
The Making of a Tyrant

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The Making of a Tyrant

By FRANCIS NEILSON

DURING A VISIT to England in 1957 I met three British generals and some well-known historians. In discussing the condition of international affairs and the portents of another war, I was asked to name a work on the causes of the last world conflict, which was written without national bias or party prejudice. I could think of no one book by an American or English author I had read, which dealt with the causes in a general survey of the evidence now extant.

However, a score of volumes I had searched contained enough reliable information from many different sources. But it would be a huge task for an industrious student to glean thoroughly the thousands of pages, and present in chronological order the policies and consequences of the political and diplomatic actions of the powers directly concerned with Germany's economic and industrial revival under Hitler.

Alan Bullock's Study of Hitler

THE BOOK that seemed to interest my English friends was Professor Alan Bullock's *Hitler, A Study in Tyranny*.¹ I was not surprised to learn from one general that it was the best work he had read and that it had been praised highly. When I gave him my notion of it, he was a bit shocked and asked me to tell him why I had a poor opinion of it. Discussion of several points followed, but whether my adverse criticism was well taken I could not tell.

When I read it some six years ago, I intended to review it for this JOURNAL, but I had to put it aside because of the pressure of other work. Now I take it up again, having glanced here and there at my markings, and I will set forth the reasons I gave to my friends for "damning it with faint praise."

The crisis which arose in 1938, after the State of Czechoslovakia fell to pieces, marks a point in the course of events, which gave Hitler reason to consider that the war party in Great Britain was bent upon his destruction. He was better informed about the work of warmongers, as he called them, than the British public. Hence, Bullock's chapter "From Vienna to Prague 1938-39" calls for drastic revision. *Indeed, it is only necessary to point out that he has ignored much of the information in *Docu-*

¹ London, Odhams Press, 1952.

*ments on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939, 3rd Series*² (which he mentions in his bibliography). At least two documents of great importance—Nos. 1228 and 1229—are not dealt with by Bullock, and they contain material that calls for quite different interpretation.

I suggested to my friends that psychologically it was possible for Hitler to be speaking to Chamberlain in Munich, while at the same time envisaging Winston Churchill and his co-conspirators. In dealing with these grave problems, English historians have let Churchill off lightly because he has been the only political idol they could worship. These and other shortcomings in Bullock's work may be set right when the time comes for him to revise the present volume. For, indeed, there is no Hitler, the "tyrant," without Churchill, the "warmonger."

The Problem of Czechoslovakia

IT IS SOMETHING of a relief to find, in section XII of Professor Bullock's chapter "From Vienna to Prague," that he has steered clear of the nonsensical propaganda which was current after Hacha and Chvalkovsky went to Berlin to see Hitler. We learn from Bullock's description of what occurred that it was a voluntary act on the part of the new President and his Foreign Minister to go to Berlin to intercede with Hitler. Hitler did not order them to come. Moreover, the meeting took place in Berlin, and Hacha was received with full diplomatic courtesy and lodged in Berlin's best hotel. Hitler did not storm and rave and browbeat his visitors, as the French Ambassador, Robert Coulondre, has stated. On the whole, the review of events is accurate, and information of a later date than 1952 confirms the story as it is told by Professor Bullock.

Yet, there is very much more to it than we learn in this volume. He makes no reference to the shocking treatment the minorities suffered at the hands of the Czechs. Yeats-Brown's story in *European Jungle*³ is only one of several told by men on the spot, who witnessed the outrages perpetrated upon the Sudetens. It is a pity this is lacking because it casts a different light upon the reason why Hitler occupied Prague.

For nearly twenty years the minorities in the new State, put together by the tinkers in Paris, in 1918, had sent petition after petition to the League of Nations, asking for redress, but without hope of response. The promises of Masaryk and Beneš about the status of the minorities in Czechoslovakia were not kept, and it was not until two years before Hitler went into Poland that we learned what the promises really were. I am indebted to Yeats-Brown for the following statement:

² Edited by E. L. Woodward and Rohan Butler, London, H.M.S.O., 1949, Vols. I-IX, esp. Vol. II, pp. 635-41.

³ Philadelphia, Macrae Smith, 1939, pp. 378-91.

It is the intention of the Czecho-Slovak Government to create the organization of the State by accepting as a basis of national rights the principles applied in the constitution of the Swiss Republic—that is, to make the Czecho-Slovak Republic a sort of Switzerland, taking into consideration, of course, the special conditions in Bohemia.

Schools will be maintained by the State, throughout its territory, from the public funds, and will be established for the various nationalities in all the communes where the number of children, legally ascertained, prove the necessity of establishing such schools.

All public offices, in which, in principle, the languages will have equal value, will be open to the various nationalities inhabiting the Republic.

The Courts will be mixed, and Germans will have the right to plead before the highest Courts in their own language.

The local administration (of communes and “circles”) will be carried on in the language of the majority of the population.⁴

No one has suggested that the founder of the State ever intended the minorities should suffer as they did. But for some years he was in the position of authority when complaints came to headquarters at Prague describing their distress and the cause of it. Yet, he did nothing to mend matters. As for Beneš, the minorities looked upon him as a bitter tyrant. But was he at any time free to act? Was he not the victim of the secret society, *Narodne Jednota*, and did he not have to knuckle down to their notion of how the State should be run? If we are to get a glimmering of light upon the awful plight of the minorities growing worse year by year for nearly two decades, it is surely necessary for the historian to let us know the dark side of the business as well. Here is one short paragraph from an eye witness:

During my visit in March, 1938, I saw with my own eyes that everywhere the *Narodne Jednota* had pursued its work of “Czechization” with ruthless efficiency. Karlsbad and Marienbad, thriving cure resorts before the Great War, were ghosts of their former selves, and Teplitz-Schönau, another watering-place, was half-desolate. It was snowing when I left Teplitz and drove through the bleak industrial neighborhood of Dux. There I saw factory after factory deserted, with broken windows, like the eye-sockets of a skull, and indeed they were the corpses of industries killed in this racial quarrel.⁵

The precedents which Hitler might have considered in occupying another people’s territory are so numerous in European history that it is only necessary to mention the occupation of the Rhineland and other portions of Germany. How often has this occurred since the armies of Louis XIV ransacked the Palatinate?

⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 381.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 384.

Stalin as a Tyrant

YET, PROFESSOR BULLOCK'S persuasively written book, containing chapters of information that will be of use to future historians, is lacking in many other respects. Some of these I shall now place on record. The use of the term "tyrant" cannot be applied to the Hitler who set Germany on its feet. He was not a tyrant in his methods of gaining power nor of maintaining it, until he was forced to go to war. The early struggles in Munich were fought out in street riots. There it was a case of killing or being killed. His method of getting rid of his domestic enemies at that time was no different from that of other leaders of the past in England and foreign countries. From the days of the Conquest of Britain to the Reform Act of 1832, English history is replete with the methods Hitler had to adopt.

Of course the sentimental Liberal, pinning his faith to the franchise, is disturbed because the electorate of Bavaria was not given the chance to vote for one party or the other when Hitler first entered the political arena. When the first uprising took place in Munich in April and May, 1919, and the Communists were overthrown,⁶ there was no electoral means of taking a vote. All this has been made plain by writers of repute in many volumes, but it is almost useless now to attempt to enlighten the public whose minds have been shaped by the propaganda of the war.

Upon examination, it will be found that Hitler, as a tyrant, had several peers of various caliber, who were exercising their tyrannical policies during the period when he was being denounced in the press of the Allied countries as a raucous agitator, a slapstick comedian, and a wretched house painter. What Stalin did in Russia will never be exceeded by a dozen tyrants. The records of the concentration camps of Siberia, given to us by Ciliga⁷ and Souvarine⁸ in their books, are extremely revolting. Another form of tyranny was exercised by Eduard Beneš who had the people of four different nationalities under his heel. There was also Franco in Spain, who certainly adopted the methods of a belligerent tyrant to quell the disturbances that raged from Barcelona to Cadiz and from Corunna to Valencia.

It will appear strange to the student of the next generation to read the following in the first paragraph of the Epilogue of Professor Bullock's book:

⁶ See Alan Bullock, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

⁷ Anton Ciliga, *Au Pays du Grand Mensonge*, Paris, 1938.

⁸ Boris Souvarine, *Stalin, A Critical Survey of Bolshevism*, New York, Longmans, Green & Co., 1939.

In this age of Unenlightened Despotism Hitler has had more than a few rivals, yet he remains, so far, the most remarkable of those who have used modern techniques to apply the classic formulas of tyranny.⁹

It may be asked if Hitler's methods were comparable to those of his fellow dictators and what were the modern techniques that he used. The few affairs known as *putsches*, in which he rid himself of unreliable persons, occur in every rebel crisis.

It should be easy for the intelligent reader who has given some study to these affairs to recall many examples of the practice of modern techniques by Stalin. I have already mentioned works dealing with the concentration camps of Siberia and Murmansk. They stand as a record of atrocity unequalled by any tyrant described in political history. The murder of Polish officers at Katyn was a novel experience in military methods of wholesale slaughter of captive troops. The trials of alleged conspirators was another new and unusual method which amazed serious thinkers of the western world.

These and others like them were enough to shock the governments of the west. But in the principal States, including America, there were thousands who were either working for or hoping for a change in their democracies, with the prospect of establishing a Communist regime such as Lenin and Trotsky hoped for Russia. Many of these people were ready to pooh-pooh the facts given in works that exposed the methods used by Stalin for self aggrandizement. Some of them considered them merely incidental affairs that would crop up from time to time. They felt sure the day would come for Russia when these affairs would be forgotten.

It was not until the figures of depopulation were published that some of those who were inclined to look for a bright side of Communism gave grave consideration to Bolshevik rule. A few who pondered this matter renounced their allegiance to Socialist groups, notably Max Eastman. Here is what Souvarine has to say about a form of genocide.

. . . The test of population which Stalin keeps concealed, speaks more eloquently than any other. On the basis of the 1926 census there were 147 million inhabitants, and assuming a birth rate of 2.3 per cent per annum, or an annual increase of roughly three million, a figure which Stalin keeps repeating, the second Five Year Plan anticipated a population of 180 millions at the end of 1937. The census taken at the beginning of that year, after a minute preparation and with an army of over a million officials, ended in the arrest of the directors of the statistical bureau and of their close collaborators, the results remaining a mystery. According

⁹ *Op. cit.*, p. 735.

to W. Krivitsky, whose excellent confidential source of information is the G.P.U.: "Instead of the 171 million inhabitants calculated for 1937, only 145 million were found; thus nearly 30 million people in the U.S.S.R. are missing."¹⁰

The figures for depopulation may startle those who have swallowed wholesale the figures of Hitler's work in concentration camps. But they were confirmed later when the kulak uprising was crushed. In that, over a period of six years, something like three or four million people died.

It may be inferred from these examples that a study in tyranny—even of Adolph Hitler—cannot be complete unless comparisons are made of the techniques of his period. But why should we be shocked at the cruel enormities of these tyrants? Is it not rather late in the day to feel shivers up and down our spines at what happened in the two world wars? Many of the statesmen of England not only paid visits to Berlin, for fox-shooting and other business; they even went to Berchtesgaden and Munich to confer with Hitler while, at the same time, there were men in Parliament (some had been cabinet ministers) who were seeking favors from Stalin. They seemed not to be afraid of these monsters nor loath to "shake hands with murder," as Churchill called it.

Lord Londonderry, after a visit to Germany, returned to England without a scratch. Lloyd George enjoyed his sojourn at Hitler's villa in Bavaria and, when he was safely back in England, said, "The Germans are the happiest people I have met." As for Lord Halifax, his religious, sectarian views of honor and prestige in no way deterred him from having a long interview with Hitler after Göring's fox-shooting party came to an end in 1937.¹¹

The encomiums showered upon Hitler by British statesmen may be put aside by the unintelligent as mere "platform oratory," or the exaggerated notions of garrulous politicians and servile biographers. So little did Churchill fear the Hitler of the first four years of his leadership that he wrote in *Step by Step*:

. . . 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 indomitable to restore our courage and lead us back to our place among the nations.¹²

Surely this indicates that Churchill was not at all afraid of the German tyrant. For who would be so unkind as to believe he would be guilty of

¹⁰ *Op. cit.*, p. 669.

¹¹ Halifax, *Fulness of Days*, London, Collins, 1957, p. 184.

¹² *Op. cit.*, New York, Putnam, 1939, pp. 143-44.

inflicting upon England a leader who resembled Hitler, the tyrant? Perhaps the climax in associating with tyrants was reached when, at a banquet in Moscow, Churchill, in a toast, took the Russian dictator to his heart:

It is no exaggeration or compliment of a florid kind when I say that we regard Marshal Stalin's life as most precious to the hopes and hearts of all of us. . . . I walk through this world with greater courage and hope when I find myself in a relation of friendship and intimacy with this great man, whose fame has gone out not only over all Russia, but the world.¹³

Hitler's Achievements in Pre-War Germany

ONE MIGHT ASK, what are we to make of all this contradictory attitude of mind and action on the part of British politicians and historians who present pictures of tyrants? Is there another side to all this that is not revealed by Professor Bullock? His bibliography is one of the longest I have seen in a work on the war or, indeed, upon the persons that participated in it. But when a student starts to work, he will wonder why such an essential volume as *Hitler Germany* by Cesare Santoro,¹⁴ which presents the Germany and Hitler that Churchill admired, is missing. The author was an Italian correspondent at Berlin. I do not know whether there was an American or a British edition of this extraordinary tome. The one I have was printed in Germany and published in 1939. I am assured by those who know that it is an excellent translation and that the author was a reputable journalist. It is a huge volume containing many pages of illustrations. The student cannot afford to overlook the information it contains.

Long as Professor Bullock's bibliography is (running to some twelve pages), it has the titles of many works not dealt with by the author in his chapters. I could mention a score of books that he does not include, which were published in America and England before Hitler attacked Poland. There were Arthur Bryant's *Unfinished Victory*,¹⁵ Wyndham Lewis' *Left Wings Over Europe*,¹⁶ and two works on Central Europe published by Butterworth and Company.¹⁷ But the book that was of unique importance in understanding the condition of Europe before Hitler became Chancellor is Colonel E. Alexander Powell's *Thunder Over Europe*.¹⁸ No other work I have seen describes the dangers within Ger-

¹³ Churchill, *The Second World War: Triumph and Tragedy*, Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1953, p. 361.

¹⁴ Berlin, Internationaler Verlag, 1939.

¹⁵ London, Macmillan, 1940.

¹⁶ London, Jonathan Cape, 1936.

¹⁷ *The Czechs and Their Minorities*, by "Diplomaticus," 1938 and *Czechoslovakia Within*, by Bertram de Colonna, 1938.

¹⁸ New York, Ives Washburn, 1932.

many and also in the States round about her, especially those of the Little Entente (made especially to hem Germany in, or as the phrase goes "to encircle her") as this one does. The author, a well-known explorer and traveler, writes as an eye witness of the events he sets before us. He was the first man to realize what Hitler was doing and what his achievements meant to the western powers.

Powell came to the conclusion that Europe needed a thorough house-cleaning, and that she should get rid of her politicians and diplomatists. He says in his introduction:

The most discouraging feature of the whole business is the moral cowardice and lack of vision of the European statesmen, who, with a few notable exceptions, are only politicians, and of mediocre intellectual caliber at that. They are cowards because they are afraid of public opinion. . . .¹⁹

It would take up far too much space to deal with a dozen of the books I possess (published before 1939), which have been overlooked by Professor Bullock. One reason why many of them are unknown is that, owing to straightforward statements about the opponents of Hitler, many of them became, on publication, taboo—not salable—the words used by one of the foremost booksellers of the United States. Several works published in London before 1940 met with a storm of disapproval which in some cases meant they had to be removed from booksellers' counters.

It is all different now. The period of hectic acrimony is passing away, and the students who were children when it took place will, without antipathy, search for the sources that will enable them to interpret the trend of events aright and produce a work without prejudice.

There is a book of historical value mentioned by Bullock in the bibliography. It is *The House that Hitler Built*, written by Professor Stephen H. Roberts,²⁰ of the University of Sydney, Australia, who spent sixteen months in Berlin when Hitler was *Reichsführer*. It contains much authentic matter that should have caused Bullock to reflect before he took some of his hasty decisions. Roberts says that nineteen petitions were sent to the League of Nations by the minorities suppressed in Czechoslovakia. There was no response from the peace-loving democrats at Geneva. He also tells us when the making of the Nazi army began. Furthermore, he gives an enlightening description of Hitler, the man.

The portrait presented by Professor Roberts is so widely different from the one we find in many biographies and histories of Nazi Germany that we wonder how it is possible for anyone to think of Adolf Hitler as a

¹⁹ *Op. cit.*, p. xi.

²⁰ London, Methuen, 1937.

tyrant; at any rate, up to the time when Neville Chamberlain gave the pledge to support Poland in case she was attacked.

Hitler's Use of "Modern Techniques"

HENCE, THE QUESTION ARISES: How and when did Hitler begin to use "modern techniques" to coerce the German people? For twenty-five years I have studied scores of books by American, British, and European authors, written about this unique figure in political history. If there were space I could draw up a list of more than fifty works not mentioned by Professor Bullock or any other English historian. There are certain facts extant, which reveal the mind of Hitler from the time that he became *Reichsführer*, and some of them may be found in the message that he addressed to the powers. On May 17, 1933 he declared:

. . . Germany will be perfectly ready to disband her entire military establishment and destroy the small amount of arms remaining to her, if the neighboring countries will do the same thing with equal thoroughness.²¹

There was no response; indeed it may be said it was rejected with contempt by the peace-loving nations. When he broke away from the League of Nations in October 1933, he again addressed the powers in a most extraordinary document. Even as late as March 1936, he desired to enter into agreements with European governments for the limitation of armaments, and asked for a commission to be organized, in which Germany, Belgium and France would each be entitled to send a representative to discuss outstanding matters concerning frontiers and armaments. He made no progress at all with his proposals.

Nearly all matters concerning warfare were to be discussed by this commission. It may surprise those in the countries that suffered from the dropping of bombs to learn that Hitler was ready to join with other nations in prohibiting the use of incendiary bombs of all kinds. All these sane overtures received not the attention of a single minister in one of the democracies, and their well-beloved subjects never knew anything about them. Were these offers part of the "modern technique" of a tyrant?

The strangest thing about all this is the gathering of millions and millions of the youth of Germany to support Hitler's rule. What an exceedingly unusual demonstration of trust to be given to a tyrant!

Alfred Fabre-Luce's book, *Histoire de la Révolution Européenne*,²² was published in 1954. From his account of Hitler's intentions in regard to

²¹ Quoted by Friedrich Stieve, *What the World Rejected*, Washington, D. C., 1940, p. 2.

²² Paris, Editions Domat.

Poland, we learn that on March 25, 1939, Hitler told General von Brauchitsch that he had no intention of employing force for the settlement of the Polish question. But on April 3 he settled upon a day. The passages of historical value are as follows:

La volte-face britannique a réveillé l'amour-propre du Führer. Comme, en mai 1938, la lecture d'articles de la presse étrangère assurant qu'il venait d'abandonner un projet d'attaque contre l'Tchécoslovaquie l'avait déterminé à envahir ce pays, le bruit fait autour de la garantie anglaise le décide à attaquer la Pologne. L'année précédente, il avait fixé une date limite: le 1^{er} octobre. Il en fixe une à nouveau: le 1^{er} septembre. Sa résolution, comme la précédente, va dans le sens de revendications allemandes préexistantes, mais elle a le même caractère d'improvisation. Le 25 mars encore, Hitler disait à Brauschitch qu'il n'avait pas l'intention d'employer la force pour la règlement de la question polonaise. Le 3 avril, il a déjà choisi son jour.²³

This statement is confirmed in several works, notably by Professor Bullock. After the fall of Poland, when Hitler saw the ruins of Warsaw, it is recorded that he cried, "Look what they made me do!" The reader will ask, "Who are 'they'?" And we shall now attempt to find out how certain members of Parliament and secretaries at the Foreign Office at Downing Street conspired to make a tyrant of the German *Führer*.

Much has been made of his going into the Rhineland. But surely if Germany had won the First World War and occupied the counties of the Wash, would Englishmen have neglected to take the first opportunity to reclaim them for the realm? In this case, Hitler was under no obligation to observe the conditions of the treaties that were signed under the gun. Erzberger and his fellows were merely a makeshift government. When a semblance of order was brought about, the German people repudiated without demonstration the treaties that subjected them to ignominy and shame. This I learned from Walther Rathenau, that well-informed economic expert who later became German Minister of Foreign Affairs.

When, in memory, one harks back to the time when Hitler was striving for sole power, it is rather disturbing to remember that large, influential bodies of British politicians and their supporters were not averse to the dictatorships of Stalin, Beneš or Franco. Hitler's desire to bring the

²³ (The British about-face offended the Führer's pride. Just as when, in May 1938, a reading of foreign newspaper articles assuring that he had abandoned his project of attacking Czechoslovakia made him make a decision to attack that country, the fuss made about the English guarantee persuaded him to attack Poland. The year before, he had set a final date—Oct. 1. Again he set a date: Sept. 1. This decision, like the previous one, goes along in the direction of old German demands, but it has the same character of improvisation. As late as the 25th of March, Hitler was telling Brauchitsch that he did not have the intention of using force to settle the Polish question. On the 3rd of April, he had already picked his day.) Fabre-Luce, *op. cit.*, pp. 210-11.

sequestered Germans into the Reich once again was prosecuted without bloodshed. The so-called rape of Austria was the culmination of a great movement for an Anschluss. He and his troops entered Austrian territory without firing a shot and, according to the reports of unprejudiced observers, were received by the people of Austria with shouts of joy. When order was restored and a vote taken, the majority given to Hitler amazed the prophets of disaster in other countries. Yeats-Brown in his *European Jungle* is only one of a half-dozen observers who has given a true account of the "rape of Austria."

When, then, did Hitler become a tyrant, adopting "modern techniques"? He did not assume power in 1933 by such methods, nor was it necessary for him to act the tyrant in putting Germany upon her feet. It is rather difficult to pierce the confusion of thought that has befogged this matter. The vast majority of the people of Germany did not regard him as a tyrant. He did for them what no first-class European power had been able to do for its subjects.

On this point the student might consult the files of *The Times* (London) for October 11 and 13 and November 13, 1940 for information. That newspaper quite frankly stated that "one of the fundamental causes of the war has been the unrelaxing effort of Germany since 1918 to secure wide enough foreign markets to straighten her finance." In another issue we were informed that nothing was ever heard of the necessity of increasing taxation; that public savings bank deposits touched new monthly records again and again; and that money was so plentiful that the interest rate for the Reich loans could reasonably be reduced from 4½ per cent to 4 per cent. Small wonder Churchill said that Hitler had achieved some of the most remarkable things in the history of the world.

It is quite unnecessary for anybody at this time to talk about making excuses for Hitler, that is, the Hitler who existed before Neville Chamberlain gave the pledge to Poland.

The Behavior of a Tyrant

HITLER IS NOW an historic figure, and as the years pass the student will learn that in the matter of absorbing interest for people in all parts of the world he will rival the notoriety of any politician that has appeared in the Christian era. Professor Bullock might have done much, in presenting his portrait of him, to clear away the drivel of the broadcaster and the gross misrepresentations of him fostered by politicians and editors to make the people of different countries war minded.

It is hard, however, to tolerate patiently Bullock's grave omissions, his peculiar bias, and the indiscriminate use to which he puts the term

"tyranny." He gives us no record of the work that was done by the British war party when Churchill was a private member of the House. He is lenient in dealing with many of the documents compiled by the British Foreign Office and (perhaps it is too much to expect of such a work) he does not check them with the German documents published before America declared war. I admit that this calls for a tome in itself, and if the task were completed, no publisher would think of dealing with it in a commercial way. It has been done in parts, but who is to spend ten years at least in making a thorough job of the matter?

Many questions arise from Bullock's use of the term "tyranny," and in connection with it, Hitler's use of "modern techniques" to gain power. Is the reader to imagine that Hitler was a tyrant when he was elected Chancellor of the Reich in 1933? Is it not stretching a point much too far to suggest, if not assert, that he wielded sufficient interest in that election to coerce the voters? The record of it shows that he was the leader of a party and that he held no government position. No one who has looked into this matter has discovered any discreditable action on his part. Certainly Hindenburg accepted the result and made no protest against the way the election had been conducted. Why, then, should the term "tyranny" be used in this case?

Professor Bullock forgets the undemocratic power that Roosevelt arrogated to himself. And he overlooks the case of the imprisonment of thousands of people in England who did not see eye to eye with Churchill. The difference in numbers who suffered under duress is only a matter of quantity. The principle of freedom of speech is as valid in war time as it is in peace, but in the former case the politicians must be shielded from criticism. When the Defence of the Realm Act reached the House of Lords in August, 1914, the Lord Chancellor, Halsbury, denounced it in scathing terms. It is evident that Professor Bullock has forgotten this utterly un-English law.

The tyranny of isolating people in concentration camps was nothing new in the Second World War. An example had been set by England in South Africa, and the story of these camps is told in General Christiaan De Wet's *Three Years' War*,²⁴ a book that was taboo in England. The author presents the report that Jan Smuts addressed to President Kruger. The whole of it should be read by those historians who have presented the public with their views of the concentration camps in the Second World War. I have space only to give the reader a few sentences. De Wet says:

²⁴ New York, Scribner, 1902.

. . . Lord Kitchener began to carry out in the *two republics a policy distinguished by unheard-of barbarity and by disregard of the elemental principles of all martial law.* (italics in original report)

In looking back over the wars since Joseph Chamberlain was Colonial Secretary, one cannot escape the idea that during the conflicts dictators, whether democratic or Nazi, and would-be dictators are tarred with the same brush. To save themselves, the politicians have to adopt the techniques of the cruelest of tyrants. In 1941 Lord Davies wrote *Foundations of Victory*,²⁵ in which he tells the story of the concentration camps in England. It is a revolting one, but the crushing indictment of the stupidity of the Home Office under Sir John Anderson is one that cannot be overlooked. Lord Davies says: "Unfortunately, however, Mr. Eden at the War Office and Sir John Anderson at the Home Office did not appear to be in the least perturbed; on the contrary, they rather prided themselves upon their draconian methods."²⁶ In this book the author points out with telling effect what Hitler thought of the business.

Because Professor Bullock does not include many works that would have been of use to him in a study of tyranny, I feel sure that the research student of the future, who goes to work on the causes of these wars and the political and military conduct of them, will find that the omission is deliberate on the part of the author. Politicians, whether they be democrats or totalitarians, are obliged to save their reputations during wars. Thus, tyrannical methods cannot be the monopoly of one particular person. The problem is a war problem, whether against domestic enemies or foreign ones. It is not the evil traits of this or that particular character; it is the circumstances in which he finds himself, when he imagines the hoary techniques of tyrannous cruelty will save him from opprobrium. The one object, victory over foes, dominates every impulse of his being. Defeat is oblivion. In such extremity he is driven to excesses that are, even in military affairs, inhuman. Surely it is time the sentimental Liberals should know that there never has been a "humane" war.

One reason why we have not yet had a clear statement from the evidence now extant may be that the Hitler of 1939-45 has dominated the minds of our writers. However, he cannot be understood unless he is seen as a protagonist in company with those of his enemies. And it is not only the Hitler who defeated Poland in 1939 that must be presented; it is necessary to have a clear picture of him, at least from the time when he wrote *Mein Kampf* to March 1939, when Neville Chamberlain's government gave the pledge to Poland to support her in case of German attack.

²⁵ London, Collins.

²⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 144.

It is well-nigh impossible to do justice to him by confusing the Hitler of the war period with the man who put Germany on its feet. No one recognized this so keenly as Churchill. But it should be remembered that the latter's laudatory statements appeared in works published before 1939. They may be found in *Step by Step*²⁷ and *Great Contemporaries*.²⁸ This lack of a work by an American or British author cannot be appreciated unless we are familiar with many books that have appeared in France, Belgium and other European countries. We have no such work as Fabre-Luce's *Histoire de la Révolution Européenne*²⁹ or André Maurois' *Tragédie en France*.³⁰ In this regard it is only necessary to mention Luigi Villari's book, *Italian Foreign Policy under Mussolini*³¹ to understand why Churchill praised him and said he would have been with him from the first had he been an Italian.

Therefore, the subtitle of Professor Bullock's book is somewhat misleading. His subject is Hitler, but there is no evidence whatever that he was oppressive or cruel before March 1939. To rid oneself of opponents who threaten one's life cannot very well be set down to any form of tyranny. Hitler's life was in danger from the time of the May Day Putsch in Munich in 1923. He was not even a tyrant in the Greek sense, for he was freely elected in 1933. He did not gain absolute power by usurpation. Perhaps the term might be applied to him after he started his campaign against Russia. Certainly the Hitler who put Germany upon her feet was no tyrant.

Many of his well-known supporters and opponents have regarded him as a most remarkable man. But in what way can it be explained that he cheerfully welcomed several British statesmen to discuss European affairs? Surely that is not the method of a tyrant. Even when the unrest in Europe came to the boiling point, he saw Neville Chamberlain five times,³² a most extraordinary thing to do, if he were bent upon war. He was under no obligation to see the British Prime Minister, and yet together they signed a document to discuss other difficulties that might arise. Hitler made no promise to forego his intentions of bringing back the German minorities that had been wrested from the Reich under the treaties of 1919-20. The Danzig problem could not be dropped by him, and no one knew that better than Neville Chamberlain and Winston Churchill.

²⁷ *Cit. supra.*

²⁸ New York, Putnam, 1937, pp. 225-32.

²⁹ *Cit. supra.*

³⁰ New York, Editions de la Maison Française, 1940.

³¹ New York, Devin-Adair, 1956.

³² At Berchtesgaden, Sept. 15, 1938; at Godesberg, Sept. 22 and 23; at Munich, Sept. 29 and 30.

For the latter had stated that it was one that had to be considered and solved.

There was a tyrant in the patched-up State of Czechoslovakia, and some three years before Hitler began to serve his sentence in the Landsberg Prison (November 1923), a petition was sent to the League of Nations, which put definite reasons for a consideration of the formation of the State. It said:

. . . More than five million Germans, Magyars, and people of other nationalities have not a single representative in this National Assembly, and all claims advanced by them have been waived aside by the Czechs. All the fundamental laws concerning the Constitution, and the language to be used in its administration, as regards social reform, the expropriation of land, etc., have been determined by this arbitrarily formed National Assembly without a single German-Bohemian or Magyar having been allowed a voice. . . .³³

This was the condition under Masaryk and Beneš, nearly five years before the first edition of *Mein Kampf* was published.

Hitler's Economics

ONE OF THE STRANGEST BLUNDERS Bullock makes concerns Hitler's knowledge of economics. He says, on page 136, "Hitler neither understood nor was interested in economics." And then on page 366, he emphasizes this opinion and states: "Hitler's views about economics, however, were entirely opportunistic. The truth is that he was not at all interested in economics."

These astonishing statements are far from the truth. The fact is Hitler, many times, dealt with the subject in his speeches and revealed a knowledge of economics that no other European statesman ever expressed since Turgot and Cobden. When I think of the men I knew in Parliament, who were Chancellors of the Exchequer, I cannot remember one who was even versed in economic fundamentals. Certainly neither Asquith nor Lloyd George had the remotest idea of the difference between land and property. As for Churchill, during the land values campaign in 1908, he made speeches on land reform and quoted from Cobden; but he had been tutored in this by John Paul, the well-versed secretary of the United Committee for the Taxation of Land Values. When the Land Values Bill was presented to the House in 1909, he never had a word to say in support of the measure that had saved his party from defeat.

Not only in *Mein Kampf*, but in speeches delivered before he became

³³ "Present Conditions in Czecho-Slovakia, a Dangerous and Deplorable Situation," sent from a Correspondent in Prague, *Foreign Affairs* (London), Vol. I, Spec. Supp (April 1920), p. 1.

Chancellor, Hitler expounds his desire for land reform in precise economic phraseology. The *Grund und Boden* speech he delivered in Munich April 27, 1923 is a perfectly clear statement on this question, the same one that was debated in England from 1906 to 1910, when, as two Liberal Whips (the Master of Elibank and Percy Illingworth) declared, "it saved Asquith's government from defeat in two General Elections." I wish there were space to quote the whole of these speeches. Some of them are to be found in *My New Order*, the collection made by Raoul de Roussy de Sales³⁴ (also listed in Bullock's bibliography). Alas, I have room only to quote two short sentences:

. . . Private property can be only that which a man has gained for himself, has won through his work. A natural product is not private property, that is national property. Land is thus no object for bargaining.³⁵

This statement would have satisfied John Stuart Mill.

However, it was not to be. In the four short years in which he set Germany on her feet again, he had time to deal only with the immediate problems of rehabilitation in industry, commerce, and finance. In the spring of 1937 his mind had to be given to the threats from so many quarters where grave dangers lurked that he was obliged to occupy himself with preparations that might be needed to defend Germany. These and the burning question of minorities in Czechoslovakia and Poland did not, however, hinder the progress Germany was making as an industrial power.

It was in November 1936, that Churchill and General Robert Wood lunched together in London, when Churchill said, "Germany is getting too strong and we must smash her." Perhaps this was the real reason why Hitler later became a tyrant.

Port Washington, New York

³⁴ New York, Reynal and Hitchcock, 1941.

³⁵ *Op. cit.*, pp. 59-60.

General welfare, as the aim of public services, involves the consideration, not only of the group as a whole as against interested private groups, as of a given time, but also of future generations against the present.

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