

CHAPTER ELEVEN

EDUCATION IN DEMOCRACY

"You, who wish to remain free, learn obedience to reason and the government of yourselves; and finally bid adieu to your dissensions, your jealousies, your superstitions, your outrages, your rapine and your lusts."

JOHN MILTON, 1654.

THE dangers to democracy are obvious enough. Our main hope must be the gradual education of electors. That depends by no means on State education alone; but on the Press, on parents, on the Church, on writers' (especially of fiction), on the cinema, and on Members of Parliament of both Houses.

I was born of engineering stock in the age of mechanical invention. I am still a member of the Institute of Naval Architects, that all-embracing profession. When I was young, steam was still in its infancy, with the compound engine and the turbine and oil-firing still to come; electricity unknown; wireless and the radio undreamt of; the internal-combustion engine, with its offspring of flying machines and caterpillars, was not yet within the imagination of Mr. H. G. Wells. All these inventions and many more have swept over us. Yet, at the end, I say to myself, how have we really benefited? Perhaps men use the sea more safely in time of peace by reason of the wireless; perhaps life is easier—too easy—and labor less exhausting; general knowledge should certainly be greater. Reflection leads me to the queer conclusion that of all inventions of my age the three of real utility have been—bicycles, Boy Scouts and the cinema, and

these because they are valuable as aids to education. All are of great service—playing their different roles in the fit and proper education of the people.

MANY INVENTIONS

Bicycles encourage individual enterprise and self-reliance. Boy Scouts teach self-discipline, courage and unselfishness. Cinemas give vision and imagination. All help to convert dumb, dull, stupid, resentful cattle into men fit for self-government and able to use democracy. Bicycles are not primarily a means of locomotion; they are the riders' triumph over nature, every yard impossibly upright, as one moves forward with giant stride. They are a miraculous escape to dreams in which one never touches ground, but ever puts foot down ten times further forward than mortal man has a right to do on earth. The machine moves with the body, goes as directed, rests as desired, depends on the rider alone, and offers adventure round every corner. On horseback one is not so fancy-free, so much the master of one's fate. The bicycle has done more to open the door of the world to all the young of Britain than was ever possible in previous ages. Adventure and courtship—the salt of life—become both true and idealized.

As for Baden-Powell's Boy Scouts and Girl Guides, I hope they are still doing their daily good deed. There, too, imagination has its fling as never before for the working class. The discipline and adventure of camping out, the common work and comradeship, did as much to change the youth of Britain as did Hitler's training in brutality and violence to change the youth of Germany. I doubt whether courage was even considered suitable for the education of working-class children before the Boy Scouts took them out to desert islands with Captain Marryat's *Masterman Ready*

and to the camping grounds and the warpath with Fenimore Cooper. We may be permitted to prefer his Red Indians to the Japanese, and altruism to atrocities.

It is usual to blame the cinema for crime waves, for youthful depravity, for absenteeism, and for deeds of darkness. This silly nonsense comes from unsuccessful competitors for the people's cash and attention. The cinema provides education just exactly as does book-reading. Is it all fiction? Merely palatable to those who do not read, but better than no reading at all? By no means! Educational films are still in their infancy, but aesthetically, and in the widest sense of education, modern films are valuable beyond the range of any books. The historical films may be inaccurate in the eyes of historians, but so was much of Miss Young's *Stories from History*, which nevertheless opened history to all of my generation.

Or consider the numbers so educated, especially in comparison with those who receive adult education, either organized or in the theatre. One of the most thought-producing plays of our time is Shaw's *Major Barbara*, with its indeterminate struggle between authority and liberty, between efficiency and idealism. I doubt whether more than 25,000 have seen the play, whether more than 50,000 have read it. Two millions must have seen the film; and, in my opinion, the film is as superior to the acted play as is acting to mere reading. When *St. Joan* is added to *Pygmalion* and *Major Barbara*, even more valuable stuff for thought will be taught nightly to 10,000 people. Why more valuable? Because Shaw, in *Major Barbara*, as filmed, inclines to the side of authority and efficiency; where as *St. Joan* shows a terrible understanding of the cruelty and mental processes in Church and State which governed the mind of man in the childhood of the 15th century, before the dawn of liberty.

But even normal fiction, however potted and compressed for the film, plays its part and reaches a larger public. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* had for its day a reading public surpassing all save the Bible and *Pilgrim's Progress*. No one reads it today; but, as a film, it has nearly as large an audience as it had readers a century ago. Tolstoi's *Resurrection* has been opened to ten times the number that ever read it. So has Mark Twain's *A Yankee at the Court of King Arthur*. The moral educational value of such films exceeds imagination, for the picture stays long after the written word has faded from the minds of those unaccustomed to carry words from eye to brain. I am convinced that the documentary and strictly educational speaking films are destined to revolutionise all education, from the nursery to the university degree—though it may meet opposition from some members of the teaching profession. Only the answering of questions will be left to teachers, and for that we need a 'brains trust', composed of supermen who like answering questions. All audiences prefer the 'heckling' time, and the very word (from Scotland) means pulling out the fur, and a rough time for speakers and teachers. Lord Lang, when Archbishop of Canterbury, put the ideal of future education into a perfect phrase: "The true test of the success of teaching is *not* whether children are able to answer questions set by others, but whether they are eager to ask questions set by themselves."

PUBLIC-SCHOOL EDUCATION

I translated the Archbishop's dictum into a shorter phrase, which I believe to be the essence of true education: "Teach them to think, not *what* to think."

The education of our governing class in England has long been in the hands of our great Public Schools. Much

of the snobbery and conceit which derived from Eton and Harrow and Winchester and Rugby must be deplored by the philosophers of democracy. But these Public Schools did teach that it was shameful to lie, to be dishonest in thought or act, to shirk, or sneak, or 'suck-up', or 'pass the buck'; that it was the part of a man to take without flinching what was coming to him. They tried to teach that it was better to be dead than to be a slave, that only cowards submit to injustice whether to themselves or to others, that protest and resentment are virtues. I suppose they taught courage of a sort, some self-respect, and that team spirit which does not so much mean beating the other side as helping the other fellow. Above all, they taught us to think, not *what* to think.

There is no British Tory so old and crusted that he does not acclaim such education and hold it well fitted for the master class of a master race. But we are no longer governed by a master class. Democracy no longer consists of a Parliament of one class, well trained for governing. When Robert Lowe, feeling full of dread at the passage of the Second Reform Bill (1867) said, "Now let us at least educate our masters", he showed considerable wisdom. The three Rs are not enough. If democracy is to survive, the people must be taught to think as well as to read and write.

Is all that perfect education described above to be confined to the master class of a master race? When will our old and crusted Tory believe that such education can properly be given to the working class of a master race, or even to other races not yet trained in mastery? Only then will democracy be safe.

Of course such teaching can never be countenanced by Nazis, Fascists and Papists. 'Teach them *what* to think' is the essence of all authoritarian direction and rule. It is

salvation by faith and not by works. It is government by emotion and not by reason. That is why dictators specialize on their Youth Movements, and suppress all rival merchants of 'what to think'. That is why the Roman Church cannot be content with certain hours for teaching their religion in a State school; they must have complete control of the whole education of 'their' children in 'their' schools. Over all that, there can be no sort of argument: 'They', the Germans and Italians and Irish, must *not* be taught to think.

But is it safe and prudent to teach our English 'lower orders' to think,—not what to think?—to give them that education which we all believe to be the one best fitted for the master class of a master race?

Much depends upon the answer. All enemies of democracy will answer 'No!' How shall we answer? How will Stalin answer? It is common ground to Democrats, Fascists and Communists that the building of character should be the aim of education. Bishops and sociologists have learnt the cliché:

*Es bildet ein Talent sich in der Stille,
Sich ein Karakter in dem Strom der Welt,*¹ . . . as

said Goethe. Every prize-giving speaker echoes the theme. But all define character to suit themselves. To the Fascist a good character implies obedience without argument, stoicism and endurance, a mind disciplined in simple hero-worship of the master.

To our Church, character means honesty and truthfulness, power to resist temptation, unselfishness and the dignity of self-support. Such was the ideal English gentleman, the product of centuries of the Bible and *Pilgrim's Progress*.

¹ Genius may develop in the cloister, but character only in the struggle of life.

The democrat sees character in the man who thinks for himself, respects himself and can take the unpopular side.

Once, when I was at Győr, in Bolshevik Hungary, I got talking to a man—or he got talking to me. My companions sheered off, nervous of my company, for the man was a propaganda agent, a job which has other less attractive titles. He asked me how I liked the country. I said, "Fine, but it is all so peaceful. You might drop the dictatorship business." He said, "Impossible! We could not maintain order without it." It seemed to me the order of dumb animals, so I said, "I prefer rebels to cabbages"; being a man of labels and erudition, he replied, "I see you are a follower of Bakounin. I believe in Karl Marx." I rather hope Stalin believes in himself. These *post-mortem* loyalties are so cramping.

STATE EDUCATION

State education—judged by any standards—has improved in my time. The schools set an example to most homes of cleanliness and freshness. The children enjoy more outdoor life. The subjects are made interesting. The teachers, especially the women teachers, are well bred and well educated. Perhaps I speak mainly of the provided schools in my own country, where parents take a pride in their children's progress and behaviour. For the tales one hears of children evacuated from the slums of London, Manchester, Liverpool and Glasgow show lower standards of life and conduct, at least among the Irish Catholic element of the population.

Girls are particularly sensitive to example and rapidly acquire in secondary school the manners, mind and accents of their mistresses. Eliza Doolittle¹ was not more responsive to her professor's tuition than are the girls promoted from

¹ Feminine character in Shaw's "Pygmalion." M.S.

elementary schools. By the time they are 16 they have ceased to giggle and whisper in corners; by the time they go to college they have ceased to be afraid of the sound of their own voices and are indistinguishable from those who come from cultured homes. Unfortunately boys are not so adaptable, and as they go alone up the ladder feel acutely the difference, and acquire an inferiority discomfort. This, however, has never been the case in Scotland, and the extermination of such snobbish fear among English boys may well be anticipated as one result of this war. Of course, if all classes were educated together, as is generally the case in America, class differences would die out much more quickly, to the great comfort of all and with the best results to self-respect.

UTILITY EDUCATION

Apart from that vicious habit of working for examinations which saps the daring of the teachers, and promotes despair among the dull, I see little to complain of in the usual curriculum of the State schools. I would have more learning by heart, more play-acting, more teaching by films, more history (especially American); more learning to speak and debate; less spelling, grammar, dictation; less questioning by the teacher, and more asking of questions from the desks. It is good for all boys to have a bit of constructive carpentering to do; so it is for girls to explore the adventurous side of cooking. All that is good education. What I fear, resent and despise is vocational training, which does not widen the mind, but seals the brain before it can develop.

The worst form of vocational training is, no doubt, boys marching in step, singing the Horst Wessel song, and carrying dummy rifles. That it has been effective in closing the mind and opening again the beast that preceded the

mind none can now doubt. But long before Baldur von Schirach, Germany inculcated the material advantages (to the masters) of the vocational training of youth. It was begun by Dr. Kirschensteiner 40 years ago. H. G. Wells, in *The First Men in the Moon*, pointed out whither it led.¹ While the boy is still young it is decided what he is to be. Henceforth all his 'education' centres round his trade or profession. The prospective chimney-sweep becomes 'chimney conscious'. He learns the chemistry of soot, his sums treat of pounds of soot; his freehand drawing concerns chimneys-stacks, but storks and any such distractions are unnaturally excluded from *his* business in life. The draper's assistant learns the folding of huckaback and that the customer is always right; he sees no alternative to "crawling up a drain-pipe all his life".² He likes it and knows no better. This is materialism run mad; but it appears as wisdom to some of our educational experts, seeking something new, searching for efficiency, and satisfied with results in Germany. Being myself an expert in freedom, I rightly deride the experts in *fascismo*.

*Non ragioniam' di lor', ma guarda e passa.*³

THE MANAGEMENT OF EDUCATION

Let us pass from the advantages which accrue to democracy from teaching the young to think, to the directing authority which has power to inculcate such teaching and secure such advantages. If we leave out of account the Roman Catholic schools, all others are in practice directed and managed by the County or Borough Education Au-

¹ They found the inhabitants of the moon all specialists. Some all brain; others all deft fingers; others of immense muscularity; all exceedingly efficient machines for the use of . . . somebody else.

² *Kipps*, by H. G. Wells.

³ "Do not discuss such people, but look down the nose and pass by."—*Dante*.

thority. Directors of Education, servants of some two hundred Councils, are responsible to their Council for schools, teachers and what is taught. The Directors co-operate with H.M. Inspectors on the one hand and the Chairman of the Education Committees on the other. The Education Committee is selected from the Council, with education enthusiasts added by co-option. In this oligarchy, the Chairman usually gets his own way, the Director squares conscience with diplomacy and H.M. Inspector receives inadequate support from the Board of Education in his well-meant efforts to get the ratepayers' money spent on better schools.

County Councils are generally Conservative in politics, so therefore is the direction of the education oligarchy. Questions concerning education do not come before the electors for discussion, the parents take little interest, and the whole subject becomes marooned, stranded on an island inhabited only by experts and teachers. The falling birthrate has seriously perturbed the teachers' Trade Union, which feels that their profession is threatened. To make up for the loss of children under 14, they urge the extension of compulsory education from 14 to 16.

This slight obscurity as to whether children exist for the benefit of the teaching profession or *vice versa* is due to the segregation of the subject, and the lack of public interest such as used to be aroused by the direct elections to the old school boards, abolished in 1902. That step was taken by the Conservative Government to end the political struggle between the Church of England and the then powerful Non-conformist bodies. These are no longer powerful, and we might with great advantage, both to democracy and to education, revert to the direct election of school boards. That would restore the interest of parents, and secure for education and criticism

the public (unpaid) services of those who value education for altruistic reasons.

MUST EDUCATION BE COMPULSORY?

The one whose opinion I value most urges me to leave out this following section. He says, quite rightly, that 'if you tilt at windmills, people will think it is only windmills you tilt at'. But at 70 one may as well remain honest, trust in reason, and state the argument. I believe that compulsory education will, as public opinion improves, become unnecessary.

Of course it comes as a shock to experts and politicians to be told that compulsory education is unnecessary. Even readers whom I have so far carried with me gasp at such heresy—it is contrary to all that has been proclaimed for seventy years. Yet the theory that 'working-class' parents need compulsion in order to make them do the decent thing by their children, whereas 'upper class' parents do not, seems to me to be sheer impertinence. So long as wages were on the hunger line and children were permitted to work in mines, fields and factories at 10 years of age, poverty constrained parents to push their children into the industrial machine. Those conditions no longer prevail. Even if children were allowed to work under 14 years of age, most parents would still send their children to school—as they used to do in Scotland, though they had to pay for the schooling.

There is no great gulf between the minds, pride and affections of 'upper' and 'lower' class where children are concerned. The 'upper' send their boys to boarding-schools when they become a nuisance in the home; the 'lower' feel a similar urge to 'be shut of' their boys seven hours a day. Mrs. de Vere Robinson sends her children to a boarding-school she cannot afford because Mrs. Talbot Smythe does the same.

So would Mrs. Jones see that her boy was 'learnd' because Mrs. Smith down the lane was giving her boy a decent chance. Mrs. de Vere Robinson is making a sacrifice and is all the better for it, so would Mrs. Jones be. Their children would later appreciate the sacrifice, love their parents more, and make better use of their chance of education.

If some little mother had to stay at home and mind her baby brothers and sisters or get her widowed father's tea, need one suppose that the consciousness of being useful and needed is not in itself an education of high value? Freedom to choose is an education in right choice. Visits from the School Attendance Officer, armed with the power to inflict punishment on the defaulting parent, arouse just indignation or produce a slave mentality. They bring the law into contempt in the eyes of a naturally rebellious people. It were far better to rely upon the persuasive powers of emulation and public opinion.

If education were not compulsory—if no particular school could claim its quota of scholars—would not education become more attractive, even better? Headmasters would be judged by the number or type of child attracted. Their lectures would bring results; their popularity and social work would bring its manifest reward. The school would acquire a name, something better than percentages in an examination paper, or percentages of attendance. "I was at Hassall Street under Thompson" would take its place beside "I was at Harrow under Bowen", or "I was at Clifton under Percival".

A little healthy competition must surely do schools good, do scholars good, and provide a more exciting career for teachers. Had I power I would try to assimilate the school-teacher to the panel doctor. He should be doctor of the mind, watching the child from start to finish, ever stimulating and

recommending, special classes, reading, occupation and employment.

Whatever politicians may say, or school-teachers desire, neither children nor parents will ever allow education to become *compulsory* up to 16, for both children and parents will combine to break any such law. With the alternative of becoming a man, doing what men are doing, for good pay, boys will make themselves intolerable in school. Read in Jack Lawson's *A Man's Life* his joy at starting work in the pit, helping his family, following in his father's footsteps, being treated as grown-up and responsible. Make education available for those who want it; then that education will be such as to attract; make it compulsory, and it will be uninspired and evaded.

THE PRESS

So much for the effect of State schools on the education of democrats. In so far as the State schools teach the young to think for themselves, that teaching is the salvation of democracy. In so far as they teach the young *what* to think, and inject into their minds and hands the State's idea of 'the perfect citizen', that teaching leads to Fascism—to the men in the moon and the men dressed in blue of Mr. Wells' romances.¹ It has been suggested that all schools should teach 'Civics', the knowledge of how we are governed and the responsibilities of citizenship. Personally I think 14 is early enough to begin such learning, probably early enough to begin reading the newspapers. But for the salvation of democracy, it is necessary that by the time the child leaves school at 14 he should be able and anxious to start reading newspapers. With or without knowledge of Civics, he must

¹ *The First Men in the Moon*, and *When the Sleeper Wakes*.

begin to understand the world. Such understanding is given by an honest Press.

It is unfortunately sometimes the case that the worst newspapers have the largest circulation. But even the worst in a democratic country provides a better education than the best under a tyranny. Every day ten million people in Great Britain read a newspaper. From this daily perusal they get so much more information and food for thought than State schools provide, that one is tempted to an aphorism. Schools need only to open the newspaper to open the mind.

Neither in Great Britain nor in the United States has the Press now much political success. Already, as it seems to me, democracy has advanced to the stage of reading and at the same time thinking critically about what they read. Neither presidential elections in the United States nor general elections in this country are any longer decided by the newspapers. The press supplies information; it does not indoctrinate. Throughout 1938 and 1939, down to the very moment of his fall in May 1940, the British Press was overwhelmingly pro-Chamberlain, while the country became ever more critical. The country became critical because, while absorbing all the information supplied, readers knew enough to form their own judgment. It was not a triumph of democracy over the Press. It was a triumph of the Press that it had taught democracy to be critical. There is not the slightest evidence that the radio has ousted the Press. Our B.B.C. was (and is) more conservative than the average conservative newspaper. It supported Mr. Chamberlain as efficiently as did *The Times* itself, and it claims 2,000,00 listeners. The great broadcasters of America follow the American Press rather than lead it; and Father Coughlin, as a Fascist mouthpiece, has left so little mark on public opinion,

that one must discount the alleged power of emotion over reason in the modern America.

No doubt in lands where political feeling runs high, as, for instance, in France in the years 1936-1939, a Press unmuzzled, even by any law of libel, can impart a personal and social bitterness far beyond our understanding. In France they did supplant reason by fear. They did indoctrinate. They catered for a Party, and cared for no readers outside the Party. Nearly all our newspapers wish to attract readers from all Parties, and practise moderation even in the presentation of facts. If all nations have the Press that they deserve, it is at least as true that the Press produces the nation it deserves. The English-speaking world could do without its schools better than without its newspapers. Indeed, I concur with Thomas Jefferson:

“The basis of our governments 'being the opinion of the people, the very first object should be to keep that right; and, were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter.”

THE PARENTS

The father or mother of independent mind almost inevitably influences children in the same direction. Consciousness of politics awoke in the middle classes in the 17th century, and the influence of the struggle between Crown and Parliament, between Church and Dissent, has passed on through every succeeding generation. The Chartist agitation, the Tolpuddle Martyrs, and the early Trade Union struggle, affect equally today the working class. How often have I heard “My grandfather was a Chartist” given as reason

for support of the Liberal and now of the Labour side! At every general election children learn to what Party their parents belong and wear the colours of that Party. The parents are committed; they could not easily explain a subsequent change of colour, so that to shift them is difficult. Generally speaking, every child was born and remains a little Liberal or a little Conservative. Now the Labour Party has inherited from the Liberals; but the larger families of the Catholics have increased also the number of little Conservatives. While Liberal and Labour are both pledged vaguely to democracy, parents find it difficult to explain its virtues to their children. It is much easier to explain benevolent socialism, which has more in common with Christian communism than with the 'good old cause'. If education in democracy were left to parents without guidance it would indeed fare badly.

Even highly educated parents shun the task of explaining their politics to their offspring. They feel it safer to feed them with facts.

CHURCH AND CHAPEL

Church or Chapel influence has been the most powerful force behind the two Parties. Church to the Right; Chapel to the Left. The cleavage was clear-cut down to the election of 1906 and raged over the Education Act of 1902. Mr. Gladstone, a High-Churchman, was regarded almost as a traitor to his Church even before the Home Rule Bill. A Liberal parson was so rare as to be suspected of turpitude. A Non-conformist parson who was Conservative was shunned by his flock. Quite half our present Labour leaders were brought to politics in the chapel, often as local preachers. Even today the Labour hymn-book is indistinguishable from the chapel hymn-book. They literally sang themselves into politics:

“Be faithful to death, to your freedom and laws”! or
“When wilt thou save Thy people, Lord”!

Democracy meant John Bright, whose aura mingled with John Brown's body. It meant Dr. Clifford. It meant puritanism, temperance, and the Kingdom of the Saints.

But all that passed away as social questions and socialism became preeminent. A vertical cleavage became a horizontal cleavage. The Non-conformist divines forsook the political platform. The most active parsons took their place, standing on socialist planks and tubs. Year after year of Conservative Government dried up conservative propaganda and left politics dead in 'respectable circles'. Like the Church of Rome, our Church and Chapel, too, shunned Party and eschewed politics; not of course that they did not vote—only they no longer voted against each other. The new cleavage left democracy without expounders. Only since Hitler overran Europe have they all hurried back to explain the vices of tyranny and Fascism. They are still too hazy as to the distinction between Democracy, Social Democracy, and National Socialism to be of much educational value. But they have found an agreeable point of difference from the Roman Catholic Church. Once more they feel they ought to have views on politics, to reprobate Fascism, and to maintain our morale, if not our Constitution. Unfortunately they have come out of a dark room, and are still blinking in the sunshine.

WRITERS FOR FREEDOM

More educational are the prose-writers. The Left Book Club and the Ministry of Information (from the conservative Right) have produced the true cautionary tale of Europe and the fall of democracy. American and British writers

have taken on the defence of democracy with insistent zeal and marked success. For nine years Gollancz, the Penguins and Hutchinson's¹ have held the flag aloft, broken isolation and appeasement, and created the new altruism of the Atlantic Charter. They have crowned with an aureole the survivors of the International Brigade which it was once a crime to join or to assist. They have made Russia and Britain mutually affectionate. Almost they have eliminated Colonel Blimp and embraced Mahatma Gandhi.

All this they have done, but it has been emergency action to save the world from Hitler, the work mostly of unexpected² Left-Wing rebels who had no great enthusiasm for parliamentary democracy. They have taught us what to hate; but remain hazy concerning the shape, size and composition of their new world. All—save that old war-horse Nicholas Murray Butler, President of Columbia—all, from Priestley to Norman Angell, would murmur 'liberalism is not enough'. That, however, teaches no one how to prevent corruption, Party violence or administrative inefficiency from destroying democracy and substituting Fascism, even after the war is won.

PARLIAMENT AND STATE PROPAGANDA

Members of Parliament, by precept and example, would seem to be the fit and proper persons to educate the electorate on the virtues of Parliament and vices of Fascism. Even with the Party truce, they still have many opportunities to speak; but the theme is always the obvious crimes of the enemy, rarely the praise of our own parliamentary form of Government. Our democracy is not for export, nor even

¹ Publishers of popular priced and progressive books. M.S.

² Whoever expected Frank Owen, Michael Foot, Allan Nevins, Ed Morrow, Vernon Bartlett, G. T. Garratt, Quentin Reynolds, A. J. Cummings, or Bill Shirer? David Low we knew of old.

for the shop-window. So the people wait, with ear to the ground, knowing little of what is at stake. They can understand what it would be like to have one's throat cut, but not the implication of blackshirt rule by Mosley's thugs, still less the possibilities of freedom from fear.

In normal times the Member of Parliament is the natural source of education in every branch of democracy. But even in normal times he had to be coached for the part, by his leaders, by pamphlets, leaflets and books. We have indeed to consider how best schools, cinema, B.B.C., Press literature, Church and Parliament, can be supplied with the most effective ideas on the virtues of our form of democracy and the dangers to be avoided. That is the object of my *Memoirs of a Fighting Life*, of my anthology *Forever Freedom* and of this book.

Propaganda has been my business for forty years. I have agitated for Single Tax, for native African rights, for Indian freedom, for Zionism, for Union Now—ever with enthusiastic societies to shower leaflets and provide arguments, but with little success. Whence I judge that success can only result from propaganda on the widest national scale, and that mass psychology requires emotion even more than argument. In politics the strongest emotion is not love, nor fear, but indignation; the widest scale is no longer national, but covers all the fighting United Powers.

Consider examples of successful propaganda. Emancipation in America was achieved by indignation through the appeal to the emotions of Harriet Beecher Stowe in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Socialism, an appeal to the emotion of indignation, was popularized here through books written by William Morris or Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward*, not through the reasoning of Karl Marx. Nazism, an appeal to indignation against Versailles, Jews, 'profiteers', and aliens,

rose to power through *Mein Kampf*. Or now, the superb morale of the Soviet has been attained by indignation at German atrocities, and also by a new emotion of love of comrades. Both indignation and solidarity are stimulated of set purpose by the Government of the U.S.S.R. This is national propaganda on an immense scale. On the other hand our propaganda from the B.B.C. or the Ministry of Information still relies mainly on appeals to reason—sometimes rather insincere reasons—lacks national drive and is addressed abroad, not to the Home front. Indeed, it is dictated by the Foreign Office to foreigners.

I have no idea what is the national propaganda, if any, carried on by Washington or by China. But I am quite sure that a united command is required as much at the microphone as in the field. At present Soviet voices and our own, as heard on the Continent, are often in opposition to one another. To listen to some of the 'messages' put out by us to Austria, Italy, Spain and Portugal, one would suppose Broadcasting House to be a sub-office of the Vatican rather than of the Foreign Office.

The Soviet sees the best chance of victory in the revolt of the slave peoples of Europe. So do all thinking people in this country. The Soviet shape and direct their daily propaganda—*Soviet War News*—to a double end, to sustain the morale of the Home front and to destroy that of the enemy. We have nothing corresponding to *Soviet War News*. We do nothing for morale on the home front—not even circulating *Soviet War News* in the factories or to the troops—and broadcasts to the Continent and to the Near East seem directed to proving how close is our affection and how innocent our intentions. Possibly our Foreign Office hope for a revolution in Europe from the Right, in which case they will be disappointed and our money wasted. More probably,

the surviving anti-Russian appeasers wish to counter the Soviet propaganda, because they fear the Soviet and revere Rome. That is hardly loyal to the United Nations, or to the Prime Minister.

There is no need to have propaganda identical with that of the Soviet Union. In fact that might be impossible, since we have not the same material to work on. But if freedom and democracy are what we fight for—not the preservation of ‘pals’ in Italy, Greece, Egypt, Hungary, Belgium, Spain, Portugal, France and the Balkans—then we should consider and use propaganda for democracy. We need not even invent. It is ready to hand. There is nothing we need be ashamed of, or conceal from Franco or Salazar. It is just our history and traditions; if anybody is ashamed of our history or traditions or character, then he had better not have a hand in propaganda. He is not needed, for without faith propaganda rings false and convinces no man.

These shadow-boxers are men of the same kidney as the debunkers of our history—the glorifiers of the Stuarts, the vilifiers of the Whigs. Propaganda had better start by telling our story straight, with all its warts but with all its glories too. See to it¹ that those who go about to break Parliament, Parliament shall break them. I do not accuse these men of being Fascist. I do charge them with being ashamed of our past, of our eversuccessful fight for freedom. We urgently need education in democracy. For that, propaganda is essential, and that propaganda must be based on selected history. Whether such propaganda takes the form of novels, plays, broadcasts, sermons, lectures or leaflets, let it be drawn up loyally by those who hold the faith.

¹“Let the Consuls see to it that the Republic comes to no harm.” The formula used in ancient Rome when appointing a dictator.