved in ending the cold war: "There might be a general feeling among those gathered together that they might do something better than tear the human race, including themselves, into bits.---At the worst, the participants would establish more intimate contacts. At the best, we might have a generation of peace.---I do not see why anyone should be frightened at having a try." Churchill's forthright demand for a top-level conference to promote peace was even more heartily cheered by the Labour members of Parliament than by the Conservatives.

Churchill took an equally moderate and conciliatory stand relative to ending the Korean war: "I should be very content with even a truce and cease-fire for the moment.---Terrible injuries have been done each other by the North and South Koreans. But even if both sides only stood still where they are now and ceased fire and tried to replace foreign troops by Korean forces---time might once again prove to be a healer."

The debate on Churchill's speech produced an even more lively international discussion. Former Prime Minister Clement Attlee, the leader of the Labour Opposition, agreed heartily with Churchill's general position. But he had been nettled by the comments of Senator Joseph McCarthy and other American leaders, who had advocated a more aggressive attitude toward Communist China and were, according to Attlee, helping to frustrate a settlement of the Korean war. He declared, with reference to the United States: "It is sometimes hard to find where effective power lies. One sometimes wonders who is more powerful, the President or Senator McCarthy." The latter had taken the lead in trying to shut off all British trade with Communist China. Attlee proceeded to criticize those whom he regarded as American extremists desirous of preventing a Korean truce:

All my information is, though I may be wrong, that the Chinese want a settlement. I believe that the U.S. Administration wants a settlement. But there are elements in the U.S. that do not want a settlement. There are people who want an all-out war with China, and against Communism in general, and there is the strong influence of the Chiang Kai-shek lobby. It is just as well to face that fact.

Attlee went on to demand that Communist China be admitted to the United Nations and allowed to sit as one of the Big Five at U.N. conferences. Churchill interrupted Attlee to say on this point: "Not while the fighting is going on." Attlee replied: "No, soon after the armistice." This seemed to satisfy Churchill, whose attitude indicated general approval of Attlee's speech.

Shortly after, on May 21, 1953, Churchill arose in the House of Commons to announce that he, President Eisenhower, and the French Prime Minister had agreed to meet at Bermuda soon after June 15 to discuss leading problems of world affairs, presumably including the desirability and possibility of a top-level conference with representatives of Soviet Russia:

**THE PRIME MINISTER:** President Eisenhower has expressed a wish for a personal meeting with the French Prime Minister and myself to discuss our common problems. Her Majesty's Government feel that such an exchange of views could only be of advantage at the present time.

It has been suggested that Bermuda, where, incidentally, there is an American base, would be a suitable meeting place. A date shortly after 15th June would be convenient for the President, and so far as Her Majesty's Government are concerned it would enable the discussions with the Commonwealth Prime Ministers to be completed in accordance with the plans we have already agreed with them. Arrangements are being made accordingly, but the precise date has still to be finally settled.

I have, of course, sought and obtained Her Majesty's gracious permission to leave the United Kingdom for this purpose.

**MR. ATTLEE:** While I am sure the whole House will welcome this statement of a meeting for a discussion with President Eisenhower and the French Prime Minister, may I ask the Prime Minister whether he had had in contemplation that this might be preliminary to a talk with Mr. Malenkov and others? This is, of course, one side of the general world situation, and we are all anxious to see if we cannot get talks between the two sides.

**THE PRIME MINISTER:** It is my main hope that we may take a definite step forward to a meeting of far graver import.

The announcement was received with loud cheers from all parts of the House, especially from the Labour back-benchers. It was an indication that they believed that a step had been taken that might bring peace to the world.

Almost overnight, Winston Churchill, whom Britain had known as a man of war, became a man of peace! There were doubts and hesitations in America, but few in Europe. Pietro Nenni, the Italian Socialist leader, sent a warm telegram of thanks and congratulations to the British Prime Minister.

Shortly afterwards, the Tory Party won a Labour seat at a by-election at Sunderland. The Tory head office delightedly announced that this was the first by-election they had won since the war and that this was due to the fact that it was no longer possible for the Socialists to brand Winston Churchill as a warmonger!

Churchill's proposal of a top-level conference with Russia and a preliminary conference at Bermuda was bitterly attacked by those American extremists who demanded a unconditional diplomatic surrender of Russia and China and were in favor of a war to assure this, if these countries did not give way peacefully. It was widely asserted in the United States that Churchill was planning to do another "Munich" at Bermuda.

But the more reasonable American commentators and politicians hailed his turn about as the most promising move for peace since the launching of the cold war by President Truman on

March 12, 1947. They held that Churchill's new stand might prove the only factor strong enough to curb the warmongering "Asia-first" group in the United States. The American moderates observed with somewhat cynical satisfaction that, after involving the United States in two world wars, Britain might prove the deciding influence in keeping the United States out of a third world war.

At least, a deep rift had developed between the objectives of the foreign policy of the United States and Britain, with the latter much more inclined to conciliation and diplomatic adjustment, despite the fact that any rational diplomacy was now smeared in powerful American circles as "appeasement." This clash of Anglo-American foreign policies and attitudes was condensed, summarised, analysed and viewed with alarm in a long editorial article in the American periodical *Time* (November 16, 1953).

The Bermuda Conference was postponed, in part because of the inability of the French President to find a prime minister who could command a majority. Then, on June 27, it was officially announced that Churchill's physicians had ordered the seventy-eight-year-old Prime Minister to take a complete rest for at least a month. But Churchill had already repudiated at least the excesses of the cold war and of the extremists in dealing with the Korean war. Perhaps too late, he had come forth to place himself in the forefront among those who believe that it might be possible to check the onset of the third world war by means of peaceful conferences. For this he may ultimately be remembered longer and more gratefully than for any of his deeds in wartime in either world war.

Instead of a top-level conference between Churchill, President Eisenhower, Premier Malenkov, and the French Prime Minister, there was a conference of the foreign ministers of the United States, Britain and France which met in Washington in July, 1953. England was represented by the Marquis of Salisbury, who pressed Churchill's plan to bring about a top-level conference. He was rebuffed by John Foster Dulles, the American Secretary of State, who insisted that the next meeting be limited to a conference of foreign ministers. As reported by the *U.S. News & World Report*: "John Foster Dulles, U.S. Secretary of State, got his way over the British in the latest Big Three meeting. As a result, any meeting with the Russians will be at the foreign-minister level, and will concern itself with Germany and Austria, not over-all world settlement."

The possibility of any such conference of foreign ministers to deal with Germany in the near future seemed for a time to be rendered remote by a strong Soviet note on November 3, 1953, which appeared to close the door to any negotiations of this type concerning Germany. That a settlement of even the Austrian question could be reached seemed doubtful. Then, Russia reversed its stand by a much more conciliatory note on November 26.

After a considerable period of rest, Churchill returned to active duty as Prime Minister in September, 1953. The *New York Times* observed: "The Prime Minister will be 79 on November 30. Yet, despite this and his recent illness, he seemed more vigorous today than he did two years ago."

Churchill stuck stubbornly to his demand for a top-level conference between himself, President Eisenhower, Premier Malenkov, and Prime Minister Laniel of France to arrive at some general settlement of the world tension. At the Conservative Party Conference at Margate, he made a speech on October 10, 1953, which rivalled that of May 11 in its insistence on a top-level conference. On this he said:

Five months ago on May 11, I made a speech in the House of Commons. I have not spoken since. This is the first time in my political life that I have kept quiet for so long. I asked for very little. I held out no glittering or exciting hopes about Russia. I thought that friendly, informal, personal talks between the leading figures in the countries mainly involved might do good and could not easily do much harm, and that one good thing might lead to another.

This humble, modest plan, announced as the policy of Her Majesty's Government, raised a considerable stir all over the place, and though we have not yet been able to persuade our trusted Allies to adopt it in the form I suggested, no one can say it is dead.

I still think that the leading men of the various nations ought to be able to meet together without trying to cut attitudes before excitable publics or using regiments of experts to marshal all the difficulties and objections. And let us try to see whether there is not something better for us all than tearing and blasting each other to pieces, which we can certainly do.

Her Majesty's Government, as Mr. Eden and Lord Salisbury told you on Thursday, still believe that we should persevere in seeking such a meeting between the heads of Governments.

The interest of Britain, of Europe and of the NATO alliance is not to play Russia against Germany or Germany against Russia, but to make them both feel that they can live in safety with each other in spite of their problems and differences.

For us to have a very definite part in all this our duty is to use what I believe is our growing influence, both with Germany and with Russia, to relieve them of any anxiety they may feel about each other.

On October 20, Churchill made his first appearance in the House of Commons since June 23. In a speech he repeated his contention that a top-level conference was needed to settle world affairs. He declared: "Our view remains that friendly, informal and personal talks between leading figures in the countries mainly involved might do good and could not easily do much harm." While endorsing the invitation to the Soviet Union to participate in a conference of foreign ministers at Lugano, Switzerland, on November 9, Churchill made it clear that this endorsement "involves no change in our outlook" relative to a top-level conference.

In deference, perhaps, to the lack of American enthusiasm for a top-level conference, Churchill some days later took a less unqualified stand towards his demand for such a conference. He stated:

The probabilities of another world war have diminished, or at least have become more remote. I think that it would be true to say that the outlook is less formidable but more baffling.

It certainly would be most foolish to imagine that there is any chance of making straightway any general agreement of all the cruel problems.---Time will undoubtedly be needed—more time than some of us here are likely to see.

Churchill was now willing for the moment to settle for a Big Three conference of himself, President Eisenhower and Premier Laniel, to meet on December 4-8, 1953, at Bermuda. There would also be a foreign-minister conference at the same time and place, with Messrs. Eden, Dulles and Bidault to deal with the problems of Western diplomatic and military strategy.

A main problem at the conferences on both levels would be to deal with the vacillating attitude of Soviet Russia towards a conference with the Western Powers. The Russian note of November 3 rejected any foreign-minister conference to deal with Germany or Austria. Then, on November 26, the Soviet Government apparently reversed itself and agreed to a conference to deal not only with Germany and Austria but also with more general questions of international tension. Whether the second note marked a sincere bid for peace or was a clever ruse to confuse or split the powers at the Bermuda Conference remained to be seen.

How far the Western powers still were from any realistic unity in opposing the Soviet threat was underlined by the fact that France had not even yet ratified the European Defence Community (E.D.C.) treaty. This basic problem was not seriously discussed at Bermuda, because of the

unsettled condition of French politics pending the election of a new French President shortly after the Big Three conference at Bermuda adjourned.

There was speculation that the hitherto warm personal relations between Churchill and President Eisenhower might possibly be jeopardized when they met at Bermuda by the fact that in the last volume of his memoirs Churchill attacked Eisenhower for his action when Supreme Commander in Europe in 1945 in withdrawing American forces and allowing the Russians to occupy Prague, eastern Germany and Berlin. Eisenhower, in his war memoirs, Crusade in Europe, took full responsibility for this policy and defended it on political grounds. Churchill now charged that it was an unnecessary act of supreme folly which was a major step in bringing on the "tragedy" that he portrayed as following on the heels of the military victory. It enabled Russia to push into the very heart of Europe.

An episode which took place during October, 1953, afforded the American press an opportunity to indulge in cynically humorous comment on the bitterness with which British statesmen, especially Mr. Attlee and his followers, have attacked Senator Me-

Carthy and "McCarthyism." On receiving a report that the Prime Minister of British Guiana might be a Communist or have Communist affiliations, Churchill ordered a military occupation of the country and removed the Prime Minister. As the Chicago Tribune pointed out in the following editorial on October 11, 1953, "Churchillism," when confronted with Communist fears or suspicions, went far beyond the deeds or policies of Senator McCarthy's or any other congressional investigating committees to date:

Now that the Welsh Fusiliers have landed in British Guiana and the colony's constitution has been suspended and its ministry fired, some-body in England ought to have at least a few words to say about Churchillism.

The British press has said a lot about McCarthyism in this country to the general effect that it is wicked of our Congress to try to find out how far the Communists penetrated our government, what secrets they stole, and whether they are still at this business. The methods adopted by Sen. McCarthy and other congressional investigators have been condemned with particular heat.

The methods have consisted, for much the most part, of summoning witnesses and asking them, in the presence of their lawyers, whether they were or are Communists. A few have answered they once were but have left the party. Nothing happened to those witnesses. Many more refused to answer under the protection of the 5th amendment, and nothing has happened to these witnesses either, for the privilege of refusing to testify against one's self is respected in the United States with its written Constitution.

The British press found in this record alarming evidence of the descent of the United States into fascist terror. The right of a man to hold opinions was being jeopardized. Books were being burned. Academic freedom had been abandoned. America was in the grip of its hysterical fears, etc., etc.

Now let us have a look at Churchillism. There was an election recently in British Guiana in which a party led by a man named Cheddi Jagan came out on top. Prime Minister Jagan's wife is secretary of the Party which her husband leads. The governor of the colony, Alfred Savage, informed London that Jagan is some kind of a Communist, and Mr. Churchill promptly dispatched the 8,000-ton cruiser Superb and two frigates from Jamaica, bearing the fusiliers. The soldiers were immediately set to work guarding the governor and sugar plantations, lest the government elected by the people of British Guiana disturb the colonial status quo. Then the constitution was suspended and the ministers were sent packing.

Mr. Churchill may well be right. It is quite possible that Mr. and Mrs. Jagan are Communists, though there is a good deal less certainty about it than our congressional committees require

before they make any pronouncements. The Jagans have been given no opportunity to testify in their own defence. Soldiers from abroad have moved in on the mere presumption that Jagan may be a Communist.

When Sen. McCarthy stops asking questions and starts sending the army around to padlock state capitols we shall have something in this country resembling Churchillism.

The Bermuda Conference came off without any open show of conflict between the three powers represented. Indeed, it was a concession to Churchill's demand that top-level conferences be informal and secret. President Eisenhower flew back to New York City to address the United Nations with a proposal that an International Atomic Energy Administration be established within the United Nations to control the use of atomic energy and direct it, if possible, to peaceful ends. The Russians promised the American ambassador in Moscow that they would give "serious attention" to the President's proposal, although it was well known that the Russians favoured, or said that they favoured, complete disarmament and the outlawing of atomic weapons as a first step in assuring the peaceful use of atomic energy.

In his speech of December 17 before the House of Commons on the Bermuda Conference, Churchill made the remarkable statement that he believed that Soviet Russia could justly demand that she be guaranteed against aggression from Western powers. This was essentially a reversal of his Fulton, Missouri, speech of 1946, in which he had implied that all the danger of aggression stemmed from the Iron Curtain countries.

The leading immediate result of the peace campaign of Churchill and the at least temporary conciliatory policy of the Kremlin was the agreement on a Four-Power Foreign Minister Conference to begin in Berlin on January 25, 1954. This would deal not only with specific European problems like those of Germany and Austria, but also with the larger issues of lessening international tension and grappling with the problem of the atom bomb. For the time being, at least, Churchill had been unable to secure his hoped-for top-level conference of the heads of the four great powers.

In the meantime, the European tension was sharply increased for the moment by the insistence of Secretary of State Dulles that France speedily ratify the E.D.C. treaty and make it possible to organize and equip a German contingent within the European army provided for in the E.D.C. arrangement.

The Big Four Conference of Foreign Ministers met as scheduled in Berlin on January 25, 1954. The results were cryptically stated by the American Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, upon his return to Washington: "We made no progress in uniting Germany or liberating Austria." The conference had disbanded on February 18. Molotov refused Russian co-operation in uniting Germany unless Britain, France and the United States would consent to a demilitarized Germany. He declined to acquiesce in Russian withdrawal from Austria unless the Western countries would withdraw from Germany. The main achievement of the conference was to provide for another conference of some sixteen nations, including Communist China, to meet in Geneva on April 26, 1954, to deal with such Asiatic questions as the unification of Korea and the termination of war in Indo-China.

While Churchill was making no further progress toward his goal of a top-level Big Four conference, his supporters assigned him credit for any American willingness to confer at all on major international issues. Sir David Eccles, Minister of Works, attributed to Churchill's initiative the revival of important international conferences after a lapse of some five years: "If it wasn't for Churchill, there wouldn't be any talk with the Russians. You can feel the old man prodding those Americans. 'Get on with it, get on with it.' Old he may be, but who cares? He is the only person who has kicked the Americans into the conference room—that's a rude word, I'll take it back—persuaded the Americans into the conference room."





While most of the American officials, commentators, and press notices regarded the Berlin Conference as predominantly a failure and proof that Russia would make no reasonable concessions to Western demands, Churchill did not abandon his faith in the efficacy of conferences but persisted in recommending top-level conferences like those at Teheran and Yalta during the war. Speaking to Parliament about the lessons of the Berlin Conference, he said:

[It was] a very remarkable conference which restored the reputation of such meetings--- Further meetings between those concerned are in no way prevented. One meeting which seemed hopelessly barred has been fixed---the meeting in high level conference of Communist China and the United States. . . . Patience and perseverance must never be grudged when the peace of the world is at stake. Even if we had to go through a whole decade of cold-war bickerings punctuated by vain parleys that would be preferable to the catalogue of unspeakable and unimaginable horrors which is the alternative.

Churchill repeated his desire for, and faith in, a top-level conference between the heads of states—"a meeting like we used to have in the war." He tried to find a middle ground between the Russians and the Americans. He supported the idea of rearming Germany in the E.D.C., saying, "It astonished me that anyone can imagine the mighty, buoyant German race being relegated to a kind of no man's land in Europe and a sort of leper status at the mercy, and remaining at the mercy, of Soviet invasion." At the same time, he recommended "faithfully striving to reach a workaday understanding with the Russians." But nowhere was there any admission of the role he had played in bringing about the stalemate, impasse and possible "unspeakable and unimaginable horrors" which plagued the world as the delegates prepared for the Geneva Conference.

The Geneva Conference met at the beginning of May and dragged on intermittently until the end of July. Britain was represented at the conference by Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden, who adopted a very conciliatory attitude towards Communist China and Russia. The British policy was obviously designed to prevent the Indo-Chinese War from developing into a general war in south-eastern Asia that might bring on a third world war. A dread fear of the hydrogen bomb hung over the British leaders. It was known that Russia had the latest and most devastating hydrogen bomb. Military experts estimated that eight well-placed bombs of this sort would

utterly destroy Britain, and it was conceded that Russia must have more than eight of these by the summer of 1954. To avert a general war, Eden proposed a sort of Locarno Treaty for southeastern Asia, a proposal which received no support from the United States.

The conference ended with an inconclusive truce not unlike that which terminated the hostilities in Korea. It was regarded by many, especially in the United States, as a victory for Russia, Communist China, and the Communist forces in Indo-China. But at least it brought an end to hostilities and averted war for the time being. The truce was made possible not only by the British policy but even more by the conciliatory attitude of the new French Prime Minister, Pierre Mendes-France, who had promised either to bringing about an early end to the Indo-Chinese War or to resign.

While the Geneva Conference was being held, Churchill was formally installed by Queen Elizabeth, late in June, as a Knight of the Garter, with impressive ceremonies. Thus clothed in glory at home, Churchill visited the United States with Eden early in July. There was none of the fanfare which used to greet a Churchill visit in wartime. He did not romp down the White House corridors in his bathrobe or kimono or address a joint session of Congress to the plaudits of the American legislators, some of whom bitterly criticized his policy during the 1954 visit. He remained at the British embassy and held quiet conferences with President Eisenhower. The exact nature of their exchanges was not made fully public, but it was evident that Churchill's aim was to prevent active American military intervention in south-eastern Asia. In this he succeeded. His attitude was made clear by a statement he gave to the American press at the end of his Washington conferences: "I am of the opinion that we ought to try for peaceful coexistence—a real try for it—although anyone can see that it does not solve all the problems. I am most anxious that the real mood of the people of Russia should be known and every opportunity be given it for its expression."

Few Americans were unkind enough to point out the contrast between Churchill's attitude in the summer of 1954 and that expressed in his Fulton, Missouri, speech, of March, 1946, which launched the cold war under what was then the protection of the American monopoly of atomic bombs. Russian technological advances in eight years had completely changed the situation, and Churchill had been compelled to modify his policy accordingly. If he gave any thought to the situation, it must have been humiliating for him to have to come to Washington and plead for a cessation or moderation of the American fury which he himself had set off nearly a decade earlier.

American hostility to such action prevented Churchill from arguing for a top-level conference with the Russians and Chinese. But he did give his blessing to a conference headed by important members of the English Labour Party. This quasi-official delegation, made up of Clement Attlee, Nye Bevan, Morgan Phillips, Wilfred Burke, Edith Summerskill, Harry Earnshaw, Sam Watson and Harry Franklin, visited Moscow, where its members were received most cordially by high Russian officials, including Premier Malenkov, who drank a toast to the health of Queen Elizabeth. The members then proceeded to visit Communist China, where they were greeted with equal cordiality by Mao Tse-tung and top Chinese officials. These visits were vigorously criticized in many American quarters and by some British Tories. But final judgment on their wisdom and the results must await further developments. At least they may have produced more information on the "real mood" of the peoples of Russia and China which Churchill had pleaded for during his visit to Washington.

It seemed likely that Churchill's desire to rearm Germany within the terms of the European Defence Community would be balked by the opposition of France, despite the efforts of Mendes France. The tense days following the French legislative rejection of the E.D.C. pact saw much consternation and considerable gloom, while at the same time a few voices were raised demanding a re-examination of the desirability of putting German rearmament above unification. But whirlwind negotiations led quickly to the conference in which the London Agreement

was signed, and West Germany seemed further on the way to becoming a sovereign state with its own army. The French Assembly then approved rearmament in December, 1954.

Churchill's effort to mitigate the cold war with Russia has marked the final stage in his dealings with the Soviet Union to date. It will remain one of the strangest and most potent paradoxes of history that Winston Churchill, who has undoubtedly hated the Bolshevik experiment from its very inception, probably did more than any other person outside Russia to place the Soviet Union in its present position of Old World dominance and to make it one of the two contenders -for world leadership. It is fairly generally agreed by historians that the attempt of the Western powers after the end of the First World War to suppress Bolshevism by forceful intervention was the main factor in solidifying Russian revolutionary action and policy and in preserving Communist Russia from disintegration in the first desperate and chaotic years of its existence. Churchill was surely the leading figure in inciting and executing this intervention that preserved the Communist system in its earlier stages.

By vigorously supporting Russia after June 22, 1941, Churchill assured the complete destruction of German military power and the ascendancy of Russia in the Old World. And he approved all the secondary decisions and policies which contributed to the inevitability of this result: the "unconditional surrender" ultimatum of Casablanca, the decisions at Teheran and Yalta to betray Poland and to partition and zone Germany, and the Morgenthau plan adopted at Quebec to starve Germany and destroy its industry and trade. After the creation of a power vacuum in Central Europe, it was inevitable that Russia would fill it.

Finally, Churchill was the inspirational prophet of the cold war, which led the Western nations, especially the United States, to spend hundreds of billions of dollars on armament and to link what remained of the capitalist economy in the West to war scares and vast armament production. If the Russians are clever and persistent in their peace drive, this may well deliver a more powerful blow to the capitalist economy than any action short of a third world war. The conservative trends already generated by the cold war in the United States would make it difficult for its leaders to devise and execute any public-works program which would assure prosperity in an era of world peace and disarmament.

Churchill's change of attitude toward Soviet Russia was paralleled by a more tolerant portrayal of Germany under Adenauer—a transformation of his view of that country from "sixty-five million Germans, all killable," to "Berlin, the outpost of Western civilization." When certain members of the Labour Party criticized the visit of the German General Hans Speidel to England, Churchill rose to the occasion in truly noble fashion in these words: "This keeping alive of hatred is one of the worst injuries that can be done to the peace of the world, and any popularity gained thereby is a shame to the Member to attempt to gather it."

In his notable speech before the Conservative Party Conference at Margate on October 10, 1953, Churchill repeated his conciliatory attitude toward Germany. He said on this point: "Personally, I welcome Germany back among the great powers of the world. If there were one message I would give the German people, as one a large part of whose life has been spent in conducting war against them or preparing to do so, I would urge them to remember the famous maxim: The price of freedom is eternal vigilance.' We must not forget that either." Unfortunately, all the damage wrought by the policy of "unconditional hatred" during Churchill's more bloodthirsty period, culminating in the bombing of Dresden, could not be undone in 1953.

As a result of one of those strange paradoxes which could only happen in an Orwellian age, it was announced in Stockholm on October 15, 1953, that Mr. Churchill, on the basis mainly of his six volumes of war memoirs, had been awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature of \$33,840. He won out over such distinguished literary figures as Ernest Hemingway. The committee especially commended Churchill for "mobilizing" the English language during the Second World War. Churchill was directed to come to Stockholm on December 10, 1953, to receive the

prize from King Gustav Adolf, but because he had been attending the Bermuda Conference, which did not adjourn until December 8, Mrs. Churchill accepted the prize for him.

It was reported that Churchill was much disappointed that he did not receive the Nobel Peace Prize rather than the prize for literature. If so, this attitude betrayed unlimited capacity for humour, cynicism or self-deception. Some American editorial writers pointed this out in caustic fashion. But it later appeared that Americans had little basis for any cynical derision of Mr. Churchill's yearnings when it was announced that the Nobel Peace Prize for the year was given to General George C. Marshall.

## **CHAPTER XLI**

### **Sir Winston and the New Elizabethan Era**

IN January, 1953, Churchill again visited the United States. He was bound for Jamaica for a few weeks holiday away from the gloomy English winter and to enjoy the sun of the West Indies. He spent a few days in New York as the guest of his millionaire friend, Mr. Bernard M. Baruch, and took the opportunity to call on the outgoing President, Mr. Truman and the new President, his old colleague, General Dwight D. Eisenhower, with whom he had been so closely associated in the last phase of the Second World War. There was some comment that the visit was inopportune because the new President had not been officially installed and it was too early for him to have made up his mind definitely as to the next immediate move on the chess board of world affairs.

Churchill met the American reporters with a broad smile and the V sign, obviously pleased with the fact that he was again the British Prime Minister and in the centre of the international limelight. He grinned cheerfully when asked by Mr. Paul Raskine of Reuters, in reference to the drastic new American immigration act, if he had been screened "for Communist, atheist or polygamous tendencies" and replied, "I'm told it's okay." "The only aging sign," wrote one commentator, Mr. Alistair Cooke, "was a new pianissimo note in his voice. He was ruddy, benign and gentle."

Churchill was pressed about the outlook for world peace: "Prospects for peace," he said in answer to one question, "are certainly not less encouraging than they were the last time I was here."

"You said in a recent speech that the chances of war had subsided."

"I did not say 'subsided,'" Churchill replied. "It was 'receded.'" He hinted that he was opposed to any policy that meant extending the war into China: "It would be a great pity for the United Nations and United States armies to wander about all over this vast China." He thought the centre of gravity was around the Iron Curtain.

Asked about the atomic bomb, "Churchill looked blithely up and replied, 'Oh, yes, we had one and let it off.'" But mention of the atom bomb touched a sore spot. His eyes flickered with the slightest trace of mockery when he confessed to ignorance about the comparative efficiency of British and American bombs: "Unfortunately I have not had the advantage of the promise that President Roosevelt had given me to be fully informed about the development of American atomic power."

There was no official report of what happened at the inter-views with President Truman and General Eisenhower, and Churchill went on his way to Jamaica without further comment. It was the guess of veteran newspapermen in Washington that Churchill was chiefly interested in

counselling moderation on the part of Eisenhower and in encouraging him to resist the more war-minded Republican leaders who wished to spread the Korean war to China.

One of Churchill's first tasks on returning to Britain was to broadcast an appeal for the fund of £1,000,000 needed for the restoration of Westminster Abbey. This was the kind of speech which Churchill enjoyed making. He quoted Macaulay, his old favourite historian:

The Abbey was not only an active centre of religious faith but the shrine of nearly a thousand years of our history presenting the pilgrimage of our race and acting as the focus of our national and island life. Here we may see the panorama of our various fortunes from the triumph of the Norman conqueror to the long succession of sovereigns who in good or evil days, glory or tragedy, safety or peril, in unity or strife have forged the chain of our ancient monarchy until we are now looking forward to the moment next June when the crown of St. Edward will be set upon the head of the young and beautiful Queen Elizabeth the Second. This historic edifice, Westminster Abbey, which links the past with the present and gives us confidence in the future, shall we in this valiant generation allow the building to moulder under our eyes?

This was rhetoric after his own heart. This was how he saw the panorama of history, a procession and pageantry of kings in which there was no place for the common herd, and of battles which he saw as the triumph of great marshals and generals whose deeds and campaigns he had glorified, while relegating to a minor place the story of the cruelties and suffering that war had imposed on humbler folk.

It was clear that the prospect of being the Prime Minister at the time of the coronation of Elizabeth II had given Churchill a new lease on life. I heard one member of Parliament remark that nothing would have pleased Churchill more than to have dropped dead in Westminster Abbey on the day of the coronation.

But the approaching glamour of the coronation could not hide the fact that it was by no means certain that, with the beginning of the reign of the second Queen Elizabeth, Great Britain could look forward to a new age of prosperity. There was still the cold war, the war in Korea, and the long-drawn-out struggle to maintain the British hold on Malaya, while, in Kenya, the outlook for violence raised the prospect of trouble in an area of Africa where British imperial power had not previously been seriously challenged.

Then there was the seriousness of Britain's economic problems. It had become clear that in the new Elizabethan age old British export markets in other parts of the world were in danger. Churchill was taken to the annual dinner of the National Farmers Union on February 24, 1953, to make an oration which would stimulate the farmers to grow more food. He told the farmers:

The balance between population and food supply has tilted to an uneconomic, unwholesome and dangerous extreme. A vast growing world towers up around us and reveals increasing strain and tension. Populations almost everywhere outpace the food supply. The difficulty of placing our exports mounts. We have got to alter the basis of this in this island. The balance of food production has got to be altered in a marked and decisive manner and altered soon. . . . Many of the necessities of life we have to import from the dollar area; we are endeavouring to expand our engineering industry, but we find it increasingly difficult to compete in the world market with those countries, for instance, Japan, though she does not enjoy the same standard of living as we do here in Britain, or indeed Germany, which is largely free from the burden of armaments which we now have to support.

It is just as important for our future now to wring the last ounce of food from our acres year by year as it was in the dark days of the war.

This indeed was the stark reality of the problems facing Great Britain at Coronation time. Faced by strong competition in her old export markets, weighed down by a heavy burden of taxation caused to a large extent by the huge rearmament program, only a romanticist utterly blind to economic facts could perorate confidently about the glorious days that were coming in the new Elizabethan age.

The golden era of British imperialism was over and Winston Churchill was the last of its prophets. That was apparent when he opened the debate in Parliament on the defence estimates. Although the costs of defence had gone up by £123,000,000, the original defence program of the Labour Government had to be scaled down. It was indeed an ironic situation. In spite of the huge expenditure of approximately £1,500,000,000 on the war estimates, Churchill had to admit that "we have not got a single combatant division in this country, our whole formed or regularly organised army is abroad." He added, "any further substantial diversion of our resources from civil to military production would gravely imperil our economic foundations and with them our ability to continue with the rearmament programme."

Such were the economic consequences of the policy embodied in the Fulton, Missouri, speech of March, 1946. The policy of rearming the Western world for a crusade against Communism had brought Britain near bankruptcy without in any way adding to the security of Britain, which had become the atom-bomb base of America in Europe, exposed in the event of war to devastating and destructive counterattack, and without even an armed division in the country in case of a Russian parachute attack.

While not as momentous a matter as his repudiation of the extremist position on the cold war, Churchill brought another surprise to the British public on the eve of the coronation. It was announced that the Prime Minister had been summoned by the Queen to Windsor Castle, where he was made a baronet and a Knight of the Order of the Garter, entitled to rank with the dukes of royal blood. In the future, he would be known as Sir Winston Churchill.



This was totally unexpected. Churchill had hitherto refused all such honours. As an ex-Prime-Minister, he could, after the war, have been made an earl and gone to the House of Lords. He preferred to remain a commoner. But nobody had expected him to become Sir Winston. There was speculation as to whether this meant his retirement or not. When he appeared in the House of Commons as Sir Winston he was loudly cheered and congratulated by the Members of the House. An irreverent Socialist Member asked if he could assure the House that he was not on the slippery slope to another place, the parliamentary description of the House of Lords, and whether he was to be known as Sir Winston the First or Sir Winston the Second. Churchill assured the House that he was not "going to another place," in the parliamentary use of the words, and there were more cheers and loud laughter.

As a Knight of the Garter, Churchill was entitled to don a resplendent garb: a court dress, a black velvet hat decked with ostrich plumes and black heron feathers, a dark-blue mantle lined with white taffeta, and the Star of the Order of the Garter. This outfit he wore during a portion of the coronation rites and ceremonies on June 2, 1953.

Coronation Day was a great moment in Churchill's life— perhaps more thrilling and satisfactory to him than V-J Day. He thoroughly enjoyed being in the centre of the glorious picture. He was dressed for the occasion. Part of the time, he wore his robes of a Knight of the Garter and, during the remainder, the strikingly decorated uniform of the Warden of the Cinque Ports. He wore an

historic decoration, the Star of the Order of the Garter that had been made for his ancestor, the original Duke of Malborough, and was lent to Sir Winston for the day by a museum.

Only one slight mishap marred the day for Churchill. His gilded coach was held up in the traffic and he found himself being driven in the procession behind the royal coach, which was contrary to all precedent. He gave instructions to the driver that his coach be diverted down a side alley to Downing Street. Here he telephoned his apologies to Buckingham Palace. Despite this annoying episode, the coronation had been Sir Winston's crowning glory as well as the Queen's.

It had been predicted by some that Churchill would use the coronation season as the time to try the ruse of a "snap" parliamentary election, in the effort to increase the Conservative majority in the House of Commons. But several considerations dissuaded him from taking the risk. Chancellor Butler informed him that his proposed "tough budget" would not be popular in an election campaign. Even more important was the fact that, in the local elections on the eve of the coronation, an overwhelming majority of the Labour candidates won.

Instead of a striking political coup, the Coronation was soon followed by the announcement on June 27 that Churchill had been ordered to take a complete rest for at least a month. The report of his medical advisers stated that "The Prime Minister has had no respite for a long time from his very arduous duties, and is in need of a complete rest." From Downing Street came the official announcement: "In consequence of the attached medical report the Prime Minister, in consultation with the President of the United States and the French Prime Minister, has postponed the Bermuda conference."

The New York Times paid him the following glowing tribute on the event of his temporary retirement:

Sir Winston Churchill—descendant of the Dukes of Marlborough, soldier, author, First Lord of the Admiralty in two global wars, Prime Minister in one—has been a part of world history for half a century. His great decisions—to fight to the end in 1940, to oppose Stalinism in 1946—have altered its course. His words—"We shall never surrender"; "This was their finest hour"—have stirred millions. To the world at large, Sir Winston is the statesman incarnate; to the West a symbol of implacable resistance to tyranny; to Britain a formidable national leader and mainstay of the Conservative Party.

The facts set forth in this book may qualify considerably the Times' characterization of Sir Winston as "the statesman incarnate," but few of even his political opponents could be ungallant enough not to wish him a deserved rest and full restoration of his powers at its conclusion.

Certainly Sir Winston Churchill had no reason to complain of the way he was honoured on his eightieth birthday. He was the guest of honour at an all-party ceremony at Westminster Hall presided over by the Speaker and attended by members of the House of Commons and the House of Lords, the diplomatic corps, and many distinguished guests. Here he was presented with his portrait in oils by Graham Sutherland, one of Britain's notable painters, a painting which roused great controversy for its modernism and realism. It was attacked later in Parliament: it was the portrait neither of a noble warrior nor of an elder statesman. But the artist too had his defenders; the member for South Ayrshire said, as one who had sat opposite Sir Winston often, that "it is the truth; it is the picture of a depressed-looking old man thinking of the atom bomb."

The next day he had to face a fierce barrage of criticism for a speech at Woodford in which, for some unaccountable reason, he had recalled that at the end of the war he had sent a telegram to Field Marshal Montgomery, ordering him to stack carefully the arms the Germans had surrendered, in order that, if necessary, they should be re-armed again to stop a Russian advance. But neither he nor Montgomery could find the telegram. He was apologetic, but it had revealed what

was in his mind. There was a sharp reaction in Russia. It seemed obvious that he was not the man in whom the Russians would have confidence to negotiate with again. His telegrams appealing to Stalin, at the time of the Ardennes offensive, to speed up the Russian offensive and advance into Germany were also recalled. Many who had fought and lived through the Second World War wondered what it had all been for.

## CHAPTER XLII

### Churchill in Historical Perspective: A Concluding Appraisal

**T**HE Western world knows a great deal about Winston Churchill. During two world wars he was in the full centre of the limelight, one of the most spectacular and colourful personalities in both conflicts, and he has written elaborate histories of both world wars himself. Opinions differ about him as a historian, for it is difficult to be impartially objective about one's self, especially if the writer thinks that he is producing the evidence upon which posterity will judge him and determine his place in the history of his times. Winston Churchill has written so copiously about himself and has so great a capacity for writing a dramatic and romantic account of events that is stirring and readable, even if it is superficial, biased and incomplete, that it is little wonder that a world fed so much on the sensational in the last two decades has tended to accept Winston Churchill's evaluations of himself and his deeds.\*

This applies especially to the role he played in the Second World War, when he was regarded as the spokesman, the champion and, indeed, the very incarnation of the spirit of a Britain

\* Churchill's defects as an historian have been trenchantly revealed by Professor Samuel J. Hurwitz in *Some Modern Historians of Britain* (New York: Dryden Press, 1951), pp. 306.



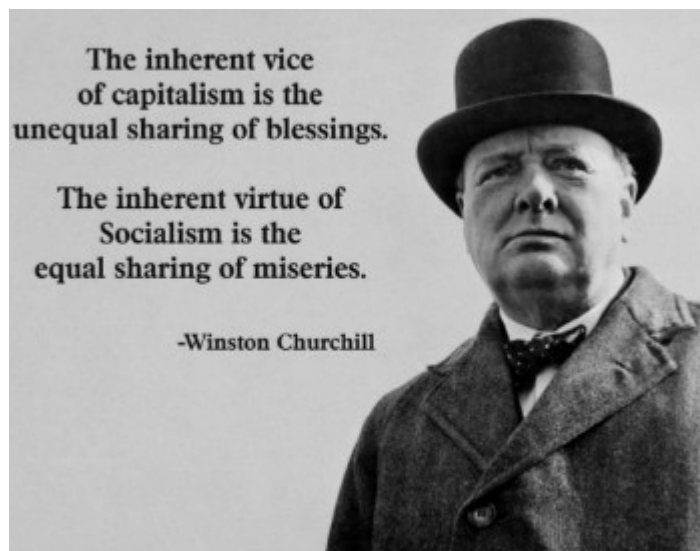
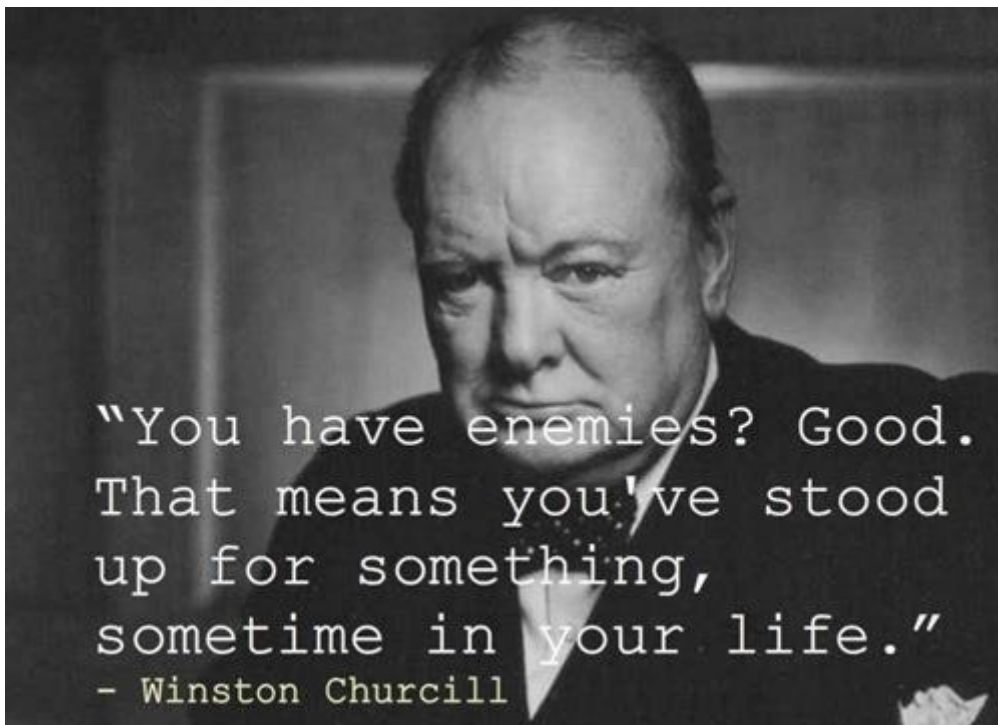




**Out of Office**



**Sir Winston Churchill welcomes the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh to 10 Downing Street for dinner in April 1955**



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CHURCH**

**CALLING THE PEOPLE OF BRITAIN**

**At last the bible makes sense!**

**At last we know its meaning.**

**Its the book of the RACE**

**"For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the  
Word of the Lord from Jerusalem"  
(Isaiah 2:3)."**

