

THE  
THOUSAND-YEAR  
CONSPIRACY

*Secret Germany Behind the Mask*

by

PAUL WINKLER

*"I know no way of judging the future but by the past."*

PATRICK HENRY

[Speech at the Virginia Assembly, May 1765]

*New York*

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FOR MY CHILDREN

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## Foreword

This book attempts to contribute to the work of identification of the forces behind Nazism. It results from research undertaken to substantiate this hypothesis: that Nazism is not the product of some "spontaneous generation" crystallized by Hitler's evil genius; and that it is not—as it has often been described—simply a reaction to the harsh terms of the Versailles treaty; finally, that Nazism does not derive from some basic trait of the German character.

Chapter I is introductory. It presents a few characteristic quotations from German writers of the past one hundred and fifty years. These passages, all written by members of what may be called the Prussian School, are evidence that *Mein Kampf* is merely a rehash of ideas frequently expressed before Hitler voiced them. But what was the common inspiration of these earlier authors? In seeking an answer to this question, we first perceive the contours of the conspiracy—very old but very real. Its existence—fantastic, at first thought—remains the only possible explanation of the facts.

Chapters II–VII are an attempt to retrace this centuries-old conspiracy, the actual subject of this book. Chapters II and III examine in particular the hidden forces responsible for the rise of Prussia and the Germany of Bismarck and Wilhelm II. Chapter IV introduces the "Fehme," the blood tribunal of the Middle Ages, into the picture. Chapters V, VI and VII show that Hitler's rise to power would have been impossible had not Hitler placed himself and his movement at the service of the Prusso-Teutonic forces.

In Chapters VIII, IX and X, the effort is made to search out behind the specific subject—the "actual conspiracy"—its fundamental basis. Whatever may have appeared earlier

to be a fortuitous development now takes its proper place within an evolution which derives from basic, organic causes. In these chapters we seek the reasons why the Prusso-Teutonic forces have pursued paths completely divergent from those taken by the other peoples of Western civilization. Here we face the "forces behind the forces."

## *Part One*

CHAPTER I  
THE CONSPIRACY AND  
ITS MIRROR

IN 1921 Nazism was still in its infancy and rather harmless. During one of the sessions of the Bavarian "Landtag" (Parliament), the Deputy Gareis, with a heavy pile of documents in his hands, made a statement to the other Deputies which none of them seemed able to understand: "I have here the evidence of a thousand years' conspiracy—evidence which I shall present to you shortly."

A few days later Gareis was murdered. The criminal escaped punishment and the incident was practically forgotten. The evidence to which Gareis had referred was never revealed.

It was eighteen years after this, in 1939, that German military might began its goose-stepping march across the borders of Poland, Norway, Holland, Belgium, France, Yugoslavia, Greece. Today it is bent upon world conquest.

The forces which launched Germany on the path of conquest are those which were behind the murder of the obscure Bavarian Deputy. Those responsible for the conspiracy which Gareis mentioned decided—when he sought to unmask them—to destroy him. It was these men—all members of the same conspiratorial group—who, some eighteen years later, decided that the time was ripe to place world mastery in German hands.

Hitler and Nazism had very little to do with this conspiracy, although they occupy the present spotlight. This is not to suggest that Hitler and his party have not been important factors

in all the decisive actions for which—during the last nine years—Germany has been responsible. But these men are only tools in the hands of much more powerful forces. We shall have a great deal to say later about these forces—the “Prusso-Teutonic” groups and organizations.

If we want to win this war we must see our enemy clearly—and we cannot cure a sick world unless we understand the true nature of the disease. To destroy the evil we must first identify it. And this will be of equal importance even when the war is over and our problem is to win the peace.

### *The Forerunners of “Mein Kampf”*

We intend to start this identification with the forerunners of *Mein Kampf*. We cannot expect to locate the roots of the evil in the literary field. But literature is a good mirror of much deeper currents.\*

The writings of Treitschke and von Bernhardt and of the other authors of the Pan Germanic school were widely discussed in the United States and England before and during the last World War. Their connection, however, with the whole evolution of the Prussian idea—from the thirteenth century up to Nazism—has in general not been sufficiently emphasized.

*Mein Kampf* is a significant work from many points of view, but this work and its author, Hitler, are not the source of all evil in present-day Germany. In 1913, more than ten years before the publication of this work, General von Bernhardt, who had enormous influence on the army and the younger generation of Germany, stated in his book, *Our Future*: “For us there are two alternatives and no third—world dominion or ruin.”

\* All quotations in this chapter from German and French authors are my own translations. Italics are liberally used for the sake of emphasis. All italics are mine. P.W.

### *Surplus Population as a Springboard*

In *Germany and the Next War*, published in 1912, General von Bernhardt had this to say:

“Strong, healthy and flourishing nations constantly increase the number of their population; consequently they will be faced, after a given moment, with the necessity of extending their borders, of acquiring new land, in order to settle the overflowing population. However, since the Earth is almost completely settled by this time, acquisition of new land can be gained only at the expense of its present occupants—that is through conquest—which becomes a law of necessity.

“The right of conquest is universally recognized. At first this can be effected through peaceful means; overpopulated countries pour out streams of emigrants into other lands and territories. These emigrants, while submitting to the laws of the new land, try to create favorable living conditions for themselves to the detriment of the original inhabitants and in competition with them. This means conquest.

“Finally, the right to conquer through war has always been recognized. When an increasing population cannot acquire colonial lands from their primitive and uncivilized occupants, and *if it is nevertheless desirable to retain for the State the surplus population which can no longer be supported, there is only one thing left to do—self-preservation will force this nation to war and to the conquest of foreign lands. Right no longer belongs to the possessor, but rather to those who are victorious in war. . . .*

“. . . In such cases, right belongs to those who have strength either to maintain or to conquer. Might is the highest law. Before its tribunal war is the gauge of strength—war whose decisions are always biologically just since they evolve from the very essence of all things. . . . Even from the point of view of Christianity, one would come to the same conclusion. True Christian morality is of course based on the creed

of love: 'Love God above all, and thy neighbor as thyself.' This law, however, can claim no validity insofar as relations between nations are concerned, since, when applied to politics, it would surely lead to a conflict of allegiances. For an individual to profess love for another country would in most cases result in a negating of love for the people of his own country. A political system based on such foundations would surely be subject to the worst aberrations. Christian morality is personal and social, and can never become a political reality. It strives to develop the ethical personality, and to give it strength, so that this personality can live altruistically, in the interests of a community."

The cynical frankness of von Bernhardt is as great as Hitler's cynicism. Both resort to hypocrisy when their deductions are too unpalatable for their public. Both consider their special moral conception above discussion and consequently do not discuss it.

It is evident from the General's text that he looks upon emigration of surplus population only as a provisional remedy and that his solution consists of perpetual conquest. He prefers conquest, which "preserves" the surplus population "for the State"—and when he speaks of "State" he is thinking, of course, of the German State. He does not explain what natural law makes it necessary to preserve this surplus population for the State, nor why it cannot be peaceably integrated with the populations of other nations if there is no room left in the homeland. That "you wish to preserve them for the State" is a premise which needs no justification for this preacher of Germanism and Prussianism. "The very essence of the State is power," further declares von Bernhardt and, quoting Treitschke, that other great theoretician of German power, adds: "anyone not sufficiently virile to face this truth squarely has no right to meddle with politics."

Not for a moment does von Bernhardt consider limiting the populations of nations reproducing too rapidly. On the con-

trary, his point of departure is that "strong, healthy, flourishing nations increase their numbers."

In this, the conclusion is implicit: the German people, obviously strong, healthy and flourishing, will always have excess population, and consequently will ceaselessly have to annex territory until they dominate the world. "World dominion or ruin," the final tragic alternative of von Bernhardt's, implies, of course, that if Germany does not succeed in dominating the world, another country will perform this task, which awaits the strongest; and in that case the Germans will go to their ruin. Facing this choice, which he believes inevitable, his decision is made.\*

#### *War as a Necessity*

Von Bernhardt's "indispensable" conquest can be accomplished only by war and the General believed that war should be not a defensive but an offensive operation—or rather, outright aggression. He cites the Prussian example as proof of this:

"Indeed, the foundation for Prussia's strength was established by the Great Elector † through successful wars of his own choice. Frederick the Great continued in the glorious tradition of his noble ancestor. . . . *Of all the wars through which he led his people not one was forced upon him; he never tried to delay the start of any of these wars. In order to deprive his foe of the advantage of the first movement he would take the initiative by attacking so that he could assure*

\* Note at this point what von Bernhardt considered to be the first step toward world dominion: "In one way or another we must settle with France in order that we can gain that *military freedom of action so necessary to our world politics*. This is the first and most necessary demand for healthy German politics, and since the traditional French hatred for us can never be overcome through peaceful means, we must conquer it by sheer force of arms. France must be so thoroughly beaten that *she will never be able to stand in our way*."

† Friedrich Wilhelm (1640-88).



himself the best chance of success. How successful he was is well known. Had he lacked this heroic decisiveness, the entire historical development of European nations, and of mankind, would have taken a different turn."

Given such a state of mind the conclusions of present-day pacifists—to the effect that "War doesn't pay," or "If the Treaty of Versailles had not been so harsh, this war would never have broken out"—prove singularly impotent.

But General von Bernhardi did not invent anything himself. He only reduced to a formula a mode of thought cherished by a series of German predecessors. A century earlier Dietrich von Buelow (1757–1807), in *Modern Methods of War*, using a style cleverly veiling, by technical military terms, purposes none may doubt, said: "If the amount of military resources must sooner or later decide victory, it is obvious that little nations cannot succeed against the big ones, better equipped with war materials. In ancient times courage and discipline compensated for the inequalities of mass power among nations. . . . Today, however, all moral strength, all individual military talent of the small in number necessarily fails against the great. It is necessary, of course, to make good use of your own superiority of numbers in accordance with modern methods of war, but it remains certain that in modern battle the weak have never conquered the strong unless the latter have made some mistake. Besides, these modern methods of war have been developed only very recently. We shall know better how to benefit from all these advantages in the future.

"Great empires are not only wealthier. Their natural frontiers are more extensive than those of small, neighboring states. It happens frequently that a smaller state is completely enclosed within the borders of the larger one. . . . What a double advantage for the latter!

*"I refer here only to small adjoining states, for in the nature*

*of things, it is first necessary to attack one's neighbor before coming to more distant States. If this rule is not observed countries separating two main adversaries may declare themselves either with or against the great empire. Should they declare themselves against this power everything is changed, since a coalition of little States is equivalent to one big State. Even in such a case, however, the concentration of power and coercive means in the hands of a single political body may still give the great power a military advantage over any federation of independent States."*

Despite the reservations stated in these last lines, if leaders of all the little States successively engulfed by Hitler had taken the trouble to reread these words in time they might perhaps have been able to decide upon a common course of action instead of maintaining an illusory neutrality until their fall.

To get people to accept the idea of "perpetual war" (indispensable for the achievement of perpetual conquest), philosophical, or at least biological, arguments are needed. German science finds them, and demonstrates that the state of war is but a process of natural selection, permitting the human race to improve itself. Thus von Bernhardi states: "Without war, inferior or degenerate races could easily pollute and weaken all healthy, vital elements by their weedlike growth, and a general decline would be the result. 'War,' says A. W. von Schlegel, 'is as necessary as the struggle of elements in nature.'"

Heinrich von Treitschke (1834–1896), like von Bernhardi, had great influence on the thinking of the generations of Germans immediately preceding Nazism.

Treitschke is a conspicuous example of what is known as "Prussianism." We shall see later what significance the formation of "Prussianism" had in the evolution of German thought. Specifically we shall see that "Prussianism" is much less an ethnic reality than a special state of mind, a crystallization of thought that has developed over the course of centuries

through some remarkable process. Close examination of Prussianism will permit us to see more clearly into numerous details of the German problem.

Treitschke, this typical Prussian, was not legitimately a Prussian at all. Son of a Saxon general, descended on his father's side from a recently Germanized Czech family (a fact he was reluctant to admit), Treitschke was powerfully attracted to the Prussian way of thinking. This Prussian by vocation deemed that only Prussia possessed the necessary strength to dominate all the other German States and lead Germany toward the conquests he so ardently desired.

Concerning the concept of war and its role in the existence of nations, Treitschke preached thus to future generations:

"War is not only a practical necessity, but is also a theoretical necessity, an exigency of logic. The concept of a State implies the concept of war, since the essence of a State is power. The State is the people organized into a sovereign power. . . .

"A State which renounces war and which in advance submits to an international tribunal gives up this sovereign power, that is, its very self. Whoever dreams of permanent peace asks for something not only unachievable but absurd; he commits an error of elementary reasoning. . . .

"War, it is true, may alienate nations from one another and yet, to a certain extent, it brings them closer together, by making them acquainted with their own and their neighbors' resources. War as an intermediary among nations is often more effective than universal trade. A nation which clings to the visionary hope of everlasting peace will inevitably end in decay within its haughty isolation. History builds and destroys tirelessly; never weary, she exhumes humanity's divine treasures from the ruins of ancient worlds in order to restore them to a new world. *To whoever may believe in this perpetual growth, in the eternal youth of our race, it is quite evident that war is an inevitable necessity.*

"That war should be forever banished from the earth is not only an absurd hope but profoundly immoral. If it were ever realized, we should witness atrophy of many essential, sublime forces in the human soul, and transformation of the terrestrial sphere into a vast temple of selfishness. . . .

"On the other hand, the State has the right to consider itself an end, since it contains the essential conditions for prosperous social life. . . .

"Every people, and particularly one of high cultural development, runs the risk, during a long period of peace, of degenerating into egotism. Such a race should consider a great and righteous war which fate may send them as a favor, but the more the comfortable habits of social existence have crept into their spirit, the rougher the counter-blow may seem.

"I have said 'fate may send them a war,' because the reason the value of this cruel remedy is so rarely appreciated is that no doctor among mankind dares prescribe war as a beneficial potion for a sick people.

"As soon as a nation hears the echo of this cry of alarm: 'The State is in peril—our existence is threatened!' then awakens the highest virtue, courage of sacrifice which may never be so freely or widely displayed in times of peace. . . .

"Among the thousands of men engaging in battle, blindly obeying the will of 'All,' each is aware how little his life is worth compared to the glory of the State; each feels himself hemmed in by profound forces which dominate him. From this, in every important war, will spring deep religious feelings, and the sublime spectacle, incomprehensible to pure reason, of enemy armies, praying to the same God for victory.

"The grandeur of war is to be found in these acts considered shocking by a debilitated civilization.

"Men who have never done each other any harm, who accord one another the high esteem one owes his chivalrous enemies, kill each other. They sacrifice in this line of duty not only their lives, but what is infinitely more painful, natural

sentiment, the instinctive love for humanity, and horror of blood. The insignificant self, with all its noble and base instincts, must sink into the will of the 'All.'

"I ask of whoever may find this barbaric: why, then, has no great beneficial idea of political or religious freedom ever been accepted by men without christening by blood? And why has war been, in every age, the favorite theme of the arts?"

The cynicism of Treitschke's reasoning is remarkable: war, in itself, is a blessing, but it would be dangerous to confess it to the people ("... the reason the value of this remedy is so rarely appreciated is that no doctor among mankind dares to prescribe war as a beneficial potion for a sick people"). Instead of such a frank admission the cry of alarm is sounded: "The State is in peril—our existence is threatened," and people rush into war with enthusiasm.

It would be an illusion to believe that Treitschke speaks in the abstract, or that his purpose is to develop theories to benefit humanity. Reasoning in this manner, he hopes to benefit only his own people ("our race," as he has already expressed it), whose fate alone concerns him: "To whoever may believe in this perpetual growth, in the eternal youth of our race, it is quite evident that war is an inevitable necessity." This was written in 1869.

The opinions of Treitschke and von Bernhardt are not isolated phenomena, but derive from distant sources. And if we admit that *Mein Kampf* merely outlines clearly the objectives of a certain Germany, without adding anything really new, it is interesting to note that Hitler's spiritual ancestors were in turn descended from a long line of thinkers of similar leanings.

It was a mistake on the part of the Western world not to attach in time sufficient importance to this type of thought—which was in violent contradiction to the basic ideas of Western civilization. Doubtless people were lulled by the illusion that such thinking represented purely theoretical fantasies of

a few German scholars. They were not able to see that actually such thoughts were extremely significant manifestations of a state of mind having its roots in the distant past; and that these manifestations might in turn result in a very particular and very dangerous way of thinking in future German generations.

Later we shall discuss the early, fundamental causes of German aggressiveness. For the moment let us review briefly more recent spiritual ancestors of Hitler, contemporaries and predecessors of Treitschke and von Bernhardt.

#### *Starvation as a Springboard*

Friedrich List (1789–1864), along with several minor economists active around 1840, was responsible for formulating the principal theories on which present-day German economic conquest is based.

After emigrating to Pennsylvania and becoming an American citizen, List was concerned only with Germany's greatness. He returned to Germany in 1840 to publish there his principal work, in which he outlined the basis for his *National System of Political Economy*. Violently opposed to the principle of free trade because it gives the same advantages to weak as to strong nations, he would welcome its use without reservation within the continent of Europe, once the continent were dominated by Berlin; and he had high hopes that this would be achieved as soon as possible. So far as his own age was concerned, however, he was an extreme protectionist and advocated development of new industry in Germany—through high protective tariffs raised against competition of foreign countries. He took into full account the risk of losing Germany's foreign markets, since protectionism always provokes reprisals. His remedy is simple: stimulate tremendous expansion of Germany, including conquest of Europe, acquisition of colonies in Australia, New Zealand, India and the Americas.

Then Germany would no longer have to fear that she might lack foreign markets in a protectionist world.

According to List a nation must conquer all countries lying in its sphere of economic action—by degrees, but steadily; and this sphere of action is defined as every territory which may serve as outlet, or which contains raw materials the nation may need. In the long run this becomes perpetual conquest, for eventually every foreign country, however distant, represents a potential export market, or is a producer of useful raw materials. In the ideas of List, we find the economic basis for General von Bernhardt's thesis: "For us there are two alternatives and no third—world dominion or ruin." And here too is to be found the complete outline of Germany's recent and present economic attitude—the old thesis, slightly improved upon by Dr. Schacht.

The process is simple. Schacht's Germany settled into a system of the most absolute protectionism, the system so dear to List. This was accomplished through methods more modern and effective than tariffs. Germany was the first country, after the World War, to return to exchange control, adopting it not because of any financial need, but deliberately, in order to create a system of total protectionism. The old-fashioned protectionist use of high tariffs to discourage imports becomes outdated. Imports are now made practically impossible: the State releases no currency to private business to cover cost of imports purchased abroad, with the single exception of certain raw materials or tools considered by the State to be absolutely indispensable. As in all systems of protectionism, the population of the country whose production is thus "protected" must suffer: and their suffering becomes more acute the more the system is improved. Soon the world is accused of starving the German people, and of withholding raw materials necessary to German industries. (No mention is made of the fact that these materials had been available to Germany in a world of free exchange—the system she was the first to deviate from;

and that her importers, on a free monetary market, could have obtained the necessary funds to pay for any quantity of raw materials.) Germany is pictured as "deprived of her place in the sun." Thus a favorable psychological atmosphere is created within the country and abroad as well, to prepare for world conquest "by degrees, yet steadily," as outlined by List. The achievement of List's plan for the future is considerably advanced by the repetition of the specious statement to the German people: "Poor Germany must starve unless she succeeds in dominating the other nations."

List bolsters the self-confidence of his compatriots by asserting that a specific determinism demands supremacy of the German race. According to him, the Latin races, under French influence, and the Slavic nations led by Russia, have not the power for domination. Germanic races, among which he included Anglo-Saxons and Germans, possess this power to the greatest extent. Of the two, his choice is simple: Germany must supplant England; build a powerful fleet, extend her colonizing to all corners of the world; and finally unite all other Europeans against English supremacy, so that she can direct the destiny of the world.

Charles Andler, a French author, summed up certain ideas of List in his work, *The Origins of Pan-Germanism*, published in 1915: \*

"It is necessary to organize continental Europe against England. Napoleon I, a great strategist, also knew the methods of economic hegemony. His continental system, which met with opposition even from countries which might have profited from such an arrangement, should be revived, but, this time, not as an instrument of Napoleonic domination. *The idea of uniting Europe in a closed trade bloc is no longer shocking if Germany assumes domination over such a bloc*—and not France, Belgium, Holland, Switzerland, willingly or by force, will enter this 'Customs Federation.' Austria is assumed to be

\* Charles Andler, *Les origines du Pan-Germanisme*, Paris, 1915.

won over at the outset. Even France, if she gets rid of her notions of military conquest, will not be excluded. The first steps the Confederation would take to assure unity of thought and action would be to establish a joint representative body, as well as to organize a common fleet. *But of course, both the headquarters of the Federation and its parliamentary seat would be in Germany.*

"At once the sharing of common commercial advantages would begin. List proposes something like a cooperative league of nations, in which all profits would be distributed in proportion to investments. European vitality, intelligence and order would put the Far East to good use. Oriental ports would become 'Free cities' where European agents would deal with native authorities in the capacity of advisors duly accredited and diplomatically protected. Austria would extend its borders to the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. A German navy would be built up. *Prussian colonies would be established in Australia and New Zealand, where England has firmly planted her flag but has failed to exploit resources.* How could England resist all the navies and the concentrated economic power of a united Central Europe?

"Since Germany possesses a greater stock of vital energy and superior economic ability to that of any other nation *one may guess which nation would be likely to benefit most from this association,*—an association which was to be based on the principle of equal privilege for all members."

Various firsthand reports have given us a fairly accurate picture of the manner in which Nazi Germany is applying the principle of "economic collaboration" to the "occupied" countries, and how, through her agents, she has seized control of all the great industries of France, Belgium and Holland. We have also seen how she has allowed the whole of her economic policy to be dictated by Dr. Schacht. All this indicates clearly that Hitler is merely applying the century-old theories of List in the economic sphere.

### *The Origin of the "Lebensraum" Theory*

Ernst-Moritz Arndt (1769–1860) as early as 1803, in his work *Germania and Europe*, expressed political ideas based on the "right of the strongest," highly significant for the future. He believed that each nation owed it to itself to take advantage of every opportunity for imposing its will. Nations which allow such an opportunity to slip by deserve spoliation by their neighbors. "A State," says Arndt, "must first have a stable foundation, geographically speaking, and develop further according to rules of chance, and by virtue of its own character. The only restrictions laid down for the State are those of climate and surrounding territories. Yes, each State has the right to make strong representations to its neighbors, should the latter unjustly seize air and light necessary to its growth and development."

Arndt expresses himself "euphemistically" about a point of view which might appear too brutally direct to a section of the public. Hitler, who commits the gravest injustices in the name of "justice" and "equality of rights," has drawn excellent inspiration from Arndt's methods. His "Lebensraum" is a mask for the simple will-to-conquer, as was Arndt's "right (for each State) to make strong representations to its neighbors should the latter unjustly seize air and light necessary to its growth and development." It is evident too that in speaking of "each State" Arndt had Germany, and particularly Prussia, in mind.

We shall see what a great influence the Teutonic Knights of the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries had on the evolution of the Germany we know. It is natural for a man who thinks like Arndt to say that because Poland did not manage to put to rout or destroy the Teutonic Knights, she no longer had the right to exist. This is the theory that "since you once were weak enough to grant your enemy his life, you must permit him to kill you now."

"Poland did not realize," Arndt says, "that her duty as a nation was first of all to defend her coast line and drive the Teutonic Knights away from it.

"This negligence spelled death for Poland.

"When in the eighteenth century Prussia and Russia seized Poland's entire maritime domain, it meant that Poland no longer existed. With no outlet to the sea, surrounded by powerful neighbors and having no implements of higher culture, nor any natural frontiers for defense, it was impossible for her ever to become anything. Sooner or later she must disappear . . .

"According to our conception of things, small nations must disappear because geographically they rarely possess the means for subsistence.

"The natural frontiers of Poland were assaulted by Prussia, Courland and Livonia; and this injury was certainly the main cause of Poland's final political death."

And Arndt adds:

"Today Holland constitutes the most glaring violation of Germany's natural frontier."\*

### *Defense Will Not Win a War*

It is not only the political and economic ideas of "New" Germany which were expressed much earlier. In the realm of military tactics also, all the German principles now described as "new" were discussed in detail over thirty years ago by

\* The following words, no less significant, are quoted from another work of Arndt, *Spirit of the Times* (*Geist der Zeit*): ". . . Let us declare a sweeping, merciless war against France so that our mighty efforts may carry us beyond the Rhine. And let us not return our swords to their sheaths until all German speaking peoples, those of Alsace, Lorraine, Luxembourg and Flanders, have been emancipated and restored to the German Empire. Here is the task and the goal. And if we should fail to liberate them, in spite of all our efforts we should not realize this goal we may as well not undertake anything else, for in vain will God have offered his treasures to the Germans, only to take them back because we are too lazy to enjoy them."

General von Bernhardt. Dietrich von Buelow, of whom we have already spoken (and who died in 1807) had this to say in his *Spirit of Modern Warfare*:

"*We must fight only offensive wars.* In a defensive war all positions and all parallel marches are useless: they will never suffice as a wall against the enemy, as we shall soon clearly realize. Regardless of how strong or well protected or how well chosen any position may be which you defend against frontal attack, you will be expelled from it by the enemy. He will quickly achieve this result by attacks on your flank, especially if his forces are greater.

"I must boldly assert—although this principle may be new—that defensive wars should never be waged: as soon as possible the role of aggressor should be assumed, and operations conducted against the enemy's flank and rear."

Von Buelow also clearly formulated the ideas underlying the penetration—now a sad reality—by the Fifth Column into democratic countries, including creation of "economic allies" in enemy countries in the persons of a few great industrialists to whom economic advantages are promised. This system gave Germany excellent results in the conquest of France, and before America's entry into the war she tried to employ similar methods in the United States as well. In the writings of von Buelow are anticipated all the advantages which Germany's masters later gained in several countries by carrying on a campaign of corruption of the enemy at home.

"Insofar as everything has its price," says von Buelow, "the amount of money available is also a decisive factor. Greed for gain is so irresistible that one may buy materials of war even in enemy countries when they are not available at home . . . to say nothing of the advantage possessed by the wealthier for succeeding in their purposes through bribery and corruption. On this subject Montecuccoli has already said: 'To wage war, three things are necessary. . . . Money, Money, and Money.'"

*The "Ideal Prussian"*

In reviewing briefly the theories of a few German writers of the past 150 years, we wished merely to emphasize that ideas generally attributed to Hitler and Nazism originate from much earlier sources. For these very writers (and we might have cited many more at the risk of becoming repetitious) have only formulated principles underlying a curious "cultural trend," generally described as "Prussianism," but never clearly defined. Taken individually, such texts, frequently cited before the World War, were regarded as characteristic fantasies of slight significance, springing from that "Prussian insolence" about which nothing could be done. Related to each other, and related chiefly to the future (which has since become the present) and the past, those texts assume new significance, and we are obliged to attribute equal, if not greater, importance to them than to *Mein Kampf*.

We will frequently deal with the origins and purposes of "Prussianism" in this book. We attribute to this word a meaning much wider and reaching much further back in time than that of most writers—for whom Frederick II, King of Prussia, is the prototype, if not the actual founder of Prussianism. Frederick II, while in many ways an extremely interesting personality, and one of the most important forces in the rise of Prussia, was, however, only one of many in a long line of men formed by the Prussian school. Besides, this close friend of Voltaire was much too strongly tinged with humanitarianism to be considered an ideal representative of the school which is fundamentally opposed to humanitarian ideas. That a number of his actions can be explained only by the inspiration he received from the Prussian tradition does not alter this fact.

Frederick II was unquestionably a great Prussian, but an imperfect Prussian, much as was Bismarck, that other great Prussian, who has often mistakenly been described as the greatest Prussian statesman of modern times—mistakenly be-

cause, even though Bismarck did render tremendous service to the Prussian cause, his attitude did not always please the high priests of Prussianism. Having conquered France, he attempted to live at peace with her. He limited Germanic ambitions in the Balkans. He opposed his own country's tendencies toward colonial expansion. Although many of his acts were in harmony with the purest precepts of the Prussianism of Arndt, List, and von Buelow, Bismarck retained a certain restraint and a trace of respect for Christian ethics—the opposite of Teutonic ethics (as described by several authors quoted). Thus Bismarck cannot be considered an ideal Prussian.

This ideal Prussian, this man of "Prussian dreams" (which, in previous centuries, would have been called "Teutonic dreams") does exist, however, and is none other than Hitler. Here one must search for the secret of his success among his compatriots, who, for centuries have been awaiting a kind of Teutonic Messiah, who would ruthlessly achieve an ideal definitely opposed to conceptions of Christian and humanitarian morality.

Constantin Frantz, German writer of the nineteenth century, refers in one of his books to a little known work by Bollmann entitled *Justification of Machiavellism*. He says:

"The contents of this book are worthy of its title. What Machiavelli once claimed for Italy is applied here to Germany. The writer considers all small political parties powerless; *and he hopes for an armed reformer who, with blood and iron, shall unite Germany, and to whom anything shall be permitted provided he attain the proposed goal. Powerful and of irresistible attraction, this man will know how to accomplish such a task.*"

Frantz tries hard to apply this prophetic description to Bismarck, but does not Hitler fit this picture much more accurately than Bismarck? Besides, the ideal of a man devoting himself exclusively to the German cause, to whom "*anything*

*shall be permitted,*" is much older than Bollmann's prediction, and even older than the "Prince" of Machiavelli, to whom Bollmann and Frantz credited this figure. This is the "man" of whom Heine spoke (see pages 337-40): "the man whom the German people await, the man who will bring to them the life and happiness they have so long hoped for in their dreams." This is a purely Teutonic conception, as we shall see, at least 700 years old. In the course of centuries it has had numerous ramifications, so that it has become rooted in the spirit and subconscious mind of the German people. Later it was considered a Prussian conception. Small wonder, then, that Hitler in his uncompromising brutal attitude of the "savage ideal" should have evoked such response in the hearts of the Germans.

#### *Prussians by Adoption*

The fact that Hitler is not Prussian by birth does not prevent his being the "ideal Prussian." The most ardent Prussians were not born in Prussia, for Prussianism is first of all a state of mind and a special way of thinking shaped over centuries, and to which men of diverse origins have felt strongly attracted. We have seen that Treitschke, that fervent Prussian, was by birth part Saxon and part Czech. Fichte, who placed his philosophy at the service of Prussianism, also came from Saxony. Hegel, another great philosopher who recognized his "ideal State" in Prussia, was south-German by birth, and Houston Chamberlain, famous theorist of the Prussian school, was of English origin.

Hitler's Prussian inclinations were not restricted to the realm of theory. He opened the way to power for himself in 1932 and 1933 when, with the help of von Papen, he concluded an effective alliance with the powerful Prussian forces directing Germany's affairs under various guises. From that time on this agitator, who had until then been taken seriously

only in internal German politics, became a veritable world threat.

While Nazism, as a truly demagogic movement in its early days in Munich, was making noisy attacks on all existing power, including the power of Berlin, it provided a certain spiritual nourishment to thousands of frustrated German souls, who appreciated such talk. But from the day when Hitler concluded his alliance with the Prussian Junker leaders, Nazism became a front for Prussianism and entered into systematic planning for conquest of world power. From that time on, Nazism became a most threatening reality for all other countries. We must, however, never forget the forces hiding behind this movement, forces which we shall attempt to expose.

#### *Prussia Ueber Alles*

Christianity, and humanitarianism which it inspires, believe in the supremacy of the human personality and the "Rights of Man." All Western ethics are based on this belief. Prussianism, however, admits only the supremacy of the State, to which it demands absolute submission of the individual, at the expense of his liberty, his private interests and his personal well being. General von Bernhardt summarized this idea thus: "There is, as Fichte has taught us, but one virtue, to forget about oneself as a person; and but one vice; to think of oneself. In the final analysis, the State is bearer of all culture, and as such she has the right to claim for herself the individual strength of her citizens."

According to the Prussian theory, the State itself is nothing but *power*, and the individual must do everything to contribute toward the infinite increase of this power. No attempt is made to define the State, nor to explain why it has the right to this absolute submission of its citizens. The theory is offered as a sort of dogma, belief in which forms the very essence of Prussian welfare.



States are forged by the fire and blood of wars of conquest. Great and powerful countries gain possession of the weak, and these weak countries can only disappear. War, consequently, is not only inevitable, but forms the very basis of the State's ethics. For specialists in Prussian theology the validity of reasons for which wars are waged does not matter. They readily admit that wars waged by Prussian kings may have had no legal bases. What matters is that these wars contributed to territorial gains and increased Prussian power. Christian morality, fundamental to legal concept, may be tolerated for private relationships, and for maintaining social equilibrium, but as for the State itself, the latter determines its own ethical laws.

Under the cloak of this "ethics of the State," everything which according to traditional moral conceptions would be severely condemned, is excusable and even laudable if it is done in the interests of the State: broken pledges, alliances and friendships negated, treaties disregarded, and whatever is considered a "lie" by ordinary human beings. The entire technique later applied by Hitler, which is ably analyzed by Francis Hackett and by Raoul de Roussy de Sales in their works based on *Mein Kampf* and Hitler's speeches, had already been outlined by this school of thought.

The evidence offered by authors of the Prussian school to support their contention that Prussia, more than any other country, merits such an impressive future is extremely vague. Often the evidence is of a cultural nature; they attempt to demonstrate that Prussia (or "Germany," understood as a Germany dominated by Prussia) could contribute much more to world civilization than any other country. But most often, instead of proof, a sort of "realistic philosophy" is suggested as sufficient: Prussia has known how to extend her domain through victorious wars at the expense of other nations; therefore she seems to have been chosen by Providence to continue in this direction. And since, in the final reckoning, a

single State is destined to dominate all the others, these German thinkers (expressing an entirely personal point of view, and vouchsafing no explanation) conclude that it may just as well be a German state which assumes this rôle. But, they say, Prussia alone has shown throughout history that she has the strength or, if one prefers, the ruthlessness to bend other German people to her will.

"Let us, then, rally round her flag," say Fichte, Treitschke and all the other super-Prussians born in different parts of Germany. ("Let us ally ourselves with her," says Hitler.) "Let us," they agree, "help her seize power in Germany, and this Prussianized Germany will one day succeed in conquering the world."

## CHAPTER II

### THE CAVALCADE OF THE TEUTONIC KNIGHTS

EVERY PLAN FOR international regulation which has been put into practice, or merely proposed (including the League of Nations), presupposes a common ethical principle among the participants. Without such a similarity of moral views it is impossible to achieve any international stability whatsoever. Religions, and the schools of philosophy which they have inspired, have successfully brought the leading nations of the world to a more or less common moral denominator. From this angle, Christianity is not in sharp conflict with Mohammedanism, Buddhism, and Brahmanism.

#### *Prusso-Teutonism and the Vehme*

The Catholic Church at first, then Lutheranism, performed the task of ethical education in Germany too. It can hardly be said that the masses of the German people are influenced by the moral teachings of religion to a lesser degree than other nations. But separate from the "Christian" moral influence—which still carries weight with large portions of the German population—two distinct developments are discernible. These derive from a very different, much more primitive moral concept, barbarous from one point of view and in any case pre-Christian.

To say that these two developments stem from pre-Christian ethics may on the surface seem contradictory, for both arise in direct line from organizations of a definitely religious character. The *Prusso-Teutonic tradition* (or briefly "Prussian-

ism") originates directly from the religious *Order of Teutonic Knights*, and the "*Fehmlic*" tradition is derived from the notorious *Fehme*,\* the blood-tribunal of the Middle Ages, which had definite ties to the church. But centuries have elapsed since both organizations discarded all their religious characteristics.

Immediately before the first World War, the problem of "Prussianism" was often subjected to the scrutiny of the world and was held responsible for German ambitions of that period. Feeling the danger, the Prussian group acted according to time-honored principles for outwitting savage animals: "If you are without a weapon and fear the lion, lie down and play dead."

The trick succeeded, and it is currently believed that the old "Prussian" or "Junker" menace has practically died out since Hitler's accession to power in Germany.† It is extremely important that we penetrate this camouflage. It is not only useful to reveal the connection between Prussianism and present-day Germany; it is equally useful to show clearly the roots from which Prussianism originated in history long before Frederick II of Prussia and the Great Elector. Only by understanding what these roots were can we appreciate what present-day Germany really is.

Prussianism, in its usual interpretation, hangs in the air. Isolated from its past and from its present, it represents nothing more than an historical curiosity with no direct significance for our times.

For us "Prussianism" goes back to the early part of the thirteenth century and is still very much alive in our day. It is the heir of the world-embracing ambitions of the Caro-

\* Also called Vehme or Veme.

† Heinrich Hauser, in *Time Was—Death of a Junker*, bewails the passing of the Prussian Junker, and has succeeded in arousing sentimental regrets among his readers that these "good people" are no more. (Hauser's good faith in the matter is not questioned here.)

lingian and "Holy Roman" Emperors—but at the same time it is also what it became during the centuries in the stuffy and nauseating hot-house of East Prussia.

The principal events in Germany between the two World Wars, the reasons for Hitler's rise to power and the events that followed can be understood only by a thorough scrutiny of the Prusso-Teutonic and Fehmic organizations. This should enable us also to understand better the connections between various writers—"theologians of Prussianism," a few of whom we have cited—and the motives which were sufficiently powerful to make them unanimously adopt an attitude in the question of morals which *our* moral sense, faithful to tradition, strenuously rejects.

### *The Rulers of Prussia*

Before we go back to the origins of the Prusso-Teutonic conspiracy we may recall that the "Germany" we know is not the same as the Empire which bore this name until 1806. That Empire was composed of a number of little States whose principles of government were almost all similar to those of other European States and whose ethical doctrines were essentially Christian.

In the second half of the nineteenth century a remarkable manoeuvre was effected. Prussia, one of these States (the only State whose principles were profoundly different from those of other German and foreign States), succeeded in imposing her rule—at first in 1866 over the other North German States, and in 1870 over every German State except Austria. This two-fold manoeuvre, carried out in first-rate Machiavellian fashion, allowed Prussia to indoctrinate all Germany with her principles. And our centuries-old Prusso-Teutonic problem became from that day on only a "German problem."

Prussian principles consisted of discipline with a vengeance,

aggressive methods, absolute submission of individuals to the interests of the State, and disregard of all Christian morality where these interests were concerned. From 1870 Germany, ruled by the Prussians, assumed the rôle of a *Great-Prussia*, although her "Prussianization" had only been partly completed. Despite the Prussian influence, a number of traditional German elements had been preserved throughout the country. It was now a question of making the whole Reich accept the idea widely propagated by nineteenth-century Prussian theoreticians: that Germany could not achieve prosperity except by imposing her will, through unceasing conquest, upon other countries. World peace, that age-old dream, could be attained only by creating a unified world under German rule. To reach this goal—a world under German rule—any method would be acceptable. The favored method for effecting this expansion was by bloody wars, deliberately started, and so ruthless that, according to the Prussian theory, the transformation would be all the more lasting.

Bismarck was the man who accomplished total seizure of all Germany by Prussia. Although of the same turn of mind as other Great-Prussians, he felt that any plan for expansion must be applied slowly and progressively. Guided by opportunistic considerations he introduced a parliamentary system into Prussia and Germany, which satisfied the masses, even though he personally was opposed to representative government.

His friends, whose spokesman he was, were even more opposed to this than Bismarck—but they knew that behind this façade of representative government the real power would remain in their hands, if they proceeded wisely. The conspiracy which had started many centuries ago—a materially founded, actual conspiracy and not a purely ideological and abstract heritage—would live on. The façade may change but the goals always remain the same.

*A Conspirational Community is Born*

Hans Krieg, Nazi author writing in 1939 in the *Zeitschrift fuer Politik* (Vol. 29) says this, directing his words to readers in Germany:

“. . . The Teutonic Order, having fulfilled its historical role, was destined to disappear as an organization. However, its legacy of a mighty Prussia, and the Order's basic idea of *conspirational community* remains a sacred duty for us today.”

The Prusso-Teutonic organizations of the twentieth century and “Prussian spirit” in general stem directly from the Teutonic Knights of the twelfth century. This religious order, founded at Acre, Syria, in 1190, during the time of the Crusades, from its beginning was distinguished from the two other orders of knights of the Holy Land, the Templars and the Knights of St. John (known later as the Knights of Malta), by its strictly national, or rather racial, character. In order to join the Teutonic Knights, one had to prove pure *German* ancestry (*noble* ancestry, of course), whereas membership in the Templars or the Knights of St. John was open to nationals of any country.\* Nevertheless there was a definite preponderance of Latins in the membership of these two orders. As a reaction against this, the German Crusaders decided to found a hospital of their own in the Holy Land, reserved exclusively for German Knights who were sick or wounded. A few years later, in 1198, this organization was changed into a Knights' Order. King Philip of Swabia took it under his patronage in 1206; the Germano-Roman Emperor Otto IV did the same in 1213. From this time on the organization may be considered as a purely German *political instrument* of the highest importance.

\* At the beginning of the nineteenth century anyone wishing to enter the Teutonic Order had to prove that eight paternal and eight maternal ancestors were purely German. (C. J. Weber, *Das Ritterwesen*—Stuttgart, 1835)

*Emperors Against Popes*

The Crusades were born of the almost perpetual conflict between the Papacy and the German Emperors. It was inevitable that rivalry should break out between these two powers, each of which in the eleventh century considered itself supreme. The Emperors, who did not fail to recognize the spiritual influence of the Church, began to appoint Bishops without consulting the Pope. They even managed actually to get Popes appointed. Their opportunity came because the Church had been weakened by the human frailties of certain of its most prominent members.

But the Church as an institution was to prove that it possessed greater internal strength than the few weak men who had momentarily been at its head. Cardinals elected new Popes. They came from the great monastery of Cluny, whose influence on Christianity was very important. These Popes, men of Godly existence, restored to the Church its former glory, but only found themselves in greater conflict with the Emperors.

Pope Gregory VII was determined to be free of the authority of the State. He proclaimed the spiritual sovereignty of the Papacy throughout the world and preached about St. Augustine's “Kingdom of God on Earth”; *he denied the claims of the German “Holy-Roman” Emperors to world rule in a material sense.* Emperor Henry IV, of the Franconian line of Emperors (ancestors of the Hohenstaufens through maternal lineage), claimed sovereignty by divine right over mankind and the earth. This resulted in bitter conflict, and in 1076 the Pope excommunicated the Emperor, who came in 1077 to humble himself before the Pope at Canossa. But the struggle was soon resumed, and in 1080 Henry IV had Gilbert of Ravenna appointed “anti-Pope,” occupied Rome with his troops, installed Gilbert on the Papal throne, and drove out Gregory, who died in exile.

*The Crusades are Born*

His successor, Urban II, burned with intense spiritual passion. Banished from Rome, he travelled throughout Christian countries as an "apostolic pilgrim," using the full force of his tongue and pen against Gilbert and the Emperor. Gregory had already spoken in vague terms of a mighty armed pilgrimage to reconquer Jerusalem. Now Urban again took up the idea, and in Italy, Normandy, and Provence, preached the cause of "God's Expedition." He felt certain that if he succeeded in launching such a holy campaign under the banner of St. Peter, he would be striking a telling blow at Gilbert and the Emperor, and the prestige of the Church would thus be restored. Slowly the idea took shape, Crusader troops were organized all over Europe, and finally a speech by Urban to the Clermont conclave loosened the human avalanche which set out toward the Holy Land. The First Crusade was born! The triumphal march of this army across Italy was sufficient to drive the anti-Pope from Rome without a struggle, and Urban again had possession of the Lateran Palace.

The prestige of the Emperor suffered a heavy blow. Now that the Pope had regained all his rights, Henry's excommunication was everywhere regarded much more seriously than before. Abandoned by his friends, an outcast, he died in 1106, and was not permitted burial in consecrated ground.

These conflicts left a deep impression on succeeding Germano-Roman Emperors. A more or less open rivalry between Popes and Emperors continued throughout the twelfth century.

Emperor Frederick Barbarossa of the Hohenstaufen family had himself proclaimed "master of the world," *Dominus Mundi*, in 1158 in the fields of Roncaglia during his second campaign in Italy. He also found himself opposed by the Papacy. His struggles with Rome were particularly remem-

bered by his grandson Frederick II\* who was greatly to influence the destiny of the Teutonic Knights.

During this time two Knights' Orders, born of the Crusades, were founded in the Holy Land: the *Templars* and the *Hospital Knights of St. John*, both having their seat at Acre in Syria.

Both these orders can from that time on be regarded as *armies of the Pope* the lack of which had previously been a serious shortcoming to the Papacy. *It is therefore not astonishing that the German Emperors should have tried to neutralize these forces. It is quite probable that they were influenced by considerations of this kind when they supported the formation of the purely German-armed Order of the Teutonic Knights.*

*Imperial Monks*

A skillful manoeuvre: to allow establishment of a Knights' Order, at first of solely religious appearance and with but vague ties to the Empire, so that it would have the consecration by the Pope indispensable to its prestige. It was not until a few years later, when its existence was quite secure, that the Teutonic Order more openly put itself at the service of the Imperial plans for expansion.

Hermann von Salza, Grand Master of the organization from 1210 to 1239, was primarily responsible for the profound impulse of the Order in this direction, and he may be considered its true founder in a political sense. From the time of his accession to power he realized that the Teutonic Knights were, in the Holy Land, in direct competition with the other two older and more respected Knights' Orders. It was therefore preferable for the Teutonic Order to turn toward other lands in order to secure actual conquests. The seat of the

\* Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II (1194-1250), not to be confused with Frederick II, King of Prussia (1740-86).

Order remained at Acre, but in 1211 Salza arranged with Andrew II, King of Hungary, to send a detachment of Teutonic knights into the "Burzenland" in the south of Hungary (Transylvania) to combat pagan tribes.

The territory reserved for the Order was clearly defined in a written agreement drawn up between the King and Grand Master. Nevertheless Andrew soon made the complaint that the Knights were widely trespassing beyond the borders outlined for them, that they were coining money without authority, and, finally, had so cleverly manoeuvred at Rome that the Pope had consented to take the territory occupied by them directly under his protection. This allowed the Knights to consider this territory no longer subject to King Andrew. Heinrich von Treitschke, though well disposed toward the Teutonic Knights, founders of the Prussianism he holds dear, states that they acted in Burzenland "*in that spirit of ruthless egotism, fully conscious of its strength, which, from this point on, characterized the statesmanship of the Order.*" Von Treitschke obviously meant this as a compliment, although he describes the Knights as "dangerous friends" for the King of Hungary. The latter in 1225, having early perceived the danger, hastened to expel these "friends" from his country, before they had time to become too powerful. But we can recognize here, from von Treitschke's frank description, the first evidence of certain traits which have survived to this day among the contemporary descendants of the Teutonic Knights.

Following this setback in Hungary, Hermann von Salza sought new lands for the Order to conquer. Frederick II, of the Hohenstaufen family, grandson of Barbarossa, had been Emperor of Germany since 1220, and von Salza was on very good terms with the new Emperor. Frederick II was an extremely curious individual, highly cultured for his day, but with a combination of the most contradictory traits in his personality. He was both adored and hated, and often called

the Antichrist. Hermann von Salza was very devoted to him, frequently acting as his intermediary with the Pope. When in 1226 he discovered a new land, conquest of which might compensate for his humiliating defeat in Hungary, he immediately turned to Frederick II, and placed the campaign he was about to undertake under his patronage.

Hermann von Salza managed to have conveyed to Conrad of Masovia, Christian Duke of Poland, the idea that the Teutonic Knights might give him valuable assistance in his battles against heathen tribes. Among these tribes the Slavic Borussians (Prussians) were most famous. Bishop Christian, a Bernardine monk settled as a missionary within the borders of Borussia, acted as intermediary for the Order. It was he who, believing in the sincerity of the Knights, mentioned them to the Duke. Early in 1226 a formal invitation from Conrad arrived at the Order. Von Salza consulted Frederick II at once and the latter, in his Bull of Rimini, entrusted von Salza with an imperial "mission" for his future campaign.

#### *A Charter for Future Action*

This Bull,\* which doubtless revealed but a minor part of the agreement between the two men (the part which might safely be made public) was the very basis for all future action of the Teutonic Knights; a permanent charter for all Prussian conquest, and all German political expansion which, during centuries to come and until this day, was to radiate from that territory.

The uncompromising spirit with which the Teutonic Order pursued its aim sprang from the "imperial mission" which was entrusted to the Order in this Bull. This document also clearly defines the ambitions of the Hohenstaufen Emperors as they appear to us as opposed to those of the Papacy. It was this Bull which launched the Order on the path of conquest against

\* See complete text of the Bull, page 363.

Slavic countries—but its full scope exceeded by far this particular conquest.

In the Bull of Rimini, the Emperor described himself “by the merciful tenderness of God” head of the Empire “erected before the Kings of the August Earth.” He asserted that God has “extended the limits of our power throughout the various zones of the world.” The reason (or rather the excuse) given to justify this claim was the “preaching of the Gospel.” (The Holy See often violently opposed, in the time of Frederick II as in the time of his predecessors, such claims of the Germano-Roman Emperors to world rule, and refused to admit that the pretext of a religious mission justified such purposes. This is in fact the very origin of the secular conflict between Popes and Emperors, and the reason for excommunication of several Emperors, including Frederick II.) Further Frederick specified that his mission of Empire was directed “*not less to subjugation than to conversion of the people*”; which makes still more apparent a preponderance of imperialistic ambitions. This phrase, moreover, is a clear indication of the methods by which the Order was to carry out the imperial mission entrusted it by the Bull.

The Bull states that in this spirit and by virtue of the invitation of Duke Conrad of Masovia (whom the Emperor calls “*noster Cunradus*,” consequently his vassal) the Teutonic Order is charged with conquering the territory described (intentionally, no doubt) in very vague terms: a land known as the “*Land of Culm*”; another country situated between the borders of the Duke’s land and those of the Prussians (Borussians); and finally the Prussian country itself. Elsewhere the Bull adds that, besides the right of conquest in the territories conceded by the Duke of Masovia and in the Prussian country, the Order shall enjoy “the old and due imperial rights over mountains, plains, rivers, forests and seas” (*velut vetus et debitum ius imperii in montibus, planicie, fluminibus, nemoribus et in mari*).

The Bull further confirms that all territory conquered or received as a gift by the Order shall belong to it entirely, with all the rights and privileges of a sovereign imperial prince, including the right to levy taxes and duties, coin money, exploit all sorts of mines, name judges, impose territorial laws, etc.

German historians of the Teutonic Order note with satisfaction that by this Bull the Order was provided for a long time ahead with a broad plan of action. Indeed the terms of the Bull were so generally drawn that any future activity of the Order, regardless of its nature, would come under the special patronage of the Emperor, and would be supported by him. On the other hand, the Order was henceforth to be bearer of the mission of expansion, which, according to Carolingian tradition, was the very essence of Empire.

#### “*A Paraphrase of the Real Goals*”

The campaign on the Polish border did not begin until 1231, after long preparation, five years after Frederick II, the Emperor who dreamed of world dominion, had given the Order an impetus which was to keep its full force for many centuries. The Duke of Poland was bitterly to regret inviting the Teutonic Knights into his country. The Bernardine Bishop Christian was to share these regrets at having suggested the idea to Conrad, for later he was kidnapped, imprisoned and cruelly tortured by the Borussians, whom he suspected of acting with the encouragement of the Knights. The cynicism of the Order, which was to remain unchanged over the centuries, was evident here in all its strength. The Knights began the campaign with the firm resolve to keep for their Order exclusively all conquered territory, and to extend their conquests far beyond the lands of Culm and Prussia (where lived the wild Borussians, a heathen Slavic race), their first goal, and object of the agreement with Duke Conrad.

The object of the campaign was to secure more and more

territory for the Order. To succeed in this any means would do, and any excuse was valid for waging war against peaceful neighboring princes, even those who were Christian, if their land were coveted. *In the thirteenth century, the characteristic Prusso-Teutonic methods were already definitely crystallized.*

The avowed aim of the Order was to convert the heathen. This aim alone received the Pope's approval. In the understanding of the Emperor (as illustrated in his Bull) "Subjugation of the heathen" was not less important.

The Emperors, fully aware of the enormous spiritual power of the Church, always found it convenient (even at the time of their most violent conflicts with the Papacy) to maintain this religious front in order to make their imperialistic ambitions appear legitimate. Frederick II, while under excommunication, left for a Crusade to the Holy Land, despite opposition by the Pope, so that he might prove to the world that he was leading the struggle against the heathen. This "struggle against the heathen" was, for the Germano-Roman Emperors, what the "struggle against Jews and Communists" is for Hitler today—a pretext, and a most transparent one.

The German writer Hans Krieg, whom we mentioned before, writing in 1939 (*i.e.*, when the Nazi regime was already in full flower) acknowledges definitely that conversion of the heathen was only a screen and that actually the Order was concerned with increasing the territory of the "Reich." "Conversion of the heathen Prussians was a contemporary paraphrase of the real goals—a paraphrase adapted to those times." Krieg does not attempt to deny the duplicity of such an attitude, without describing it as such, but adds that in view of the "grandiose vision of the whole" pursued by the Order the methods employed did not matter much. Krieg uses a modern expression very familiar to us, when he describes the true mission of the Order: "increase of German living space" ("Lebensraum"). He does not fail to state moreover, with-

out going into detail, that "the Teutonic Order has transmitted this mission as a legacy to the Germany of today."

#### *Frederick Bequeaths His Imperial Ambitions*

Emperor Frederick II who, with Hermann von Salza, was responsible for the Teutonic Knights' great adventure into Prussia, was one of the queerest men of the Middle Ages. Son of Henry VI and grandson of Frederick Barbarossa, he felt responsible for carrying out his forefathers' inordinate ambitions. The title "dominus mundi" proudly borne by his grandfather awakened powerful responses in his highly mystical soul. His most ardent desire seems to have been to continue this tradition and maintain it for posterity, and this desire dictated all his acts and decisions.

He finally came to realize that the violent opposition of the Pope would doubtless not permit him to pursue his scheme for imperial expansion and perpetual conquest by direct means. He decided therefore to use the Teutonic Knights by charging the Order with an imperial mission suiting his own purposes. Thus a double advantage was achieved. He succeeded in covering up his real ambitions by having them carried out by a so-called religious Order under the pretext of "converting the heathen." Even the Pope who had excommunicated him could not criticize such activity. Besides in bequeathing his schemes to an Order following strict monastic rules which assured its permanence, he could hope that his intentions would be carried out not only during his lifetime, but in future times as well.

Frederick had had ample opportunity to get a clear idea of the power acquired by the two other Knights' Orders, the Templars and the Knights of St. John. He understood that their strength lay in their rigid organization, the strictness of their rules, and also in what was known as their "secret." The "secret" of religious Orders of the Middle Ages was a power-



ful motive which insured absolute devotion of the members to the purposes pursued. It was not so much the content of this secret which mattered, (although it usually bore, at least symbolically, some relation to the real designs of the Order). What mattered was the very existence of a secret. Men bound by a common secret, subject to the same vow of silence on certain questions, were likely to devote themselves more ardently and with steadier zeal to the common cause, than if they were bound by purely rational obligations, devoid of mystery. Modern society has greatly neglected this helpful factor, so very important in the Middle Ages and ancient times. Frederick II, whose mystical soul divined what he could expect from the closed organization of an Order built on mystic *vows* and a *secret*, firmly intended to use them in carrying out his plans.

Both rules and organization of the Teutonic Order had been copied from those of the Templars. The Templars had a secret (although it is unlikely that its content was as malodorous as certain witnesses claimed during the famous trial instituted against them early in the fourteenth century by Philippe le Bel—the trial which was to end in the annihilation of this Order). Both Templars and Hospitalers, aside from their own leaders recognized only God and the Pope as their masters. Frederick repeatedly found himself in difficulty with both Orders, and especially with the Templars. For his tastes, they were too devoted to the interests of the Papacy, with which he was in constant conflict. He therefore deemed it profitable to do everything possible to fortify the position of the Teutonic Order, on which he could depend ever since his close alliance with Hermann von Salza had been concluded. He knew that the Teutonic Order, apparently a religious Order like the other two Knights' Orders, was much more devoted to him than to the Pope and could be safely considered the faithful heir of his ambitions.

Can these "ambitions," these "intentions," be described as

peculiarly "German"? In the thirteenth century the word had a meaning different from what it has for us. Frederick II was German only on his father's side. His mother was Constance of Sicily, and the education he received in his own youth was much more Sicilian than German. He was a sort of Renaissance figure—*before* the Renaissance. But Frederick, in achieving his imperialistic plans, had met with more difficulties in Italy than in Germany. Although the German princes were often not easy to handle, he still had a greater hold on the German nobles than on the Italian. In view of this, the Teutonic Order, which was an organization of German noblemen, was able to bring him valuable help—especially because of his sincere friendship with the Order's Grand Master. Thenceforth he could consider the Teutonic Knights the dependable force on which he might rely. Because of the instability of imperial power, Frederick had had every reason to strengthen as much as he could the position of the Order. It is because of this that he elevated it to the rank of a State of the Empire—to make it the principal performer of what he considered the imperial task.

In reading the text of the Bull of Rimini, one may wonder whether the Emperor had not wished to grant the Order a certain independence from the Empire. This could be explained by the fact that Frederick had been very uncertain regarding the immediate future of the Empire. One of his sons, Henry, whom he had had appointed "King of Germany," had later revolted against him; Frederick had been obliged to have him thrown into prison, where he died. His other sons did not appear to have much strength or promise. He had therefore no way of knowing what family would occupy the throne of the Empire in future generations.

Frederick must have realized that his own family, and an Empire poorly consolidated, would offer fewer guarantees for continuance of his imperial ambitions than would a rigidly organized Order with which he had spiritual ties. It is not sur-

prising, then, that he should have assigned such an important rôle to the Teutonic Order, both in the Bull of Rimini and by his subsequent aid. He must have experienced a kind of satisfaction in seeing his task pursued by an Order to which he had brought real life by giving it a *raison d'être*. This satisfaction can be compared to that felt by the modern industrialist who bequeaths his concern to his employees. But Frederick II was a mystic (which modern industrialists rarely are), and must therefore have felt a satisfaction all the greater when he thought of the influence he was exerting on the future through the medium of the Order.

Frederick II cannot be considered a "German Nationalist" according to modern terminology. The Germanic racial character of the Teutonic Order charged with execution of his schemes was secondary to the Emperor, cosmopolitan *par excellence*. The Order had been organized according to German racial laws before it became associated with Frederick. These racial laws were likewise class laws, for it was necessary to belong to a noble German family to be admitted to the Order. Frederick had no reason to wish to change the Order's purely "noble German" aspect, for this contributed greater unity to the organism. But aside from such considerations, the problem of German nationalism did not concern the Emperor at all.

In the Bull of Rimini, Frederick describes himself at the beginning and the end as "Emperor of the Romans, King of Jerusalem and of Sicily." He makes no mention of German countries anywhere in the Bull. The continuation of the ancient Roman Empire was part of his mystical vision of life, and purely German traditions meant nothing to him. He longed to be "dominus mundi," Lord of the Earth, for to be a German Emperor seemed to him, under Carolingian tradition, too restricted a task.

The Teutonic Order, while maintaining the German racial organization of its beginnings, concentrated chiefly on per-

petuating the spiritual heritage bequeathed by Frederick II, and developed, from this stock, *its own traditions*. These traditions were necessarily distinct from all other German traditions, and it was inevitable that at some time in later centuries a struggle should arise between the two traditions.

### *Antichrist?*

While still a young man, Frederick had hoped to accomplish the greater part of his colossal ambitions during his own lifetime. Fedor Schneider, in a lecture given at the University of Frankfort (published in the 1930 collection of *Frankfurter Universitaetsreden*) says with regard to this:

"Frederick's program of imperial politics was completely formed by the time he was about twenty. The first objective would be an absolute and thorough centralization of the Kingdom of Sicily, the Norman State of his ancestors. Through the strength thus gained in Sicily he might reconquer Italy (which Barbarossa previously had conquered and lost) acquiring control over more territory even than Barbarossa. Then, using all Italy as a base, the Emperor planned not only to re-establish his imperial authority in Germany, but to strive for world dominion in the spirit of Henry IV."

The plans formed by Frederick in his youth were extremely idealistic. He dreamed of an empire of justice, of world peace. We have no reason to doubt the sincerity of his interest in these objectives. His extremely wide culture helped to make him both visionary and tolerant. He was very active in the study of natural history and contributed considerably to the development of medical science in Italy. In 1224 he founded the University of Naples, and also enlarged the medical school at Salerno. He spoke six languages: Greek, Latin, Italian, German, French and Saracen. He wrote poetry in the most varied and difficult meters. He surrounded himself with poets, scientists and artists. He collected works of art and had a magnifi-

cent library. He was also known for his tolerance towards Mohammedans and Jew.

In his youth he appeared to be a faithful son of the Church. Moreover he owed his election as Emperor to the sponsorship of the Pope. But his faith was not to evolve along very orthodox lines, and he was often accused of scepticism with regard to Church doctrine. He was much interested in astrology and the occult sciences which he had learned from the Saracens in Sicily, the home of his mother. With age he showed more and more independence with respect to the Church, and set a price on his obedience. The conflict became increasingly sharp, and Frederick was finally excommunicated.

Frederick's struggles with the Pope and the Italian cities revived the old conflict between "Guelfs" and "Ghibellines." The Guelfs supported both the Papacy and the idea of freedom. They composed the party of the "Rights of man" of that period: their political doctrines harmonized with the Church's recognition of the sacred character of the human person. The Ghibellines were followers of the Hohenstaufens, who favored strong centralized power—and absolute imperial power. Here the popular Christian ideal struggled against the ideal of an ever-expanding imperialism.

The Guelfs came primarily from among the lesser nobility and the city bourgeoisie, while the Ghibelline idea took root among the high nobility. The Guelfs were named after the German family of Welf. The expression "Ghibelline" is an Italian corruption of the German "Waiblingen," which was the name of a Hohenstaufen castle. Welf I was a powerful noble at the time of Henry IV and received Bavaria from him as a fief. Later, as a result of the rivalry for the imperial throne, fierce hostility developed between the families of Welf and Hohenstaufen. The struggles extended to Italy, where the Hohenstaufens wished to rule with the same absolutism as in Germany. Both families had their ardent champions, recruited from among individuals of opposing schools of thought. The

origin of the rivalry was soon forgotten; but cleavage between the two camps remained, dividing the members according to their opposed mental attitudes. Partisans of Barbarossa and of Frederick II in their struggles against the Popes were recruited, naturally, from among the Ghibellines.

Frederick spent the second part of his life struggling against the Lombard cities and the Papacy. From this time on he changed considerably. The idealism of his youth had departed. From now on he was a hard man who respected nobody and stopped at nothing. His vision of world empire was no longer humanitarian. His sole concern now was the winning of absolute power at any price, in opposition to the Church's claim of spiritual domination over the entire world. It was then that he declared: "From now on I shall be the *hammer*."

His imperialistic ideas, of course, aroused determined opposition from the Church. Until now the Church trusted him, forgetting that this was the grandson of the ambitious Frederick Barbarossa. Traits of Frederick's character, which he inherited from Sicilian forebears on his mother's side, may have been misleading. Sicily was at that time the melting pot of the Mediterranean. There Greeks and Saracens had introduced their highly developed cultural traditions. Frederick's mixed blood is perhaps the very explanation of his contradictory nature. In the second phase of his life all the harshness of the Hohenstaufens characterized him. The description, "Stupor mundi," applied in his youth in an admiring sense, now symbolized the terror which he inspired everywhere.

His biographer, E. Kantorowicz (in *Kaiser Friedrich der Zweite—1928\**), describes Frederick during this second phase of his life as follows:

"Attila's air surrounded him and he alone could keep on breathing it—just as it was Attila's mission which was now his, and which only he could comprehend. His contemporaries

\* The translation is my own from the German original.

instinctively bestowed Attila's title, 'Scourge of the Peoples' and 'Hammer of the World' on him, and his followers no longer referred to him merely as 'he who rules over land and sea,' or 'he who makes the winds to rejoice,' but rather as 'he whose power tramples the mountains and bends them at will.' All Europe suffered terribly under him, both friend and foe alike, Italy and Germany in particular; and to those who did not worship him and were not his followers, Frederick now represented the very epitome of all evil. The capacity for evil possessed by Frederick was indeed rare in a ruler of his stature . . . nor has anyone taken greater pleasure in doing evil. Where the State was concerned he had always been capable of any cruelty, treachery, violence, cunning, deceit, harshness—of any outrageous behavior. 'I have never reared a pig whose fat I would not eat' was one of his expressions. But where previously he had committed evil for the sake of the State, now it was for its possible effect in the world struggle which went on around his person; and he alone had come to be the State. Where previously the needs of the State constituted right, now it was the Emperor's personal needs. What he required at the moment and what might be useful as a weapon were now considered right . . . and where, in the past, laws had been bent to the interests of the State and the world at large, they were now bent to suit imperial caprice. The theory that the welfare of the Empire, of other Kings and nations, and of those who believed in him depended on his personal weal or woe—was frequently proclaimed. Every act and move of his now seemed more tyrannical, more violent, more monstrous and in fact more ruthless, since it was useful only in the preservation of a single individual."

Kantorowicz gives the following description of the effect produced by Frederick on the minds of his contemporaries:

"The entire life of Frederick II can be interpreted in the Messianic as well as the Antichrist spirit. It was the common belief that the Antichrist begotten in sin, would be surrounded

by magicians and wizards, astrologers and sorcerers . . . and he would restore demon worship: he would strive for personal fame and would call himself God Almighty. He would come to Jerusalem and install his throne in the Temple . . . he would restore the ruins of the Temple of Solomon and then, lying, claim to be the son of the Almighty. At first he would convert the Kings and Princes, and through them, later, the people. He would dispatch his couriers and preachers to all parts of the world, and his preaching, as well as his power, would reach from sea to sea, from east to west and from north to south. With him, however, the Roman Empire would come to an end. And he would accomplish signs and wonders and unheard-of deeds—but unprecedented confusion would reign over the Earth. For when his deeds were witnessed, even the perfect ones and God's chosen would doubt whether he were Christ—who, according to the Scriptures, will come again at the end of the world—or whether he were the Antichrist. They would look like one another. . . .

"And Frederick's behavior always allowed for double interpretation. In his display of the exotic splendor of both his court and his menagerie, he might be considered by some as a universal King ruling over all peoples and races—men and beasts—as the Messiah, under whose scepter all animals shall lie down together in peace . . . while others might have seen, in this galloping procession of pards and owls and dark-skinned Corybantes, sweeping through Italian cities, the very Hosts of the Apocalypse."

Frederick II liked to trace his behavior to his grandfather, Frederick Barbarossa. It is quite possible that the legends attached to the latter largely influenced the dreams of his grandson. Frederick II maintained for example that the Teutonic Knights had been founded by Barbarossa, a claim which seems to have no justification in fact. In the popular mind the legends inspired by Frederick's death fused with those which centered about his grandfather at an earlier time. When Fred-

erick II died, people did not believe it: had it not been said that the Emperor would live to the age of 267 years? For almost a century after his death impostors pretended to be Frederick. In Italy it was said that he was not dead, but that he had retired inside Mount Aetna. A Franciscan monk told of having been deep in prayer along the edge of the sea, when he noticed a company of several horsemen disappearing with their mounts among flames into the water. One of these riders said to him: "It is Emperor Frederick who is leading his Knights into Aetna." The German legend mentions Mount Kyffhäuser as the refuge of Frederick and says that he will live there until he returns to lead his people. It was assumed that this refers to Frederick Barbarossa. It is probable that the story was told originally about Frederick II, and that this is one of those confusions of personalities which is common in all folklore.

The mysticism of Frederick II, allied with that of Hermann von Salza, was behind the vast and daring imperial mission which had been assigned to the Order of the Teutonic Knights. Frederick bequeathed it all of his incontinent ambitions and all of his utilitarian ruthlessness. The Emperor's word, "I have never reared a pig whose fat I would not eat," could have been the motto of the Order. Like its spiritual ancestor, it too was to become "Hammer of the World" and "Scourge of the Peoples." And the description of Frederick II,—"what he required at the moment and what might be useful as a weapon were now considered right,"—can equally and unreservedly be applied to the Order.

It was Frederick II who instructed the Order in the strict methods used by the Normans of Sicily in organizing the State. The Order's entire set-up of Knight-officials, which was to be the basis of the severe Prussian official system, sprang from there.

In transmitting to the Order all the conceptions deriving from the second phase of his life, Frederick II was careful not

to bequeath to it any of the ideas and principles of his youth, which were marked by humanitarianism and tolerance.

### *Conversion as a Pretext*

The conversion and oppression of the Borussians by the Teutonic Knights were carried on by fire and sword. These Borussians were a savage people who knew how to make themselves feared, but the Knights opposed them with all their Teutonic harshness, the arrogance of their caste and the fanaticism derived from their monastic origins—fanaticism strengthened by severe rules and regulations inspired by those of the Templar Order.\* A cruel campaign followed in which the Borussians were unable to resist the superior forces of the Order. By 1260 almost the entire territory of the Borussians had passed into the hands of the Order. Hermann von Salza died in 1239 and Frederick II in 1250, but their deaths did not change the course of events. The future paths of the Knights were all clearly defined; now, subjected to the strictest discipline, they unswervingly pursued their task of conquest.

The methods used by the Knights from the beginning of their campaign were severely criticized by contemporary chroniclers, most of whom were themselves German. This criticism was also taken up by the German clergy established in various sections of the Borussian territory, as well as the German missionaries belonging to non-armed orders. All of these deluged Rome with petitions complaining bitterly about the cruel and hypocritical behavior of the Teutonic Order. One of their complaints was that the Knights had made absolutely no effort to convert the conquered peoples. On the contrary, the Order hindered such conversion because as long as the heathen remained heathen, they could be considered as slaves: the Knights could exploit them at will, entirely for their own ends.

\* See page 231 for more details.

Modern German authors have no illusions as to the true ends pursued by the Order. The "contemporary paraphrase of the real goals" acknowledged by Hans Krieg is accepted by most German historians. Dr. Bruno Schumacher, in a work published in 1927 (*Der Staat des deutschen Ordens in Preussen*) described as follows the basic ideas governing the foundation of the Order's State:

"The first colonization of this land, cities used as military bases, and great land-grants made to people eligible for Knight service, seem to have been dictated primarily by military considerations. This all became changed by 1283, when the conquest was complete. Only now did the idea of a National State begin to take shape. A vigorous and systematic colonization of the land by German peasants was effected. At the same time this network of cities was extended—no longer for defense needs only but also for administrative purposes. . . . But the completion of this founding of a State was realized only with the acquisition of Pomerania-Minor. This Vistula land, which for a long time had been within the range of East German colonization, was acquired by dint of the greatest diplomatic skill, with the definite intention of using it as a connecting link to Germany. In this, there is not much of the spirit of the Crusades to be discerned, but what does stand out strikingly is the foresighted political activity in the tradition of Hermann von Salza."

August von Kotzebue, the famous German writer, did extensive research among the archives of the Order at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and published his findings in 1811, under the title, *Preussens aeltere Geschichte*. He claimed that he could find no evidence that these peculiar armed monks, the Knights, had ever attempted to preach the Christian religion. "They wanted to conquer a *land*, not a people; establish dominion and not the teachings of Jesus. In this they took advantage of Europe's 'holy madness'."

The "holy madness" of this period was the "struggle against

the heathen." As already pointed out, with minor differences the Teutonic methods of the thirteenth and twentieth centuries are identical. The slogan of "conversion of the heathen" used by the Teutonic Knights assured them sympathy in different parts of the Christian world, despite the abuses of which they were accused by respectable people. It also allowed them considerably to expand their forces through the constant influx of young warriors coming from all German countries. Actually it now became fashionable to participate in this crusade into the Borussian country—as it had formerly been to depart for the Holy Land at the behest of the Pope. In this, Frederick II and the shades of his ancestors who had survived in the Order's traditions won the advantage over the Pope.

Although formally a *religious* order, the Teutonic Order pursued its own ends in accordance with the spirit of its *imperial* mission. And it went further. Having taken over the aims toward an *imperium mundi* of Frederick II and the Germano-Roman emperors, the Order might be considered, following Frederick's death, much more the spiritual successor to the limitless ambitions of this strange man and his predecessors than was the German Empire itself. The latter from now on lost much of its brilliance, and appeared in a less threatening light.

Frederick II had been the last great Germano-Roman Emperor, and the Hohenstaufen line died out with his son, who reigned but a few years. The German Emperors who followed them descended from other families. They did not continue these Carolingian ambitions, and not one claimed the name of "dominus mundi." The Order therefore regarded itself thenceforth not only as bearer, but also as *sole heir* of that mission which it had been assigned by the Germano-Roman Emperors. And while the Christian spirit of "Leben und leben lassen" ("live and let live") was becoming widespread throughout the rest of Germany, the Order pursued its aims of perpetual

conquest with egocentric ruthlessness, and later bequeathed them to the Prussian State.

### *The Gratitude of the Order*

The Order extended its territory deeper and deeper into the Slav country until the fifteenth century.

Those "Prussians" (Borussians) who did not submit were cruelly slaughtered. The "collaborationists" of this period were more or less safe, but in order to gain the favor of their conquerors, they were forced to give up their native language. Finally their descendants intermingled with the conquerors. The Germanized Borussian nobility now married among the German "beggar-noblemen" (Betteljunker) who had settled in the countries of the Order in the wake of the Knights. Together they were to form the *Prussian Junker caste*, which has been referred to frequently.

For the purpose of constantly extending their territory, the Knights, on the flimsiest of pretexts, waged successive wars against all their neighbors, who, for the most part, were Christian: the Lithuanians, the Samaites, the Esthonians, the Russians, the Pomeranians, the Krivitzians, and above all the Poles. After Prussia, Pomerania-Minor was taken over, but the Order's conquests did not halt at this point. The Order did not, moreover, intend to stop at any point. The tentacles of the Teutonic squid reached out ever further with insatiable avidity. In the course of centuries the whole territory thus conquered became known as Prussia.

Kotzebue, reliable historian of the Knights, described their intrigues in provoking war against the heroic Swantopolk, Christian Duke of Pomerania, so that they might seize his country. Swantopolk had rendered the Order great services. The Knights were never impressed by such considerations, when the expansion of their territory was involved. The Order, using to advantage the weak character of the Duke's

brother, and sowing discord between the two brothers, procured for itself an ally in the very country it planned to conquer. Thus, the Order excited the rage of the Duke, and through a series of incidents provoked a war with him—which was valuable in carrying forward their aims for conquest. Kotzebue relates that Swantopolk was under no illusions where the friendship he might expect from the Order was concerned:

"He could already foresee his future fate, observing that of the unfortunate Prussians [Borussians]. He knew that the Knights would never lack a pretext, a Papal Bull or an imperial sanction when, after having successfully subjugated the heathen, their insatiable lust might be attracted to the lands of the Pomeranian sovereign. Realizing this, he found it both prudent and just to support the Prussians: prudent because their still unbroken power afforded him security; just, because the Order, in oppressing the Prussians, violated agreements of which he was the Trustee.

"Swantopolk was the son of Mestwin, Duke of Pomerania. The dying father entrusted Swantopolk with the guardianship of his younger brother, Sambor, and made Sambor swear to obey Swantopolk. The harmony between the two brothers was destroyed by the Order's intrigues.

"The Christian Order," says Kotzebue, "knowing neither shame nor gratitude, provoked and armed brothers against one another, thus rewarding the unsuspecting Duke, who had welcomed and supported them with noble confidence. For it was Swantopolk's bravery alone that had saved the Germans from destruction on the banks of the Sirgune in 1233. For five years he remained their confederate (1238); would not make peace with the heathen without the Order's consent; even subjected himself to the Papal anathema rather than be unfaithful to them. He remained silent even when they befriended his enemies—the Poles.

"But when the Order, disregarding the duties and oaths it

had taken, now reduced the unfortunate Prussians to a state of sorage, the latter, their arms enchained, turned to Swantopolk, the trustee of their compact. He now felt that to remain silent any longer would be criminal (1239). But he did not yield hastily to an unruly desire for war; rather he wanted first of all to try everything to awaken a spirit of justice and humanity in the Order instead of shedding blood. In outspoken fashion, and in a manner befitting a brave man and a mighty sovereign, he presented himself before the 'Landmeister' (regional master) of the Knights as a spokesman for the oppressed. But the Landmeister, aloof and excitable, accused the noble spokesman of being a traitor and of stirring up the populace. Swantopolk, although angered, was above these personal insults and was guided simply by the interests of his followers. Even now he would not draw the sword; he was determined to exhaust every peaceful and legal means so that some day the curse and responsibility for having started a war would fall directly on the heads of the Knights. . . . It was only when Sambor, the obdurate brother, built the citadel of Gordin (with aid from the Order) and turned it over to Swantopolk's enemies for their assemblies that Swantopolk drew the sword—not for conquest, but moved only by prudence and by human sympathy for the sufferings of the Prussians.

"The arrogant Knights had the impression that his only followers would be the Prussian masses, because the nobility had frequently caroused with them. But these nobles too, now become sober, recognized the new danger. They were still being handled with consideration, but what might they expect after their people were thoroughly enslaved? For a long time their indignation had mounted when they saw how underserving Germans were appointed to the principal offices and received large estates. They were no longer to be lured by revelry. They too were called to arms by the wails of the oppressed."

A long war ensued, terminating in the conquest of Pomerania by the Order.

The methods used against Swantopolk are characteristic of the Teutonic Knights' behavior over a period of centuries. Pretexs were always found to provoke war against those princes whose lands they coveted. If such pretexs did not exist they managed to create them, so that responsibility for the ensuing conflict would always be placed on their adversaries.

### *The Mania of Conquest*

Kotzebue describes the infernal urge toward perpetual conquest in this manner:

". . . that shameful depravity, referred to where the humble are concerned as greed, and, where the mighty, as the spirit of conquest: considered—in the first case—with universal contempt; in the second with admiration by the petty . . . if that scourge of humanity spurs on some individual sovereign, it cannot take from the oppressed at least one comforting hope: that some day even the conqueror must die. But once this mania takes possession of an organism which never dies (because, in place of decaying extremities, it constantly shoots forth new ones) the ground, put to fire by its mania, becomes eternal Hell. Such a monstrosity was the German Order! In vain did a few of its Grand Masters desire peace and justice; they were but as the healthy head of a diseased body; a body whose poison spread ever farther and farther. Those who willingly accept some conquering Duke as their neighbor certainly regret it, but to a lesser degree than those fools who accepted the conquering Order on their borders."

The Teutonic Grand Masters had originally imposed a rigid discipline among the brothers of the Order, setting up a strict and exacting administration. The latter was run by means of a body of Knight-officials, whose organization had been inspired by the Normano-Sicilian officials of Frederick



II. (This traditional severity, aggressiveness and intolerance of the Knight officials was carried over later in a direct line to the administration of the Prussian Kingdom.)

Despite this inner severity and partly, perhaps, because of it, all sorts of abuses arose in the countries of the Order. The treatment to which the Knights subjected the conquered people was, from the very beginning, most inhuman and led quite frequently to their severe condemnation by the Holy See, which at times went so far as to place them under ban.

Already in 1258 Pope Gregory IX had written: "The heathens were oppressed by no yoke before their darkness was illuminated by the torch of faith; yet despite this, the Brothers dare to steal the property and the freedom of those who are no longer sons of Ishmael but who have been redeemed through the blood of Christ. If they do not desist, they shall be deprived of their privileges and removed from the occupancy of the lands they have so abused."

Kotzebue describes as follows the oppression of the Krivitzians by the Order:

"What fate was in store for the enslaved remnants of the once mighty Krivitz people? Where were their rulers, their nobles, their free-holders? What status, what rights and religion, what property would be theirs? They were treated in various manners by the victors. Prisoners, men, women and children, with no hope of clemency, were forced to submit to cruel bondage. The fact that they renounced *Perkuna*,\* crossed themselves and sprinkled holy water on their heads, did not help them at all. It is true that the Order had taken the position in 1249 that all men are free and equal and that only unbelief leads to enslavement. Now, however, they managed to break their word through the vile pretext that only those who, of their own will, welcomed the cross and the beam on their shoulders might enjoy such privileges; but those who

\* The heathen god the Krivitzians worshipped.

have been forced into the fold of the Church at the point of a sword must forever, and in slavery, atone for their past unbelief.

"Less miserable was the fate of those princes and nobles who had curried favor with the Order by betraying their fatherland. These were granted estates which in many cases had belonged to them anyhow and which could not very well be stolen from those who, of their own free will, submitted. But where once they had been unrestrained masters of their estates, they now obtained as a special grant whatever greater or lesser jurisdiction they might have over their serfs and also the right—for both men and women—to inherit. For all this they were obliged to pledge themselves for Knightly service. If they were able to adjust themselves obediently under this new yoke, if they helped to draw the net even tighter around their own brothers, then the Order might occasionally condescend to give the rank of 'noble' to the nobles; to decorate the heroes with a Knight's sword; and in place of the traditional respectful title, 'Pan,' ('Sir') to bestow on them the empty title, 'Miles.' Whether they were also Christians was of no concern to these armor-clad missionaries."

### *Trickery*

At the beginning of the fourteenth century, Gedemin, Lithuanian Prince, addressed himself to the Pope, demanding his protection against the Order. Kotzebue says that his letter shows up the "black spirit" of the Order:

"Gedemin wanted to become a Christian. The pious Knights attempted to hinder this, because for their own purposes of potential conquest, they would rather have his lands remain heathen territory. Through royal grants Gedemin invited all sorts of immigrants, artists, artisans and farmers to resettle in Lithuania. To the Order this seemed a very serious matter. It appeared to them a plundering of their own States, which

had become depopulated through unholy wars. Who would come to Prussia in the future, they concluded—with reason—and there submit to their excesses, if these people had been promised by a powerful ruler peaceful shelter, protection, justice and liberty? To hinder this, the Knights had to utilize every means and practice every evil, if necessary. They had before disrespectfully broken the seal of the Grand Duke. Now they did not hesitate to intercept his letters, none of which, save those to Rome, ever reached their destinations. So that posterity might some day recognize their cunning and give them credit for their knavish trickery, they were imprudent enough to file these letters in their archives instead of destroying them. As it is, these letters, after 600 years, are so many irrefutable witnesses against the Knights.

“In order to block the only secure road leading to Lithuania, they spread slanderous rumors to the effect that Masovia had been cruelly razed by Gedemin. Actually, Gedemin’s letter described Duke Boleslas of Masovia as his only friend, through whose country one might safely travel in the pilgrimage to Lithuania. The difficulty with which letters were forwarded at this time made this knavery possible; and their slander even found its way into history. Such a circumstance appears less surprising when one takes into account the great number of lies officially set in motion, unhindered because no one dares to deny them—this even in our own times, despite all the means at our disposal for disseminating truth.

“Thus is posterity deceived.

“The letters addressed to the Pope were not intercepted by the Order, either because they did not dare to do so, or because their bearers escaped the Knights’ vigilance. That the pagan Grand Duke, rather than the Pope’s own warriors, sons of the Church and Knights of the Blessed Virgin, received the protection of the Holy Father, is the best indication of how contemptible was the Order’s behavior. Despite the mask it wore so carefully, it can be evaluated in its true light.”

### “Justice Was a Stranger in Prussia”

The Knights’ abuses continued, even against the German secular clergy, and against the monks of various orders. The Teutonic Brothers forced them out of their churches. They imprisoned and poisoned Bishops. The peaceful German bourgeoisie who lived in the seaside towns and in the cities of the interior—where their ancestors had come in great numbers as artisans, at the invitation of the Order—also had plenty of cause to complain bitterly of the Order’s corruption and immorality. Fierce battles were waged at various times and notably in the fifteenth century, between the Order and the German city bourgeoisie, who organized in a *Bund* against the Knights. The bourgeoisie accused the Knights of crimes of all sorts. The most fundamental rights were denied them by the Order, which was functioning as a theocracy, with absolute power. Expropriation and other material usurpation were common. Owners of land coveted by the Order were thrown into prison. Their wives and daughters were seduced by members of the Order, who did not take their own vows of chastity too seriously. H. Bauer (in *Schwert im Osten*, 1932) writes: “In accordance with the original regulations of the Order, it was forbidden for a Knight to kiss even his mother or sister, but a common saying in Prussia now advised the head of the house to keep his back door locked against the Crusaders.”

Kotzebue found a vast amount of evidence in the archives of the Order which permitted him to establish the extent of the abuses committed. This is what he has to say concerning the morals of the Teutonic Knights in the fourteenth century:

“Robbery and murder were every-day occurrences in Prussia, particularly on the borders, along whose reaches cries and complaints could be heard ceaselessly. In countries of the Order, some of the best known Knights were to be seen robbing and ravishing in broad daylight. In Pomerania, despite

the orders of the Grand Master to the contrary, they behaved in the same fashion. Some of the Superiors of the Order were themselves powerful robbers who would spare none of their neighbors. When complaints reached the ears of the Grand Master, his answer was invariably: 'We don't know anything about it' or 'We are really sorry.' Help was always slow in coming. Even in foreign countries, the Brothers transformed their official strongholds into robber castles, from which the friendly neighboring princes were regularly attacked.

"Contempt for divine service; neglect of pious rituals; profaning sacred ground; insulting official couriers; lust and raping of young girls—these were some of the most common occurrences. Thieves escaped punishment because of their respected kinfolk. Adulterers became bolder; in Marienburg\* the Order tolerated a public brothel."

*"We Are the Law"*

Documents dating from 1436, as noted by Kotzebue, further confirm the continuance of this deplorable state of affairs.

"Enraged by the prevailing disorder, the pious monk, Heinrich Boringer of the Order of Carthausen, wrote to the Grand Master: 'Iniquitous administrators and judges hold the power in the land, selling justice at a price; oppressing the poor because their superiors are neglectful and no longer punish them. From the poor they have taken the tools and implements of work, through which wives and children must be fed. The sweat of the poor has been spent.—Noble Master, with much virtue and wisdom did you write three years ago, that every complainant shall appear before you, so that you may

\* In 1291, the three Knights' Orders were routed from Acre, in the Holy Land, by the Arabs. The Teutonic Knights transferred their seat to Venice at first and later to Marienburg in Prussia. From this time on they made themselves at home in a land belonging to them. This contributed considerably to their independence from the Church.

correct all abuses. At this even the infernal devil was frightened. Woe to him who would have hindered you. But today it is only to Heaven above that the miserable can cry; your sheep have been entrusted to wolves. When God shall finally demand his reckoning from you, I shall not cry out as did St. John: "Woe is me!—for I have remained silent." All these things are well known but they have been carefully hidden and but few take them to heart. The heathen kings were much more virtuous than the present-day Christian rulers. Holy laws are scorned by these rulers, even though they themselves are men of the Church. And concerning the common law of their subjects they jeer, saying: "*What* laws of Culm? *We* are your laws." Representatives of the oppressed, who dare to speak up, are threatened with the dungeon.

"Particularly in the villages, and with full knowledge of the Knights, the behavior of the foresters, overseers and compeers has been thoroughly vicious on many occasions. Local judges are appointed who are forced to oppress the poor, and for this they are rewarded by being seated at the communion table of the Knights. Judges have revealed at confession that they were forced to render unjust decisions. When someone has been injured or killed while at work, these greedy Knights extort such enormous fines from the responsible party that he can no longer compensate his victim or his family. Nor do they tolerate friendly settlements; even where petty amounts are involved, one is forced, unwillingly, to institute suit. They buy grain at low prices during the winter and force the original vendor to repurchase it at a much higher price in the spring. Whoever complains to the Master is thrown into chains and often dispossessed from his home. Oppression and drudgery are intensified from one year to the next. And this, they claim, is for the good of the country! They [*i.e.*, the officials of the Order], when their larders are full, retire from their duties. When these "rulers" appoint an overseer, they

do not, from that moment on, pay him anything, but tell him: "Feed yourself from your position." O Lord, how the poor people suffer then!

"They carouse with women—they do as they please, the Master rarely questioning them. While the priests sing in Church, the Knights run riot in the taverns. No one wants to remain in the Abbey. They would much rather find themselves an office elsewhere—in the wilderness if necessary—as far removed from the Abbey as possible—so that they may go their evil ways without anybody disturbing them. The Prussians still cling to their heathen idolatry, but no one is concerned about this. They are conscripted for work duty on Holy days—the Knights, blinded by their avarice, desire only to rule and exploit them, not to teach or convert them. Their freedom has been stolen. They are supposed to be Christians, but all Christian rights have been denied them. When a serf who has no son dies, his lands fall to the manor; that is why the lands lie waste. No promise to the people is kept, and sworn oaths are but a mere trifle. Sometimes good regulations will last for half a year, but then they are trampled by the rulers. Usury, perjury and adultery are commonplace, but they are no longer considered sinful since the Knights themselves behave in the same way. At weddings and at carnivals during Lent, the most fiendish behavior is witnessed. Murder occurs frequently, since a man's life here is worth less than a horse's. It does not upset the rulers because they can extort fines out of this. The cause for all this is in the nightly debauchery in the taverns—and more and more taverns are being licensed to make possible collection of the cursed taxes. Sharp gambling prevails both among the higher Knights and their subordinates.

"May the Lord and you be prevailed on: even the priests have to lead a life more mundane than religious; they must farm their own fields and pay tithes. Quod non tollit Christus, tollit fiscus. What they exact from priests helps to gorge mer-

cenaries. Whatever the Knights leave over may be taken by their valets, only it would be preferable if they were not so uncivil in this. To sum up, this is no Christian country, since God's commandments are followed less by the Knights than they are by the Prussians."

As a conclusion, the complaining monk swears that he has told the open and honest truth, that he has composed his letter in the privacy of his home, and has revealed its contents to no one.

"Friends of the Order," says Kotzebue, "tried in vain to explain away these serious charges levelled at the organization, as exaggerated and pre-fabricated lies. But it is not the chroniclers alone who support the charges. Authenticated facts speak here. The Comthur\* of Tauchel, to satisfy his unnatural lust, had a nine-year-old girl carried off by his servant. When her parents complained, this poor violated girl was sent home. When she was grown older, the girl was married to a local mayor, bearing him a son and living with him in peaceful wedlock for sixteen years. When her husband died, the Order seized her property on the vile pretext that her marriage had been illegal, since she had at one time lain with the servant of the Comthur.

"Even peasant women working in the open fields could not be certain of their honor—their very life. They were frequently dragged off to the woods, where after being lustfully defiled, they were left to hang by their feet.

"Freemen were tricked out of evidence of loans given by them, and this was immediately destroyed. Furthermore the victims had to suffer violence and were driven out of their homes. Money was extorted from the rich by threats but the victims dared not lament this before wife and child, and dared even less to complain to the Grand Master. When two men quarrelled and a third attempted to reconcile them in friendly

\* Local and regional commanders of the Teutonic Knights were referred to as "Comthur" or "Komtur."

manner, the mediator would be punished by the Order's officials because he was depriving the tribunal of a welcome fine.

"Without a hearing, without a conviction, many had to accept corporal and financial punishment. A peasant passing by a window and seeing through it a Brother's bed-companion, would pay dearly if he dared to make a humorous remark. If one of these Knights of the Blessed Virgin succeeded in seducing an honorable woman, he would openly boast of his conquest, and of the woman's consent. Handsome wives were torn away from their husbands and locked up in castles. Daughters of wealthy burghers, already engaged to worthy journeymen, would be forced into marriage to protégés of the Order, against their own and their parents' wills. Complaints by the parents or the fiancé would lead to imprisonment, and often their lips would be sealed in death. A burgher could no longer travel in safety to the annual fair, now that the Brothers themselves had become tradesmen: they bought or extorted goods at half their value; transported them by boat elsewhere; returned with expensive commodities obtained in exchange, not bothering to pay the vessel's owner and crew, and throwing those who demanded payment into the dungeon.

"Bloody street battles were common occurrences. If a burgher was injured, that was considered fitting. Should he be the victor, however, he would be forced to flee the country."

*"We Are God's Creatures"*

At the beginning of the fifteenth century, the rugged Samaites addressed their complaints to the Pope and the King of Rome, pleading for protection in these words:

"Hear, hear, ye princes, spiritual and temporal! Receive charitably the propositions of the afflicted, listen to the cry of the oppressed. We are of free, noble descent and the Order wishes to deprive us of our inherited rights. It has not tried to win our souls for the true God; it has only tried to win for

itself our lands and our inheritances. We are obliged to beg, steal, rob and kill in order to preserve our sorry lives.

"How do they dare call themselves Brothers? How can they baptize? He who is to wash others must first be clean himself. To be sure, the Prussians are baptized, but they know as little of the true faith as they did before. When the Brothers invade foreign lands they send the Prussians before them, to shed human blood. These Prussians need no urging; they burn churches, carry on worse than Turks; and the worse their behavior, the more pleased is the Order. For this reason we have refused to be baptized—we do not wish to become like the Prussians.

"The evil began with us slowly, but it grows daily. The Brothers have taken all our fruit and beehives from us; have set the yoke of degrading work upon our necks which once were free; have laid intolerable burdens on our servants, serfs, peasants, and tenants; have taken our hunting and fishing away, and have forbidden us to trade with neighboring countries.

"Hardest of all to bear was the fact that they carried off our children each year as hostages; but not being satisfied after taking away 200 such children, showing no human compassion, they dragged our wives away from us.

"We plead with you—hear us! hear, you who love justice! We would sooner weep than talk. They have bound the most powerful among us in chains and taken them to Prussia as serfs; some they have burned with their wives for refusing to part with their children. These men of the Cross have abducted our sisters and young daughters by force and—we say it with bitter sorrow—have defiled them; this is manifest and we can prove it. For a man named Kircutis, one of the mightiest boyars of our land, had a very beautiful daughter, whom these same Brothers maliciously abducted. The girl's brother could not endure this, and when he was obliged to see how one of the Order violated his sister, he ran him through with his sword. A great and noble boyar named Wyssygynn, along

with his wife and children, were dragged to Prussia where all were killed. They burned the boyar Swolken's house and village and killed the inhabitants; he himself barely escaped. But another, Sungalo, they beheaded, and forced his whole family into slavery.

"Hear, you Christian princes! We have nothing to look forward to but death by murder and that their swords will become red with our blood. They have postponed our baptisms, have built no churches in our country and have appointed no priests. Only the noble princes Witold and Jagello have, in friendly manner, instructed some of our people in the Christian faith. Take pity on us! We beg to be baptized. But remember that we are human beings, not dumb beasts which are given away, bought and sold; we are God's creatures whom He formed in His image and in the freedom of the children of God; and this freedom we want to preserve and use. Therefore, we pray to our heavenly Father that he receive us through the Polish bishops, into the bosom of the Church. For we wish to be baptized, but not with blood."\*

#### *Prussia and the "New Germany"*

Even Treitschke—although he still finds inspiration for his neo-Prussian zeal in the history of early Prussia—must acknowledge:

"The non-Germanic people are prevented from receiving an education. Balthasar Ruessow complains that, of a thousand peasants, hardly one can repeat the Lord's Prayer by heart. The children scream and dogs slink away when a German enters the smoke-filled hut of the Esthonian. In the clear nights of the short but hot summer, these miserable people sit under the birch, the favorite tree of their dull poetry, and sing stealthily a song of hatred for these German wolves: 'You

\* As quoted by Kotzebue.

Germans—swell yourselves up before all peoples of the world; nothing we poor Esthonians do suits you; therefore down with you to deepest Hell.' For centuries such hatred on the part of the vassals and such severity on the part of the masters continued; only during the period of Russian rule did the German nobility decide to free the peasants from these yokes which tied them to the land."

But Treitschke adds, without seeming to condemn such behavior: "*By these examples we can estimate the significance of the Germanization of Old Prussia.*"

This sentence characterizes, moreover, the entire attitude of the Prussian historical school on the subject of cruelty inflicted, or abuses committed in any epoch of Prussian history. These writers adopt a nonchalant manner; and are not concerned with moral considerations. They insinuate that the sort of behavior for which the ancestors of present-day Prussianism are criticized should be considered perfectly legitimate, in the past as well as the future; for such behavior can be explained as a sort of "Spartan harshness" which is indispensable to the welfare of the Order, or to the welfare of its successor, the State. It would not have been proper for these Knights to become weakened in the pursuit of their fixed aims by such idle considerations as charity, fairness, gratitude or humanity.

In discussing the revolt of the oppressed Borussians (around 1260) who, for some ten years, seemed to have been triumphant, Treitschke says:

"After ten years, during which the German domination over the Borussians was almost destroyed, the days of victory again came to the Order through the determined efforts of Landmarshal Konrad von Thierberg . . . and during the next ten years, the supremacy of the Germans was established through death and destruction. . . . Having once learned their lesson from this dreadful experience, the Order was

henceforth to adopt a new and harsher policy towards those whom they subjugated."

The "dreadful experience" to which Treitschke refers was the almost complete destruction of German domination. To prevent recurrence of this, which Treitschke considers the worst of all eventualities, a "harsh policy" seemed indispensable. This was, perhaps, regrettable, but what could one do if there was no other way out?

"Having previously been extolled as the propagator—as the rock—of Christian faith and as an instrument of Peace, Prussia has now become worthy of the name of the New Germany," says Treitschke (Note that Treitschke thus designates the Order's State of 1260.) Actually, Treitschke might better have said that the Teutonic Order, having until then been successful in camouflaging itself as a Christian Order, was henceforth obliged, under the pressure of events, to show its true face, and to proceed with all the ruthlessness and selfishness inherent in its basic principles—the principles with which it had been endowed by Frederick II and Hermann von Salza. In this manner, it was in future centuries to become what Treitschke, writing in 1886, has designated as the "New Germany"—which name it still bears as part of its present-day mask.

The greater part of the Order's political innovations and attitudes have survived until our time.

Eventually the Borussians of the thirteenth century dared to revolt against their "masters." "The Prussians [Borussians] had forfeited all their rights through revolt," says Treitschke. "Peace treaties with the conquered were now a thing of the past; in their place came subjugation and the imposition of terms dictated entirely by the degree of guilt and by military considerations. The majority of Prussian nobles were reduced to a state of serfdom but the German peasants and those Prussians who had remained faithful, including the serfs, enjoyed

great privileges. The Order had entire townships resettled in regions where they might be less threatening. Just as the entire Order's State appears to us as a later-day 'March' \* in the Carolingian tradition so the duties it imposed on the conquered served the highest purposes of the State . . ."

Of the German philosophers and theoreticians of the nineteenth century who were referred to in the first chapter, some produced what were apparently original ideas. Others cited Machiavelli for justification. But actually all these ideas can be clearly discerned three centuries before Machiavelli in the activities of the Teutonic Knights of the thirteenth century. And this last quotation from Treitschke which describes the basic methods of the Teutonic Knights is like a blueprint for present-day Hitlerian conquest.

### *The Junker Caste*

We shall not go into details concerning the formation of the Prussian State by the Teutonic Knights, nor the ups and downs of the wars which they conducted. We are simply concerned here with showing the origins and evolution of that spirit which characterized the Pan-Prussians of the nineteenth century and of the beginning of the twentieth century—the spirit which still characterizes the Germany of today, regardless of the names by which it has been called.

But the tradition we are discussing here does not belong exclusively to the realm of ideas. We are also facing a powerful combination of actual economic interests established, in the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries among the followers of the Knights, and which may be traced right down to our time. Behind its front, which has been changed frequently in the course of centuries, this combination of interests represented *an important motive force for keeping alive*

\* "Mark" in German.

*those ideas of grandeur of the State and devotion to it which have been propagated in Prussia from the times of the Knights down to the present.*

The Knights benefited—personally and as an Order—more than all others in the conquest of Prussian territory. But thousands of nobles soon came from various sections of Germany and settled near the Knights. We can consider these nobles the second most favored of all the groups which gained by the conquest. They were for the most part adventurers lured by profits to these lands where a Crusader was granted every liberty. Here these sons of noblemen—whether they had not yet come into their inheritances, or had squandered them recklessly—might hope to make their fortunes in short order. For some years they served in the armies of the Order without actually taking the Order's vows. Then, thanks to the connections they had made in the Order, they were able to seize estates owned by Borussians or by other native people. They used the whip on the native peasants to compel the cultivation of their lands and treated them as slaves.

These adventurers arrived in the Borussian territory without possessions, practically beggars. They were called the "Betteljunker" (beggar squires).

Still others were in the group surrounding the Order. There were former members of the Order who had deserted it to marry. There were brothers and cousins of affluent Knights who came to settle where they might profit by their close connections. Then, too, many of the Borussian nobility, now Germanized and ready to accept the most humiliating conditions in order to save their estates, allied themselves with the Betteljunkers during the three centuries referred to above\*—which were the "Golden Age" of the Teutonic Order. All these groups intermarried and formed thousands of intermingling ties among themselves, to protect through the com-

\* Thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

plicity of the Order the privileges by which all of them profited. It is the descendants of these groups—the Betteljunkers, the defrocked Knight-friars, the relatives of the Knights, and the Germanized Borussians—who later formed the caste of Prussian Junkers which was to have so great an influence on the affairs of Germany down to our time.

From the monastic austerity of the Order stemmed what became known later as "Prussian discipline." Despite this austerity, rigorously imposed wherever relations between Knights or the Order's interests were concerned, an extraordinary laxity of morals prevailed among the Knights in Prussia. The behavior of the Landjunkers, who were not directly under monastic discipline, was largely responsible for the abuses flourishing in the Order's State. This contradictory situation, Spartan discipline intermingled with flagrant abuse, reflected the lasting alliance between representatives of two ideas of life to the advantage of each. It was to remain characteristic of Prussia until the present, and more recently (since 1870), of Germany dominated by Prussia.

In a work published in 1904 (*Geschichte des deutschen Ordens*) the German writer, Carl Lampens, characterizes as follows the behavior of these ancestors of the Junkers:

"Instead of treating the natives with Christian love, the Order permitted the tyranny of the Landjunkers, as well as that of their own local regents in the newly conquered lands. In a town where the populace had reverted to heathenism, one of these regents, Hermann von Altenburg, had the village exits locked, and slowly burned to death all the inhabitants. . . . The Landjunkers wanted to live only at the expense of the natives, whom they intended to make their personal slaves. When we realize how these Junkers carry on today, in those very provinces, we can well imagine what it must have been like at that time, when there was no opposition press, nor an opposition parliamentary group which



might defend the rights of the oppressed." This was written in 1904 when there were, we may say, *per interim*, an opposition press and parliamentary group in Prussia.

### *The Borussian Strain*

Attempts have often been made to determine whether or not the Borussian heritage runs deep in the blood of present-day Prussians, and particularly the Junker Prussians. It would be no easier to gauge exactly the ethnic contribution of the Borussians to the present-day Prussian group than to evaluate, for example, the precise contribution of the Saxon, as compared with the Norman, to the English of the twentieth century. But we do not need precise, statistical figures to form a general idea of the result of the mingling of Teutonic with Slavic elements in the Prussians.

Despite strict monastic rule over the inner life of the Order, the Knights, in their outside behavior, more nearly resembled the barbaric Teutons of Tacitus than the founders of the Church which preached Charity: pre-Christian elements survived among both the Teutonic Knights and those who surrounded them—the ancestors of the Junkers. The examples set daily by the savage Borussians to the Germans and the marriages between the German Junkers and the Borussian Christian proselytes (who never really understood the moral teachings of the Church) emphasized pre-Christian traits in the Prussianism born of this curious fusion. If we bear in mind that their descent from these pre-Christian or, if we prefer, "barbarous" ancestors is relatively recent, we can better understand the peculiar behavior of the twentieth-century Junkers—for example the cruel methods of the Fehme in the period after the first World War. Only six centuries have passed since Borussian wives were obliged to render absolute obedience to their husbands, failing which they were burned alive. Lampens tells of the following inci-

dent which occurred during the wars between the Knights and Borussians:

"The High Priest invoked the Gods; whereupon the Holy Oracle of Romowe promised the heathens victory, on condition that a German Christian woman offer of her own free will to be burned in sacrifice—a tribute to their Gods. The heathens actually found such a woman who, after becoming satiate with all the pleasures of debauchery, climbed up on the funeral pyre. And now the Prussians arose in their united strength."

The immediate descendants of these Borussians married the daughters of the Betteljunkers and contributed to the formation of a caste which may in many respects be considered a survival of the darkest Middle Ages. The primitive virtues of these uncivilized people were destroyed, but their traditions of cruelty merged, by a sort of osmosis, with the harshness and arrogance of the German Knights. Kotzebue says about this:

"All the moral practices and customs of these people, including, unfortunately, its virtues, were later to suffer various mutations, because they were unhappily fused with the superstition and blasphemy of the German Christians. . . . They believed in evil spirits, who would drive the possessed to jump into the water and flames. Along the Baltic seacoast, men fishing for amber would be harassed by ghosts on horseback. Sorcerers carried on their weird business. Pagan rites were still being celebrated in the black of night. The churches remained empty."

### *The "Two" Germanies*

The pure virtues of the city bourgeoisie and their strict adherence to the principles of Christian morality were in curious contrast to the very peculiar moral conceptions of the Teutonic Knights and their entourage. Already, at this point,

we can distinguish between "good" and "bad" Germany, but the latter had not yet achieved the preponderance it was to assume in the future. Korzebue says the following on this subject:

"To the shame of the noble monks, the bourgeoisie remained firm in their morality and order. In the cities, schools were flourishing. Each guild complied with the laws, which assured them peace, decency and virtue. No one could come armed to morning services. While merry-making, 'none must behave in a manner disgraceful to the sight or sound' on penalty of one pound of wax. 'None shall lack respect for the aged, nor shall one offend his neighbor by calling him by an evil name.' They had already formed a club at this time known as the *Companye*, whose rules, if broken in word or deed, imposed a fine on the violator of one barrel of honey. Similar fines were levied on drunkards. Only after vesper bells had rung would gatherings be permitted, and taverns had to be shut at nine o'clock. No carnivals or fairs except during Shrovetide; women to visit their suitors only during certain limited hours; journeymen not to be allowed time off on the morning following a Feast Day.

"And thus Prussia offered the curious spectacle wherein the immorality of the leaders did not corrupt their subjects and where integrity had fled from the Knight's castle to the burgher's cottage."

This opposition between two contradictory approaches to life was the same in all sections of Germany, where the Teutonic Knights, reaching out from their Prussian fief, had succeeded in establishing a local command in the principal cities. The Order was everywhere detested by the bourgeoisie, and conflicts were frequent. Contrast between them was not confined to the differences in their personal standards but included their social behavior as well. The bourgeoisie could not forgive the numerous broken promises of the Order and others of its acts—inspired alternately by cynicism and hypocrisy—

which were striking affronts to their own understanding of good and evil.

Here we see before us two contradictory Germanic developments which occurred independently of one another until the middle of the nineteenth century. The one, characterizing the greater part of Germany, was essentially Christian, and formed part of what we call "Western civilization." The other, proceeding in a direct line from the ambitious Germano-Roman emperors, was localized in Prussia. Representatives of the latter tendency recognized no rights but their own, and regarded with great disdain the cooperative, altruistic spirit prevailing in other German States. They described this spirit as the result of "degeneration" and patiently awaited the moment when they could annihilate it in their domination over the rest of Germany. The moment was to come under Bismarck.

#### *The Assassinations of Danzig*

The assassination by the Order of the burgomasters of Danzig in 1411 was an event long recalled by the city bourgeoisie. Following the battle of 1410, in which the Knights had suffered the most crushing defeat in their history at the hands of the Poles, the Chief Burgomaster of Danzig, Konrad Lezkau, disguised as a Polish beggar, succeeded in passing through the Polish lines. He managed to warn the Margrave of Brandenburg and other German princes, who hurriedly dispatched considerable reinforcements to the Knights. In the Order's tradition gratitude befitted only the weak; so the Knights imposed heavy taxes and restrictions on the city of Danzig, and when their erstwhile benefactor, Konrad Lezkau, protested bitterly against such behavior, the full rage of the local Comthur was unleashed against him. Upset and unhappy at such a state of affairs, Konrad and the city councillors tried to appease the Knights and a solemn reconciliation took place

before the church altar, where both the councillors and the Comthur of the Order promised to forget their differences and to live in peace with one another in the future.

Pretending to celebrate this reconciliation, the Comthur invited Konrad and his colleagues to a great banquet to be given in their honor at the Knights' castle on Palm Sunday. Lezkau, two other burgomasters, and a councillor accepted the invitation. On their way to the castle they met the Comthur's jester, who said to them jokingly: "If you knew what they were cooking, you might not come to eat." One of Lezkau's colleagues was frightened at these words and returned home. The others, under the exhortations of the worthy Konrad, whose honest soul could never suspect the villainy of the Knights, entered the castle and were immediately seized. Brought before the Comthur and his Knights, violent insults assailed them from all sides, but they had the courage to keep calm. Thereupon the Comthur summoned the hangman of Elbing, a neighboring city, and ordered him to execute the three prisoners. The hangman refused, saying that it was not his custom to execute men unless there were legally constituted judgments. He was severely whipped for his insolence and the Knights decided to do this work themselves, and first celebrated their decision in drink for several hours. The prisoners were then brought in. The Knights "leaped at them like mad dogs" (say the chroniclers) and killed them with knives and swords. Lezkau suffered ten wounds and his throat was cut, while one of his colleagues suffered sixteen wounds, and the third seventeen.

For several days thereafter the Order tried to keep secret what had happened, and they even had their guards accept the daily provisions brought each day by the wives of the three men. The wives were told what foods their husbands supposedly would like to eat on the following day, so that they might bring it. Finally, in response to the demands of the municipality, protesting against the Order's right to with-

hold their leaders arbitrarily, the Comthur had the bodies of the three burgomasters thrown in front of the castle gates. The citizenry, speechless with sorrow, brought back the bodies and buried them.

One might think that the Grand Master, having learned of these events, would perhaps have decided to punish the Danzig Knights, so that the Order might not be identified with such procedures. He did nothing of the sort. On the contrary, the wives and children of the assassinated burgomasters were driven from the city, and all their goods were confiscated.

### *From Order to Duchy*

In the fifteenth century occurred the events which weakened the Teutonic Order and finally led to the creation of the Prussian secular State.

In order to defend themselves against the abuses and autocracy of the Order, the bourgeoisie in the Prussian cities formed a protective "Bund" in 1438, which was named the "Marienwerder Bund," for the site of the place where the organization was formed. The spirit of decency and cooperation was rising against the principles of exploitation and narrow egoism. In the German cities, the Hansa's traditions were in full flower. This league of merchant cities, the Hansa, found both its function and its prosperity in the exchange, rather than the usurpation of other people's goods. United, the members of the Bund considered themselves sufficiently strong to oppose the Order—this vulture which terrorized them.

At first the Bund protested simply against the exactions of the Order. But in 1453 the Emperor upheld the Knights, and severely reprimanded the Bund. The latter, enraged, declared war against the Order in 1454. The Knights trembled, knowing very well the strength of the cities. The fortified "burgs" of the Knights, those detested strongholds which had been

dominating the cities from their outskirts, soon fell, one by one, into the hands of the revolting bourgeoisie. At the end of a few weeks the latter had seized fifty-six of these burgs. The war lasted for thirteen years and claimed heavy casualties on both sides. The cities asked assistance of the King of Poland, whom they invited to extend his reign over Prussia—"this country originally evolved from the 'crown of Poland.'" The burghers who, for the most part, were German-speaking, made this request because they were convinced that all their misfortunes dated from the time of the Knights' reign over their country, and that the Polish kings would show much greater respect for their rights and traditions.

The Knights finally realized that they could no longer continue the struggle. Their army, which had totaled 71,000 men at the beginning of the war, had now decreased to 1700 men. The peace treaty that was signed at Thorn in 1466 represented a complete defeat for the Order. The countries of Culm, Michellau and Pomerania-Minor, with their principal cities of Thorn, Danzig, Elbing, Marienburg and the bishopric of Ermeland, came under Polish rule. The Order was allowed to retain the rest of its territory, but the Grand Master, as a "Duke of Poland," was now obliged to yield to the King. Half the officials of the Order, in the lands under its administration, would from now on be Poles. The cities were to be protected, and it was forbidden for the Order to burden them with any new laws or taxes. Following the signing of the treaty, the Grand Master humbled himself on bended knee before King Casimir. The latter quickly helped him to his feet, tears in his eyes.

The only German prince who had aided the Order was the Margrave of Brandenburg, Frederick von Hohenzollern.\*

\* The Hohenzollerns, natives of Swabia (which was part of Bavaria), were the "Burgraves" (local rulers) of Nuremberg. In 1411 they were raised to the rank of Margrave of Brandenburg by Emperor Sigismund in exchange for a loan of 100,000 Hungarian florins, a loan greatly appreciated by the Emperor, who was constantly in need of money.

The Margrave and the Order had concluded an unusual pact, promising to give mutual aid to one another against the subjects of each. It was the Margrave who, in 1466, acting in the name of the Order, negotiated the peace with the King of Poland for the Knights.

Relations between the Order and the Hohenzollerns were now excellent. It is understandable then, that the Knights considered it useful in 1511 to elect Albert of Hohenzollern and Brandenburg to the dignity of Grand Master of the Order, which post he filled with full understanding of the Order's traditions and aims.

Nevertheless, it was Albert who was responsible for the secularization of the Order's State. Actually the Teutonic Knights for some time now had been much more a *caste* controlling a *State*, than a Monk's Order serving religious ends. The Knight-officials were most influential, and directed everything for the benefit of the Order, of themselves, and of the Junkers, with whom they were united by bonds of kinship, friendship and complicity. A very small minority of the Knights were still faithful to the religious traditions, but they had no influence on the Order. Albert did nothing but give official status to an existing condition, when in 1525 he transformed the Order's State into the hereditary Duchy of Prussia (with approval of the King of Poland, who remained suzerain of the Duchy as he had been of the Order's State).

The occasion for this act was the Reformation, the ideas of which Albert allowed to penetrate deeply into the Order. This had curious consequences, for it was possible for some time to witness the strange spectacle of an Order of Monks, of whom some were Catholic but the majority Lutheran; an Order having two initiation rituals with slight differences between them—one for the Catholic Brothers and the other for the Lutheran disciples. In reality there was nothing astonishing in this evolution, for, as we have seen, the allegedly

religious Order had been *German* above all from the very time of its origin. Its function had never been spiritual, but was inspired exclusively by imperialistic purposes.

### A "Hospital" for German Nobility

The transformation from the Order's State to Duchy did not at all change the internal organization of the State. The former Knights retained their positions, but from now on it was possible for them to marry legally. Thus they found themselves on the same level as their allies, the Junkers. The few remaining Knights who were still faithful to the traditions of a closed and monastic Order emigrated to Mergentheim, there to continue as a living anachronism shorn of every purpose and function. Finally in 1809, Napoleon dissolved this phantom Order,\* but he did not shatter the forces of the true Teutonic Order, which, secularized and hiding behind a variety of masks, survived in the Prussian State.

All sorts of organizations served as disguises. Secret societies had been functioning in the shadow of the Teutonic Order. The Junkers were not directly subject to rules of the Order. They had found it useful to form bonds among themselves, under protection of which they could further their own interests and pursue ends similar to those of the Order. As far back as 1397 there had been created a secret Junker society known as the "Society of Lizards"—*Eidechsenengesellschaft*—a name whose symbolic significance may have been that its members' intention was to creep in among the fissures of the Order's State. Certain Grand Masters tolerated these activities while others were more strict, as much toward the members of the Order as toward the Junkers, their accomplices. Lampens, lenient toward the Order and speaking from a distinctly German point of view, comments as follows on the

\* It continued its existence in Austria and was officially reestablished in Prussia at the end of the nineteenth century by Wilhelm II.

Eidechsenengesellschaft (*Geschichte des deutschen Ordens*, 1904):

"The Landjunkers, in their inconsiderate exploitation of the peasantry, faced constant obstacles from the officers of the Order. Now a section of the Landjunkers formed an apparently harmless but actually most treacherous association—the Eidechsenengesellschaft—claiming, as it is often said today, that its purpose was 'the protection of their own interests!' According to the secret rules of this Association the Landjunkers were to support patriotic German interests only if this were to their own advantage. And already at that time they found their advantage only in the ruin of the rest of humanity. The entire country existed for them alone, to be exploited and abused by them."

Kotzebue claims that the "Society of Lizards" eventually became the real cause of the replacement of the Order by the Prussian State. . . . "Their foundation charter referred to the Grand Masters with respect and gave no hint that they would challenge the authority of the latter. Nevertheless they showed no hesitation later in declaring that if justice were denied them they would take self-protective measures. And so even at this time, the seed had developed which after half a century was to push the strong roots of the 'Order-Oak' out from the blood-soaked earth."

The Order was eliminated from Prussia by the Junkers because the Junkers wanted to monopolize the supreme power of the State for their own advantage. When the Grand Master, Albert von Hohenzollern, transformed the Order's State into a Duchy he was acting most probably, under the influence of this Society of Lizards. The Junkers had imagined, and correctly, that they could have a more direct hold on the affairs of a political State than on those of a closed Order. The strictness of the Order had often proved an annoying obstacle to outside influences, even those as powerful as the Junkers. From favored servants, they became lord and master almost

overnight. Henceforth they could say, as Louis XIV: "I am the State". If this State, by virtue of an ancient tradition, was destined to carry forward a world mission, they intended to execute this mission—since they themselves were now to be the beneficiaries of all advantages.

The Order itself had among its secret aims that of serving as a "Hospital" for German nobility. We have seen that the Order of the Teutonic Knights was founded originally for the purpose of creating a *hospital* for the German crusaders in the Holy Land. The Knights used the term "Hospital" in a symbolic sense (another example of the symbolism common in the Middle Ages) and concealed behind it one of the aims of the Order—"conspiracy to promote the interests of a caste." This aspect of the Order definitely existed along with the imperialistic aspects so clearly defined in the Bull of Rimini, the true Charter of the Order. Kotzebue relates that when the Grand Master begged for the help of the Margrave of Brandenburg, the former reminded him "that the Order had always been a Hospital for the German nobility." "The most apt one-word description," adds Kotzebue, "which could possibly define this unnatural organization—the Order."

From the time of its founding, the Order had a "secret" or "secrets." These secrets are mentioned frequently, and in the rules of the Grand Master Konrad von Ehrlichshausen, it is clearly stated that "the Order's secrets must never be revealed before laymen or before the servants." This cannot be a reference to the Order's statutes as they were known to every one. The "secrets," then, can concern only a more detailed statement of the aims of expansion and conquest than was originally contained in the intentionally vague Bull of Rimini; or they might be related to the aim of protecting, in the Order's capacity as a hospital, the caste interests of the German nobility. This latter aim was recognized but cleverly masked in the official name of the Order: "Order of the German Brothers of the Hospital of Jerusalem." Only with this

double purpose of the Order in mind can we understand all of the Order's attitudes and methods, frequently contradictory, as well as those of Prussia, and of Germany dominated by Prussia, at a later time.

It is this *double motive* which explains the pursuit in a most ruthless manner of a mad plan for imperialism by the impersonal entity which was the Order and which today is the State. This "general interest" shouldered out all private interests except where the interests of the German nobility were concerned—or rather of those German nobles who in the course of centuries had come to form the caste of Prussian Junkers. Their welfare was the supreme yet rarely acknowledged goal of the Order.

The same double purpose which was pursued centuries ago by the Order is carried on today by the Junker organizations. The "secrets" were the same in the thirteenth as in the twentieth century.

C. J. Weber, in a work published in 1835 (*Das Ritterwesen*) which we mentioned before is surprised that the partisans of the Order were capable of describing it as a "National Institute for the Nobility." This is the natural surprise of the enlightened man who, in the face of evidence, does not dare to believe that atavistic morality still exists. On one occasion when the Order was severely criticized, this name, "the National Institute for the Nobility," was cited as an argument in its defense. Weber says of this, "It is almost comical. . . . Would it not be shameful for an enlightened nation which knows its rights (I am dreaming here of the Germans as a nation) to tolerate such a National Institute for the Nobility? And would this not be a discrimination against other citizens of the State?"

That was precisely the case.

### CHAPTER III

## PRUSSIA COMES UP IN THE WORLD

THE KNIGHT OFFICIALS, the real leaders of the Teutonic Order, maintained their positions. The Junkers preserved their privileges. The secret societies\* undertook the task of keeping alive the mysticism and the "conspirational" aspect of the Order. It may therefore be said that all the traditions of the Teutonic Knights fully survived in the Duchy, and later in the Kingdom of Prussia.

The family branch of Duke Albert died out in 1618. The Prussian heritage passed to another Hohenzollern, the Elector of Brandenburg, who was henceforth to rule over both countries. He was, as Margrave of Brandenburg, under the Emperor, and as Duke of Prussia, a vassal to the King of Poland. But the Electors who followed were much more concerned with being rulers of Prussia than of Brandenburg.

#### *The Order's Traditions Survive in Diplomacy and Warfare*

These electors no doubt wished to take advantage of the numerous traditions of the Order which had survived in Prussia as well as of the unique tie-up of interests between the Junker organizations and the caste of officials. They felt that they might carry out much more ambitious plans than if they built their reign around the dull heritage of Brandenburg, whose history was hardly different and no more interesting than that of most of the other German principalities.

\* We shall see at work the many subordinate organizations which these secret societies found it useful to create in the period 1918-1933.

Frederick William I, who was named the "Great Elector," contributed a great deal to the maintenance and development of this Prusso-Teutonic tradition. H. Bauer (in *Schwert im Osten*, 1932) comments on this with characteristic enthusiasm: "In the creation of the Brandenburg-Prussian State by the Great Elector Frederick William I, the State concept which had existed in the old Order's State was revived. The moral strength of the officialdom and of the army of the Order was given new life. Under Frederick the Sword in the East was raised in the old Prussian spirit of hardness, obedience and duty—the Sword through which the Reich (the age-old dream of all Germans) would be created anew."

During the wars between Poland and Sweden, the Great Elector, alternately siding with each of these countries, manoeuvred with a duplicity so ingenious that he finally succeeded in having the complete independence of the Duchy of Prussia recognized by both countries. Later, under his son, Frederick, Brandenburg and the Duchy were transformed into the "Kingdom of Prussia." Frederick chose this latter name because as sovereign of Brandenburg he would have been vassal of the Emperor. But at the same time, by calling himself "King of Prussia," he showed his intention of remaining faithful to Prussian traditions. His sovereignty for this reason received the support of the powerful ruling class composed of Prussian officials, descendants of the Knights and affiliates of the Junkers.

His son Frederick II, named Frederick the Great, increased the power of Prussia through aggressive wars, thus preserving cherished old-Prussian principles. He attributed these wars in his personal memoirs simply to ambition. All the wars fought by the great Elector and Frederick the Great were wars of their own choice, as von Bernhardi stated in words previously quoted: "Of all the wars through which he [Frederick II] led his people, not one was forced upon him." These men acted for the sole purpose of constantly extending the power

of the Prussian State—just as the activities of the Grand Masters had been devoted solely to continuous expansion of the territory of the Order's State. Both were supported by the same feudal privileged class, whose modes of living had varied little during the course of centuries.

### *No German Unity Without Junker Hegemony*

The wave of revolution which swept Europe in 1848 was directed at these privileges, among other things, and also at the abuses for which they had been responsible. The Junkers passed a few uneasy hours. But the upheaval was unsuccessful, in that it did not reach the true root of the evil. In an enthusiastic but somewhat naïve spirit, the revolutionaries asked Frederick William IV, King of Prussia, to assume leadership of their movement and to accept the imperial crown. The King, flattered by the offer, at first agreed; but soon "other influences made themselves felt," and he declined the proposal. The high officials, the Junker Prussians and their allies in the armed forces\* had vetoed this proposition.

This action might seem surprising on the part of a group which so strongly desired the aggrandizement of Prussia. As proven by later events, their aim was Prussian hegemony over the Reich as the first stage toward a more far-reaching hegemony. Yet, apparently, they did not wish to seize the opportunity offered them in 1848, whereby they might have united the various German states under the rule of the King of Prussia.

The reason for this is simple: the "Pan-Prussians" knew that such unification as was possible at that time would be risky, since it would have been based on ideas much too democratic. Under such conditions there was absolutely no guarantee that their feudal privileges (which for them came before

\* The latter—the officers' corps—was composed of descendants of the same caste as the first two groups, and preserved all military traditions of the Order.

the interests of the State) would be preserved. The creed of the powerful "Society of Lizards" was still strong: "Patriotic interests are to be supported only where they are to the interest of the Junkers." The Junkers preferred to wait until the unification of the Reich could be achieved on terms favorable to themselves: *i.e.*, through complete seizure of power over all other German states by the Prusso-Teutonic clique. Bismarck, Wilhelm II to a certain extent, and finally Hitler were to achieve this task as the Prusso-Teutonics had conceived it.

Carl Schurz, the German patriot of 1848, who later became a great political figure in America, described in his memoirs\* the forces influencing the King of Prussia in 1848:

"There was the landed aristocracy, the 'Junker' element, whose feudal privileges were theoretically denied by the revolutionary spirit and practically invaded by the legislative action of the representatives of the people, and who artfully goaded the King's pride. There was the old bureaucracy, the power of which had been broken by the revolution, although its personnel had but little been changed, and which sought to recover its former sway. There was the 'old Prussian' spirit which resented any national aspirations that might encroach upon the importance and self-appreciation of specific Prussiandom, and which still had strength in the country immediately surrounding Berlin [†] and in some of the eastern provinces. All these forces, which in a general term were popularly called 'the reaction,' worked together to divert the King from the course he had ostensibly taken immediately after the revolution of March, with the hope of using him for the largest possible restoration of the old order of things—well knowing that if they controlled him, they would, through him, control the army and then with it a tremendous, perhaps decisive force in the conflicts to come."

\* *The Reminiscences of Carl Schurz*, The McClure Co., New York, 1907.

† Potsdam, in the suburbs of Berlin, was the seat of Prusso-Teutonic influence on the affairs of the State.



The projects for German unification in accordance with the democratic plan of 1848-49 also met strong resistance from Bismarck, who throughout his entire career had been a faithful servant to the Prussian interests: "I believe that if we withhold our support from these projects it will be easier for Prussia to bring about German unity in the manner already pointed out by the government. If it came to the worst, however, I would rather that Prussia should remain Prussia, than see my king lower himself so far as to become the vassal of Messrs. Simon and Schaffrath's [democratic leaders of that time] political associates. In her own character, she will always be in a position to give laws to Germany instead of receiving them from others."

It is this, actually, with which the Prussian clique is concerned: to impose *its own laws* on the rest of Germany, and we know exactly what is meant by these "laws."

In 1849, Bismarck made a speech on the same question: "What has hitherto kept us going has just been our specific Prussianism, the remains of the heretical old-fashioned Prussianism which has survived the Revolution, *i.e.*, the Prussian army and exchequer, fruits of intelligent Prussian administration, and the vigorous interchangeable activity that connects King and People in Prussia. . . . The people, whose truest representative is that very army, does not desire to see its Prussian kingdom melt away in the putrid fermentation of South German insubordination.\* Its loyalty is not attached to a proper Board of Directors of the Empire or to the sixth part of a Council of Princes, but to its living and free king

\* The expression "people" employed by Bismarck in his discourse is actually a euphemism—designating that mass of Landjunks who alone opposed realization of the democratic plan of 1848, rather than the true people, who had supported this plan. When he speaks of the "Prussian army," he obviously refers to the body of officers who, in their entirety, stem from the Junker class. As for the spirit of "South German insubordination," which he vigorously opposes, this is, in reality, the Christian and humanitarian spirit, respecting the "rights of man" which Bismarck and the Junkers considered contrary to Teutonic traditions.

of Prussia, the heir of his ancestors. . . . We all wish that the Prussian Eagle should spread its wings, alike protecting and ruling, from the Memel to the Donnersberg; but we want to see him free—not fettered by a new Ratisbon Parliament, or supported on the pinions of those levelling hedgeclippers at Frankfort. Prussians we are, and Prussians we will remain; and I hope to God that we shall continue to do so long after this scrap of paper will be forgotten as though it were a withered autumn leaf."

### *The Teutonic Devil*

In thus declaring himself for "Prussian" principles, and opposing those principles which might be called "German," Bismarck supports a particular type of Germany, discriminating against the other. The "Prussianism" to which he declares himself faithful (which as a nationality has had a much shorter past than the German) is none other than the tradition of the Order, which has survived—a Teutonic tradition of everlasting expansion, supported by a privileged caste. In distinction to this is found the other tradition of the industrious city-bourgeoisie, of the peaceful principalities and of the spirit of cooperation of the Hanseatic League. In a moment of sincerity Bismarck wrote to one of his friends: "I have sold my soul to the Teutonic Devil" (so reports Moritz Busch, his literary factotum, who was very devoted to him\*). It is this very "Teutonic Devil" to whom all the "German grandeur" theoreticians of the nineteenth century sold their soul. Because this Teutonic Devil was the same as the Prussian Devil, they all, regardless of their own origins, came to consider Prussia as the only country, the only power capable of realizing their dreams.

Moritz Busch devotes much time to proving that although

\* Moritz Busch, *Bismarck*, translated by William Beatty-Kingston, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1891.

Bismarck was born a Junker, had the Junker manners, and was the political ally of the Junkers, he was nevertheless not the Junker prototype. Busch had been very close to Bismarck, and it is likely he wished to present his hero in the light in which the latter preferred to appear. His thesis to a certain extent is valid. Bismarck throughout his career was sincerely devoted to the Prussian monarchy. The latter, despite its alliances with the Junkers, despite similarity of goals and methods, despite the origin of both from the Order, had finally evolved its own goals and traditions within the framework of this common background. (This commonly happens to institutions created to serve the interests of others. When these institutions acquire an independent existence, they end by developing their own traditions and aims, still preserving those which lay behind their origins. The Teutonic Order itself, having carried on the ambitions of Emperor Frederick II toward *imperium mundi*, ended by endowing these ambitions with a more complex meaning. And the same appears to be true if we compare the Prussian-Junker organizations with the true Teutonic Order.) The Prussian monarchy was a servile instrument for the Prussian Junkers, and as such represented a most opportune façade for this group; but at the same time it had its own existence and evidently cannot be considered absolutely identical with the latter.\*

Busch, to whom one may refer without being accused of having preconceived ideas against Bismarck, says this of his idol:

"He is descended from an ancient family of country nobles,

\* Just so, in 1918, the monarchy, because of its rôle as façade, had to bear the entire responsibility for the débâcle. Because this monarchy existed as a separate entity, it was possible to suppress it without actually affecting the forces which hid behind it. Suppression of the monarchy seemed to be remedy enough. The Prussian Junkers (with their affiliations in the army, among the officials and, since the creation and development of German industry—among heavy industry as well) were a much more dangerous group than had been their *front* organization—the monarchy; and they were thus able to maintain their position. They could do so because their activities and their secret organizations escaped general attention.

inhabiting the Marches, which has supplied to the Prussian kings a goodly number of 'Junkers,' all of whom became officers in the army, not a few dying the death on the battlefield, under Frederick the Great and during the War of Emancipation, for Honor and their Country. When he had grown up to early manhood, the 'Junkerish' attributes above alluded to—arrogance, high temper and *brusquerie*—were strongly developed in him; the least objectionable of them, however, were the most salient. As a student, he was notorious for a spicy tongue and a ready sword; the older citizens of Goettingen still bear his wild tricks in mind."

The description of Junker manners in the character of the young Bismarck corresponds trait for trait with the traditional prototype of the Teutonic Knights, the ancestors of the Junkers.

Busch has a few apologetic passages here on the subject of the Junker connections and attitudes of Bismarck: "The Chancellor was a Junker; he lived a Junker's life for a considerable time, and to some extent represented the views of his fellow-Junkers. As a Minister, however, he belonged to the party designated by the epithet 'Junkerdom' only to the extent that, like itself, he was a Royalist in thought and feeling, and, above all, objected to Parliamentary government. . . . If he were styled 'soldier' instead of 'Junker'—if his militarism were grumbled at instead of his Junkerdom—there would be some sense in such a view of his character, although it would be no reproach to him. What is spoken of as militarism is in reality that Prussian discipline by virtue of which all the forces in the State, all the members of the governmental organism in its various branches, work together with one common object—that system, the first principle of which for all connected with it (from the lowest to the highest in rank, including the Sovereign) is obedience, or rather the subordination of each individual's personal inclinations and opinions to those of his immediate official Superior in particu-

lar, and to the interests of the State in general.\* Every part of this system is an accurate fit, dovetailing admirably with the part adjoining it; all goes on smoothly, as in the army, which is merely the most marked outcome of the spirit animating all our State institutions and officials, besides being the chief and central school in which that spirit is imparted to the population at large.

“Such a system as this—of which Bismarck himself once said: ‘I am ambitious to deserve one day the praise bestowed by history upon Prussian discipline’—is quite compatible with an abundant measure of political liberty, but not with the Parliamentary form of government demanded by our Liberals . . . Bismarck is the incorporate ideal of the Prussian officer and official, not of the Prussian Junker. Nothing short of stupidity or dishonesty can account for any man mistaking him in this respect. Future generations will not be guilty of such folly or wickedness.

Busch here seems to be raising an issue over words. For if we restrict the use of the expression “Junker” to that class of Prussian “country-squires” living in their Middle Age paradise, Bismarck, although springing from this very class, far surpassed them in scope and daring. Busch says that in the final analysis Bismarck should be considered basically as a Prussian officer or official. However we know that these Prussian officers and officials are sons and grandsons of the same Prussian “country-squires,” or that they are descended from other officers and officials whose families, since the time of the Order, had been closely allied with the Landjunktens. Considering all this, we are justified in saying that all these elements really formed one great caste—regardless of whether we call it Junker or not. Because he was more intelligent than the class he represented, because he had travelled abroad, Bis-

\* The adherence by Bismarck and the entire Prussian school to the principle of *obedience*, to the *interests of the State* and to *Prussian discipline*, is, as we have seen, the product of a long tradition stemming from the Teutonic Order.

marck became more “civilized” and developed a much broader outlook than his associates. That is why he might have appeared, at times, to be deviating from his original course. This was not so, for Bismarck until the end of his career continued to serve the forces which had descended directly from the Teutonic Order, always with the same devotion and ruthlessness: he simply used a little more tact in his actions than did his masters.

Busch’s division of the Prussian ruling class into army officers, officials and Junkers goes back, under different names, to the time of the Order. The Prussian army officers were formerly Teutonic Knights serving the Order by the sword. The Prussian officials had previously been “Officials of the Order.” Lastly the Junkers were descended in a direct line from those friends and relatives of the Knights who had come to Prussia as no more than Betteljunktens, and who had seized the lands with the complicity of the Knights, at the same time absorbing the remnants of the Germanized Borussian nobility. It is this Trinity—holy only to those individuals participating in it—which for centuries has been the keystone of Prussian affairs, and which has also become the keystone of Germany, since the time the “Reich” became equivalent to “Greater Prussia.”

This tripartite caste was no vague entity, but was well organized. Its tactics and direction were determined by the secret societies we have discussed. The Junkers, Prussian “country-squires,” played a dominant rôle within this group.

They were concerned with preserving the advantages derived from rights which permitted them to exploit their land and men by methods used in the Middle Ages. Because they maintained great unity among themselves, they were in a position to exercise much influence behind the scenes in all questions of political significance, and to make their opinions respected during all periods of Prussian history. Their aims did not differ much from those of the army officers and officials

who remained their faithful allies, but because they were better organized than the others and financially more independent, they were at all times more influential in the affairs of the State. Further, the Junkers were concerned with the interests of the State only so long as they could maintain it as a servile instrument in their own hands.

The Prussian army officers and civic officials, many of whom were related to Junkers (a fact which contributed to greater interdependence of the three groups), loyally carried out the Junkers' intentions. A sort of "local patriotism" masked private interests: these interests were, for the Junkers, the *raison d'être* for this association. As for the officers and officials, the State had symbolically taken the place of the Order and they intended to serve it with almost monastic submission and discipline. Collaboration with the Junkers who were the masters of the State was simply a matter of doing their duty—their Prussian duty; and, in doing it, they used all the traditional harshness of Prussian methods.

### *The Technique of "Isolation"*

It is Bismarck who extended Prussian power over all other German States with the exception of Austria; Bismarck who in 1848-49 did everything to prevent the King of Prussia from accepting the crown of Germany. King Frederick William had to yield actual control of royal power because of his mental state, which had become precarious. His brother William was elected Regent. The new Regent believed as strongly as did Bismarck in the necessity for uniting Germany under Prussian hegemony. He was hesitant as to the methods to be pursued in this. Bismarck was to provide these methods for him. When Frederick William died in 1861, the Regent became King William and in 1862 he named Bismarck Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Prussia.

Bismarck's political experience dated back nine years. Dur-

ing part of this time he had represented Prussia in the Diet of the German Bund\* at Frankfort, where he spent his time principally in struggle against Austria, which had a great influence on other German States. The Prussians considered Austria as their only rival for German hegemony, and cost what it might, she was to be eliminated from the scene. Moreover, Austria, with the urbane and kindly methods of her administration was, for Bismarck, a shocking antithesis to Prussian harshness and severity. As such she influenced the other German States in a way which the Prussians considered pernicious. She had, therefore, to be eliminated at any price.

Four years spent as ambassador to the Russian court familiarized Bismarck with the intrigues of diplomacy; so that when he came to power in 1862 he brought with him both national and international experience as background for the battle he was going to wage.

At first Austria still seemed too influential for Bismarck to consider immediately eliminating her from the Bund. Therefore it was first necessary to "isolate" her. The Prussian technique for isolating an adversary from his allies has always been the same since the early times of the Teutonic Order: first, making overtures to the country or the Prince who was to be isolated; second, after the victim fell into the trap, pointing out to his allies that the former was willing to go along without them. Generally this was enough to isolate him completely.

In 1863, while discussions on the eventual reorganization of the Bund were taking place, Prussia demanded permanent presidency of the Bund, on an equal footing with Austria. The proposal was rejected by the latter. But Bismarck found another occasion to tie up with Austria, and to trap this country into isolation from the other German States.

In 1864, the Bund favored the cause of the Prince of Au-

\* The only existing bond between German states at that time. It included Austria.

gustenburg in his struggle with the King of Denmark over the Duchies of the Elbe, Schleswig-Holstein and Lauenburg, which had been occupied by Denmark. The Bund attempted to restore sovereignty over these Duchies to the Prince. Bismarck persuaded Austria to ignore the stand taken by the Bund, and to remain on the sidelines.

In a treaty signed in 1864, Austria and Prussia decided to act on the question as independent powers, and to determine by common agreement the fate of the Duchies of the Elbe (without considering the desires of the Bund for return of these Duchies to the Augustenburg family). In his memoirs, Bismarck acknowledges that, by acting supposedly for the "liberation of Germans from Danish oppression," he was endeavoring above all to procure these territories for Prussia. He had clearly realized that the port of Kiel and the canal connecting the North Sea to the Baltic might some day serve as a base for the establishment of Prussian naval power. He was aware that his aims could be realized only through conclusion of treaties which even before signing them he intended to violate. But he confesses also (resuming here a thesis whose moral inspiration stemmed from the Order, and which is found repeated among the Prussian theoreticians of the nineteenth century) that *a treaty had but little value to him unless it gained additional validity, after its conclusion, through the concordant interests of the contracting parties.*

In August, 1864, following a short and victorious campaign by the Prussian and Austrian armies against the Danes, Bismarck signed the Treaty of Vienna, in which Schleswig-Holstein and Lauenburg were to be administered jointly by Austria and Prussia.

From this point on, Bismarck concerned himself solely with eliminating his associate, Austria, from the pact which had been concluded. Austria felt that she was drawn by Prussia into an equivocal and embarrassing position with respect to the other German States. To regain their confidence she now

began to look with favor on the settlement proposed by the Bund, which called for the return of the Duchies to the Prince of Augustenburg. Bismarck refused to subordinate the conquered territories to the authority of the existing Bund, but declared himself ready to negotiate with a reorganized Bund, from which Austria would be excluded. On June 14, 1866, the Diet rejected the Prussian proposal by a vote of nine to six. The following day, Prussian troops marched against Austria, crossing through Saxony. After a campaign of seven weeks, Austria was defeated at Koeniggratz.

### *A Tentacle Reaches Out*

With her only rival for German hegemony thus easily eliminated, Prussia now profited from the propitious psychological moment, to impose her terms on the German States. Austria had to accept a "new German organization without the participation of Austria." Two confederations were established: the North German Bund, including all States north of the Main River, and the South German Bund. Relations between the two Bunds were to be defined in subsequent conventions. The North German Bund was to have the King of Prussia as its permanent and hereditary ruler. The Duchies of the Elbe were simply annexed by Prussia, as were the north German States which had previously favored Austria: Hesse-Kassel, Hanover, Nassau, and the free city of Frankfort.

Half of Bismarck's plan was now accomplished: all north German States were henceforth under Prussia's control. The North in its entirety had always had more understanding of Prussian methods than had the South. Bismarck could therefore hope to impose on it the severity of Prussian discipline, and in this manner establish Prussia's rule over a limited territory as a first step toward further expansion. He thought that this progressive expansion would afford him much better opportunities for final success.

Of all the princes dispossessed from their estates in 1866, only the royal family of Hanover continued for many years to protest against the Prussian action. The Duke of Nassau and the Elector of Hesse formally renounced their rights, and the daughter of the Duke of Augustenburg married the young prince William of Hohenzollern, who later became Emperor William II. But the princes of Hanover, who were also heirs to the throne of Brunswick, for a long time considered themselves in a state of war with Prussia. Their faithful subjects organized passive resistance to Prussian occupation. It is interesting to note that the royal family of Hanover is descended from the Welfs or Guelfs, whose struggles against the "Ghibellines" have become legendary. As we have seen (p. 44) the Ghibellines were partisans of the Hohenstaufens, from whom Emperor Frederick II was descended—the same Frederick who had bequeathed his imperial mission to the Teutonic Order, the ancestor of Prussia. The struggle between Guelfs and Ghibellines continued until the end of the fifteenth century. It is perhaps no simple coincidence that the princes of Hanover, descendants of the Welfs, were so violently opposed to the ambitions of the Prussians—the spiritual grandchildren of Frederick II of the Hohenstaufen, or Ghibelline line. The royal family of England issued from the same family of Hanover. As such, they too descended from the Welfs, the traditional enemies of the imperialistically ambitious Hohenstaufens, of whom Prussia became the heir.

#### *The Isolation of France*

With Austria removed from German affairs, the first thing to do was to neutralize those other influences which opposed Prussian domination over Germany. Because the south German States made it a practice to invite France's advice, it would be necessary above all to "isolate" France, just as Austria had been isolated. To this end Bismarck employed the

same methods: he showed himself very friendly toward France and entered into discussions with her. During these conversations, Bismarck suggested all sorts of compensations for France if she would permit Prussian expansion of power. Napoleon III at first claimed the left bank of the Rhine, but Bismarck conducted negotiations in such a manner that a solution, calling for the annexation of Luxembourg and Belgium by France, and the extension of Prussian power to the south German States, gained preference in the discussions. Nothing was concluded: neither Napoleon III nor Bismarck definitely accepted the plan. But Bismarck preserved the original draft of the project which had been written in the hand of Benedetti, the ambassador of France. He then arranged for a facsimile of the plan in Benedetti's handwriting to appear in the *London Times*, and at the same time, brought to the attention of the south German States the original claims of Napoleon III to the left bank of the Rhine.

The isolation of France was accomplished at one stroke. Suspicion was cast on her in England and in the south German States. The latter, which then counted on the support of France, from now on felt more disposed to deal with Prussia. Bismarck now concluded a secret military pact—offensive and defensive—with the south German States, by virtue of which the supreme command reverted to the King of Prussia. He next tried to find a reason for declaring war against France, so that Prussian command over all the German armies might become a fact. Indeed, he believed that Prussian direction on the military level—especially if this were successful—might easily be followed by Prussian rule on all other levels over all German States.

Manoeuvring for the throne of Spain furnished the occasion for declaring war against France. A Hohenzollern was candidate for this throne. France protested and asked for explanations. The King of Prussia, William I, held a meeting with Benedetti at Ems, the bathing resort where he stayed,

and matters seemed to work out amicably. The King telegraphed to Bismarck, giving him the details of this meeting. Bismarck deliberately "edited" the telegram, and had the altered version published. This ruse made the French attitude appear more unfriendly, and the response of the King more abrupt than they had been in reality.

Under the influence of this famous "Ems dispatch" a belligerent atmosphere was created within France and Germany. This was exactly what Bismarck had desired. Napoleon III, under the pressure of French public opinion, declared war—a war which immediately turned to the advantage of the German armies, which were under Prussian command. In January, 1871, a few days before the capitulation of Paris, the King of Bavaria (who had always been considered the traditional ally of France) in the joy of conquest, proposed that William I of Prussia be proclaimed Emperor of Germany. The proclamation took place at the Palace of Versailles.

Bismarck, who had accompanied the King to Paris, settled at Versailles for a few months. He used these surroundings to create conditions psychologically favorable for his plans. In the impressive halls of the Palace he had no difficulty in obtaining consent of the German princes to the formalities necessary for the creation of the Reich. He passed all his time in Versailles at this task and succeeded in establishing the unity, under Prussian rule, of the States of north and south Germany.

Bismarck had thus put his theories of 1848-49 into practice: not to allow the King of Prussia to accept the throne of Germany if the latter came as a spontaneous offering of the people; but to acquire the throne through "blood and iron," which according to the traditional conceptions of the Teutonic Order was the path to more lasting results. It did not matter that to achieve these goals it was necessary to provoke wars against Austria and France artificially. Treitschke well expressed the essence of Prussian thought on this subject

when he deplored the fact that no physician could be found who would have the audacity to prescribe war frankly as a wholesome potion for the people.

From the day Bismarck succeeded in subjecting the other German States to Prussian rule the principal task was to impose the Teutonic spirit and Prussian severity on the whole of the German population, and to combat their easygoing tolerant ways—as a weakness, deriving from the "softening" Christian philosophy and corrupting the soul.

### *The Hydra Needs Time*

Culminating in the gains of Bismarck, the Prusso-Teutonics had made great strides since their modest beginning in the thirteenth century. To recapitulate briefly:

We have seen that an uninterrupted evolution proceeded from the beginning of the thirteenth century until 1870. In 1226, Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II entrusted a vast imperial mission to the recently created Order of Teutonic Knights, in his Bull of Rimini. The Knights launched the "campaign of Prussia" and conquered one country after another, dragging their neighbors into war on the flimsiest of pretexts, for the sole purpose of constantly increasing their territory. The Order was soon acting entirely on its own account as the sole heir of the traditions of the Hohenstaufen emperors (indirect descendents of the Carolingian emperors) whose line died out with Conrad IV, son of Frederick II. These are the traditions which point toward world domination, and which are in opposition and direct conflict to the claim of the Church of universal spiritual sovereignty. Under the protection of the Order, a caste of nobles, enjoying the favor and complicity of the Knights, settled in the conquered countries. These "Junkers" in turn tried to appropriate for their exclusive advantage the very aims and traditions which the Order itself had carried down from the Germano-Roman

emperors. Already, during the reign of the Order in Prussia between the thirteenth and the fifteenth centuries, the Landjunktens were those who sought the greatest advantages from their privileged position, and they committed the greatest abuses. To protect their special interests they founded a secret society in the fourteenth century, ("Society of Lizards"). Under their influence, the State which the Order of Knights had formed was secularized in the sixteenth century by a Grand Master who was a member of the Hohenzollern family, and became a purely political unit.

Instead of being subservient to the Knights as they had been in the past, the Junkens intended, from the time of the secularization of the Order's State, to have at their service the State officials and army officers, descended from two branches of knighthood—officials of the Order and the warrior Knights. The Electors, and later the Kings of Prussia, had to reckon with their desires and interests. So long as these were respected, the State—Duchy or Kingdom—could pursue those ancient plans established by the visionary Hohenstaufens, extending the bounds of conquest more and more.

The Great Elector and King Frederick II found all sorts of pretexts for waging war. The goal was always the same—ceaseless conquest. The actions of Bismarck were no different, but he was not content with increasing the territory of Prussia. Using the same methods as his predecessors, he achieved domination by Prussia over all the German States—the re-establishment of the Empire to the advantage of Prussia and the Prussian clique. The circle was now completed. The Hohenstaufens had launched the Knights on a path of world conquest, but had lost the Empire. The descendants of the Knights established their regime over a vast territory which served them as a fief, and from which they again conquered the Empire.

In observing how the Great Elector, Frederick the Great, and Bismarck all arrived at their goals, one cannot help but

be struck by the similarity between their hypocritical methods and those employed by the Order, as described by contemporary chroniclers.

Bismarck closed the circle, but by the inclusion of this immense territory within the Prussian orbit, at the same time put a temporary stop to the movement of expansion. The hydra needed time to digest the lamb. Thus in the period between 1870 and 1914, Prussia could give the world the impression that it had nothing to fear from her, and most people were lulled by the illusion that the era of Prussian conquest had passed.

The world did not realize that Prussia needed a temporary period of peace to organize the territories it had acquired. Bismarck himself had decided to call a halt. The Empire was to be thoroughly Prussianized, for only the Prussian discipline inherited from the Order—the "devota subjectio" so dear to the Knights, translated into civic terms in Prussia—would in the long run enable other German countries also to acquire the desirable toughness and ruthlessness. This development would some day enable the Prussians to resume the path of conquest, this time on behalf of the Prussianized Empire.

### *A Ghost Returns*

Principally due to the leadership of Bismarck, years of internal organization followed, but the theoreticians of Prussianism, the Treitschkes, the von Bernhardis and the others, looked toward the future and continued to keep the flame alive. In German intellectual circles they kept in the foreground the ambitions for world domination as well as the basic principles of tactical method through which to achieve it. During this time Bismarck himself was apparently occupied only with standardizing laws throughout Germany, and with unifying the army and the other institutions. Later, over a



period of years, William II pursued the same task, but being more of a mystic than his predecessors, he considered it useful, toward the end of the nineteenth century, to reestablish the organization of the Teutonic Knights in Germany and principally in East Prussia.

This gesture was purely symbolic and added but little to the existing state of affairs; the Junkers, the officers and officials who were now active in the Order had for a long time been united by numerous ties. They had their secret societies, within which they regularly discussed projects concerning the protection of their personal interests and national expansion. Nevertheless, it was characteristic that William II went further than mere reconstruction of the Order by rebuilding Marienburg, its traditional seat. He also named one infantry regiment (No. 152) as well as two artillery regiments (Nos. 71 and 72) for the Teutonic Knights. Measures of this kind would obviously increase the pride and the ambitions of the Junkers, and of their associates in the army and administration.

*"Hass gegen England, 1914"*

The next task to be undertaken was the attempt to smash the world hegemony of the power which was considered by the Prusso-Teutonic forces as their only major rival—England. Already List had pointed out the importance of this problem for the benefit of German imperialists of the future. Treitschke, in his writings, constantly fulminated against English hegemony, and thus kept alive a flame of hatred which was to become useful at the proper moment. The English had become masters of a fifth of the habitable lands of the earth. "Through robbery," said Treitschke.

N. A. Cramb, Professor of History at Queens College in London, died on the eve of World War I. He foresaw the Prussian struggle against English hegemony as imminent in one form or another, because it was indispensable for the

Prussian plans for world domination. "The quasi-historical form," said Cramb, "which the question of enmity to England now assumes in the minds of thousands of intellectual Germans is this: As the first great united action of the Germans as a people, when they became conscious of their power, was the overthrow of the Roman Empire, and ultimately, in Charlemagne and the Ottonides, the realization of the dream of Alaric—the transfiguration of the world, the subversion of Rome, and the erection upon its ruins of a new State; so in the twentieth century, now that Germany under the Hohenzollern has become conscious of her new life, shall her first great action to be the overthrow of that empire most corresponding to the Roman Empire, which in the dawn of her history she overthrew? In German history the old imperialism begins by the destruction of Rome. Will the new imperialism begin by the destruction of England?" \*

If there is conflict between the two nations, it is not because of the insults which Germany might suffer from England. No need for that. The mere existence of the British Empire is an insult to Prussian Germany. Cramb, who was in regular contact with German university circles, and who could clearly estimate the state of mind beyond the Rhine in 1913, said: "England's possessions, England's arrogance on the seas, her claim to world-wide empire—these, Germany answers, are to Germany an insult not less humiliating than any she has met with in the past. And what are these English pretensions? And upon what are they based? Not upon England's supremacy in character or intellect. For what is the character of this race which thus possesses a fifth of the habitable globe and stands forever in the path of Germany's course towards her 'place in the sun', in the path of Germany's course towards empire?"

"It is from this first recrimination that, during the last three

\* J. A. Cramb, M.A., *Germany and England*, E. P. Dutton & Co., New York, 1914. Quoted by permission of the publishers.

or four decades, largely under the influence of the Prussian School of History, there has been evolved a portrait of England as the great robber-State. In one phase or another this conception is gradually permeating all classes, making itself apparent, now in a character in fiction, now in a poem, now in a work of history or economics, now in the lecture hall at Bonn or Heidelberg or Berlin, now in a political speech.

"And the theme is precise. England's supremacy is an unreality, her political power is as hollow as her moral virtues; the one an arrogance and pretence, the other hypocrisy. She cannot long maintain that baseless supremacy. On the sea she is rapidly being approached by other powers; her resources, except by immigration, are almost stationary, and her very immigration debases still further her resources. Her decline is certain. There may be no war. The display of power may be enough, and England after 1900, like Venice after 1500, will gradually atrophy, sunk in torpor. . . .

". . . Who is to succeed her? It may not be Germany; some Power it must be. But if Germany *were* to inherit the sceptre, which is falling from her nerveless hands . . . ?

"And having visualized this future, the German imagination, in a tempest of envy or vehement hate, becomes articulate and takes various shapes, resulting in an almost complete arraignment of the British Empire, of the English character, and of all our institutions and all our efforts as an empire-building race."

For what is the supreme ideal, Cramb asks, for all these German thinkers, who influence future events in Germany? "It is world dominion," he answers; "it is world empire; it is the hegemony of a planet. It assigns to Germany in the future a role like that which Rome or Hellas or Judaea or Islam have played in the past. That is Germany's hero-ideal. It is at least greatly conceived.

"Assuming for a moment that this world-predominance is possible to Germany, what is the testimony of Germany's past,

to her capacity to play this part? You find Germany an empire already in the ninth century, if you regard Charlemagne as a German—as he was; and again you have attempts at imperialism made by the German race under the Ottos in the tenth century; but most distinctly is Germany an imperial power in the twelfth century in the time of the Hohenstaufen, one of the most tragic dynasties in history."

Characterizing the spiritual heritage of Treitschke, Cramb says: "Treitschke has defined the aim of Germany, and Treitschke's definition, which has been taken up by his disciples, is this: that just as the greatness of Germany is to be found in the governance of Germany by Prussia, so the greatness and good of the world is to be found in the predominance there of German culture, of German mind, in a word, of German character. This is the ideal of Germany, and this is Germany's role as Treitschke saw it in the future."

These considerations of Cramb (originating in a lecture series he gave in 1913 and published in April, 1914) certainly correspond with the evolution of things during the first World War, which was a first attempt to rupture English political hegemony. But other passages in these same lectures have greater point for a more recent past than the 1914 epoch. Thus Cramb points out that the forces directing Germany intend not only to achieve world dominion in their own way, and to eliminate for this purpose the power of England. What they are equally concerned with is to replace the predominant civilization of the world with another, purely Germanic; and to do away with Christianity, the "softening influence" of which is in direct contradiction to the Teutonic moral concepts.

"This world dominion of which Germany dreams," says Cramb, with great academic objectivity, "is not simply a material dominion. Germany is not blind to the lessons inculcated by Napoleonic tyranny. Force alone, violence or brute strength, by its mere presence or by its loud manifestations in

war, may be necessary to establish this dominion; but its ends are spiritual. The triumph of the Empire will be the triumph of German culture, of the German world-vision in all the phases and departments of human life and energy, in religions, poetry, science, art, politics, and social endeavor.

"The characteristics of this German world-vision, the benefits which its predominance is likely to confer upon mankind, are, a German would allege, truth instead of falsehood in the deepest and gravest preoccupations of the human mind; German sincerity instead of British hypocrisy; Faust instead of Tartuffe. And whenever I have put to any of the adherents of this ideal the further question: 'Where in actual German history do you find your guarantee for the character of the spiritual empire; is not the true role of Germany cosmopolitan and peaceful; are not Herder and Goethe its prophets?' I have met with one invariable answer: 'The political history of Germany, from the accession of Frederick in 1740 to the present hour, has admittedly no meaning unless it be regarded as a movement toward the establishment of a world-empire, with the war against England as the necessary preliminary. Similarly the curve which, during the last century and a half, Germany has traced in religion and metaphysical thought, from Kant and Hegel to Schopenhauer, Strauss and Nietzsche, has not less visibly been a movement towards a newer world-religion, a newer world-faith. That fatal tendency to cosmopolitanism, to a dream-world which Heine derided and Treitschke deplored, does, indeed, still remain, but how transfigured!

"But what is to be Germany's part in the future of human thought? Germany answers: 'It is reserved for us to resume in thought that creative role in religion which the whole Teutonic race abandoned fourteen centuries ago. Judæa and Galilee cast their dreary spell over Greece and Rome, when Greece and Rome were already sinking into decrepitude and the creative power in them was exhausted, when weariness

and bitterness wakened with their greatest spirits at day, and sank to sleep again with them at night. But Judæa and Galilee struck Germany in the splendor and heroism of her prime. Germany and the whole Teutonic people in the fifth century made the great error. They conquered Rome, but dazzled by Rome's authority they adopted the religion and the culture of the vanquished. Germany's own deep religious instinct, her native genius for religion, manifested in her creative success, was arrested, stunted, thwarted. But, having once adopted the new faith, she strove to live that faith, and for more than thirty generations she has struggled and wrestled to see with eyes that were not her eyes, to worship a God that was not her God, to live with a world-vision that was not her vision, and to strive for a heaven that was not her heaven. And with what chivalry and with what loyalty did not Germany strive! With what ardour she flung herself into the pursuit of sainthood as an ideal and then into the Crusades! Conrad and Barbarossa, Otto the Great and Frederick II, Hildebrand and Innocent III, were of her blood, so were Godfrey and Tancred and Bohemund. Yet in the East, in the very height of her enthusiasm, the outward fabric of faith sank. In the East where she sought the grave of Christ, she saw beyond it the grave of Balder, and higher than the New Jerusalem the shining walls of Asgard and of Valhalla. In Jerusalem, standing beside an empty grave, the summits of a mightier vision gleamed spectral around her. And whilst her Crusaders, front to front with Islam, burst into passionate denials and set Mohammed above Christ, or in exasperated scorn derided all religion, her great thinkers and mystics led her steadily toward the serener heights, where knowledge and faith dissolve in vision, and ardour is all.

"A great hope had sunk; a mightier hope had arisen. But like the purposes of the world-spirit in the everlasting self-disaccord, this hope could only be born in the bloodiest strife, and agony infinite, and fatalizing hatred and war. . . . Rome

no longer a guide, Germany was torn by the violence of the furious heresies, from which sprang the secret orgies of the Black Mass, and that subterranean literature of which the "De tribus impostoribus" is a sign.

"The seventeenth century flung off Rome; the eighteenth undermined Galilee itself; . . . and with the opening of the twentieth century, Germany, her long travail past, is reunited to her pristine genius, her creative power in religion and thought.

"And what is the religion which, on the whole, may be characterized as the religion of the most earnest and passionate minds of young Germany? What is this new movement? The movement, the governing idea of the centuries from the fourteenth to the nineteenth is the wrestle of the German intellect not only against Rome but against Christianity itself. Must Germany submit to this alien creed derived from an alien clime? Must she forever confront the ages, the borrower of her religion, her own genius for religion numbed and paralysed? . . .

"Thus while preparing to found a world-empire, Germany is also preparing to create a world-religion. No cultured European nation since the French Revolution has made an experiment in creative religion. The experiment which England, with her "dull imagination" has recoiled from, Germany will make; the fated task which England has declined she will essay.'

"That is the faith of young Germany in 1913," concludes Cramb.

His description of the German state of mind before the first World War is interesting in many respects. It is a rapid résumé of a spiritual evolution paralleling the social and political evolution which we have described. As to the future, his description has more significance for the events of the last ten years than for the period which was immediately to follow the time when Cramb was speaking. The Germany of Wil-

liam II was not yet ready to make an open break with Christianity. The Germany of Hitler is much closer to this point, but here as elsewhere, we can see that she only executes what has for many years been definitely planned by the Prusso-Teutonic group.

Cramb does not resolve the problem whose contradictions strike him. He is impressed by the profundity of the neo-pagan spirit which he has encountered in Germany, and by the political importance of Prussian traditions. On the other hand he is well aware of the Germany of Herder and Goethe and of its "cosmopolitan and peaceful spirit" but he does not know which to believe is the true spirit of Germany. He does not yet come to the conclusion that both Germanies might quite well have existed over a period of centuries simultaneously; the one always deeply pagan, of a pretended Christianity (Emperor Henry IV, Barbarossa, his grandson Frederick II, the Teutonic Knights and their descendants); and the other, thoroughly Christianized to an extent as great as any other European country, but constantly suffering from the exactions and egotism of the Pagan Germany. Cramb sees only the contradictions, but the permanent and secular character of the conflict seems to escape him completely. Prussia's propaganda was so clever that by 1913—forty-three years after the Prussian clique had manoeuvred themselves into the saddle over the rest of Germany—she made the world forget that "Prussia" and "Germany" are not absolutely identical.

### *More Dreams*

Frederick Scott Oliver, another observer in the same epoch, writing in London (1915) says:\*

"The complete mosaic of the German vision is an empire incomparably greater in extent, in riches and in population

\* Frederick Scott Oliver, *Ordeal by Battle*, The Macmillan Co., New York, 1915. Quoted by permission of the publishers.

than any which has yet existed since the world first began to keep its records. Visionnaires are always in a hurry. This stupendous arrangement of the Earth's surface is confidently anticipated to occur within the first half of the present century. It is to be accomplished by a race distinguished for its courage, industry and devotion—let us admit so without grudging.\* But in numbers—even if we count the Teutons of the Habsburg Empire along with those of the Hohenzollern—it amounts upon the highest computation, to less than eighty millions. This is the grain of mustard-seed which is confidently believed to have in it 'the property to get up and spread,' until within little more than a generation, it will dominate and control more than seven hundred millions of human souls.

"Nor to German eyes, which dwell lovingly, and apparently without misgiving, upon this appalling prospect of symmetry and vastness, are these the sum total of its attractions. The achievement of their vision would bring peace to mankind. For there would then be but two empires remaining, which need give the overlords of the world the smallest concern. Of these Russia in their opinion needs a century at least in which to emerge out of primitive barbarism and become a serious danger; while in less than a century, the United States must inevitably crumble to nonentity, through the worship of false gods and the corruption of a decadent democracy. Neither of these two empires could ever hope to challenge the German Mastery of the World.

"In South America as in North, there is already a German garrison, possessing great wealth and influence. And in the South, at any rate, it may well become, very speedily, an imperative obligation on the Fatherland to secure for its exiled children more settled conditions under which to extend the advantages of German commerce and *kultur*. President Mon-

\* Like Cramb, Oliver does not distinguish sufficiently between the German people (whose good qualities appeal to him) and the clique which goads the people in the direction of these ultra-ambitious plans.

roe has already been dead a hundred years or more According to the calculations of the pedantocracy,\* his famous doctrine will need some stronger backing than the moral disapprobation of a hundred millions of materially-minded and unwarlike people, in order to withstand the pressure of German diplomacy, if it should summon war-ships and transports to its aid."

Note that this résumé of German conceptions dates from 1915, and is based on observations made in 1912-1913—an epoch, therefore, in which the "Nazi menace" which today seems alone to be indicted, did not yet exist. This is the epoch in which one of the most famous scientists of Germany, Professor Ernst Haeckel, had formulated the German war aims in a series of 8 points (which would be interesting to compare with the 8 points of Roosevelt and Churchill). These evidently represented only the "immediate aims" in the grandiose whole of the Teutonic conception:

- (1) Smashing of English tyranny.
- (2) Invasion of Great Britain and occupation of London.
- (3) Partition of Belgium. The section from west of Ostend to Antwerp to become a State in the German Empire; the northern section to go to Holland. Luxembourg to receive the southeast section, and thus expanded, would henceforth be a united German State.
- (4) Certain English colonies and the Congo Free State to Germany.
- (5) France to cede its northeast Departments to Germany.
- (6) Russia to be neutralized by the reconstitution of the Polish kingdom under Austrian influence.
- (7) The German Baltic provinces to be restored to the German Empire.
- (8) Finland, united with Sweden, to become an independent kingdom.

\* Oliver's designation for the Prusso-Teutonic theoreticians.

It was the epoch of William II, and many people had the illusion that he alone was responsible for the "German menace." Some blamed the world unrest created by Germany simply on his contradictory temperament, which was responsible for his alternate pacific declarations and "sword-rattling" harangues.

In reality he was a figurehead who, at times, was even something of an encumbrance to the Prusso-Teutonic forces—who alone counted in the control of German affairs; for in these outbursts, which he did not very well know how to control, he revealed all too readily the policies and plans which should have been kept secret. But this was of little importance since the Prusso-Teutonic plans were pursued unwaveringly, regardless of which man was used as a front. This man alone would appear to the outside world.

Obviously Bismarck, who was a man of high qualities, rendered much more service to the Prusso-Teutonic cause than did that clown-supreme, William II. But it was not the latter alone who was responsible for the war of 1914. And if, abroad, he was considered solely to blame for this war and, in his own country, for the defeat which followed, this was fully to the advantage of the Prusso-Teutonic circles. The latter thus escaped blame from two sources—which would have been a devastating blow for them had they acted directly and openly.

#### *Under the Cloak*

Because of the great variety in the apparent aims pursued by the Prusso-Teutonic group over a period of centuries, the observer of German affairs has often been mistaken on the subject of the group's actual intentions. Thus the Prussians are at first allied with Austria—then they attack her so as to eliminate her from the Empire. Before 1870 they keep in the good graces of France—then at the first opportunity they

invade her. They speak of a "Teutonic solidarity" with England—and then call her their greatest enemy. They envisage a reconstituted Poland in order to make Russia powerless—and later conclude a temporary alliance with Russia permitting the occupation of Poland.

Sometimes the men who speak in the name of Prusso-Teutonic Germany are replaced by others and the change in aims is explained by the personal preferences of these men. The world is thus reassured, made to believe that Germany is abandoning her ancient plans due to the influence of new leaders. But even where a leader keeps his place, although the avowed aims have changed, the world is time and again taken in by the illusion that Germany is finally limiting her aims, and that she is no longer to be considered as dangerous as people imagined her. This was the reasoning during the period of calm between 1870 and 1914 (which calm, as we have seen, was necessary for Prussia to strengthen her domination over Germany); in the years which followed the 1918 armistice; and most recently in the time between any two changes in Hitler's tactics.

Sometimes these varied aims, these alleged "oscillations" as to the ends pursued in German politics, were simply tactical and designed to veil the real intentions of Germany. She would thus be in a much better position to make preparations in the direction she actually intended to take. But many of the changes in direction have been sincere.

Frequently these periodical shifts in the "German menace" may be explained by the absolute empiricism of the Prusso-Teutonic methods. It makes no difference what the *immediate objective* is so long as the *final goal* remains the same. If the matter of primary importance for Berlin had been the conquest of France, Austria, Poland, Russia or England—her behavior, alternately friendly and threatening to each of these countries, may appear illogical. But the conquest of any of these countries may be considered only as one of the pos-

sible first steps toward the only real goal which interests her: world dominion. Thus she can start action anywhere and continue it, guided by opportunity, resistance and degree of failure encountered. The chess player, at the beginning of his game, does not generally know which pieces he wants to win from his opponent first, but he knows his final goal quite well. The empiricism in the choice of her immediate objectives allows Germany better to hide her actual game and even to make interim allies of the countries to which such an alliance is acceptable. In the long run they will surely be devoured, as were the others.

In the quarter century between 1914 and 1939, the immediate ends of Germany have changed somewhat, but the basic plan behind her actions has scarcely been altered. The venture of 1914 had failed by 1918. Was England called the major enemy during the World War—the enemy who was to be wiped out? This is of no importance. Since she proved to be the stronger, Germany would court her friendship over a period of years so that she might be neutralized.

To encourage England's confidence in her, Germany would first show a façade of peace, the German Republic. This was the strategy Germany employed. Through it she gained time to re-establish her forces. Then—since the façade had served its purpose and was now a nuisance—she removed it and erected another, more threatening than any of the ancient ones.

This façade is Hitler and Nazism—a façade very valuable today to the Prusso-Teutonic forces, but which could be sacrificed over night as the others were, if such sacrifice would be to the advantage of the real leaders of Germany.

We shall try in the pages which follow to show the means by which the Prusso-Teutonic forces succeeded in maintaining their position in the years between the two World Wars and how they allowed Hitler to accede to "power," so that he might *serve* them.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE FEHME MURDERS

THE DEFEAT OF 1918 wrought considerable changes in the political organization of Germany. The monarchic system having borne the entire blame for the débâcle, the German people now carried through their democratic revolt. The Hohenzollerns were banished and the Republic was set up.

The Prusso-Teutonic caste, composed of Junkers, officers and officials, had been well served by the Hohenzollerns. First they brought about the secularization of the Order's State and later, on the initiative of Bismarck, achieved complete Prusso-Teutonic seizure of the whole of Germany. The Hohenzollerns retained the confidence of this caste until 1918. But when the World War ended in defeat for Germany, the Hohenzollern family became a most convenient scapegoat. A few individual members of the Prusso-Teutonic caste continued sentimental relations with Wilhelm II. For the group as a whole, however, the Emperor no longer existed, since to disciples of the cruel Teutonic philosophy any defeat is tantamount to suicide.

Germany seemed to be passing through the same transformation which both America and France had experienced almost a century and a half before. The Rightist parties, whose popularity had greatly declined in the course of these events, could not muster enough strength to oppose this political development. But the Prusso-Teutonic forces, accustomed to working in obscurity and to preparing their positions long in advance, did not feel vanquished by all this. To them the defeat represented a temporary setback to the execution of their plans.

Sacrifice of the Hohenzollerns seemed to appease the wrath

of the world; so that the Prusso-Teutonic clique was able to reorganize its forces quietly and prepare to resume control of the affairs of Germany. It was concerned, first of all, with terrorizing those unfortunates who had had, after the defeat of 1918, the unhappy idea of introducing a democratic regime and spirit into Germany. It was also necessary to eliminate the leaders of the democratic parties.

To gain time it would be necessary to hold friendly relations with England for a while and in the meantime to prepare for other conquests. But for many years the Prusso-Teutonic forces could pay no attention to foreign politics because internal political problems in Germany more urgently demanded solutions, and these had to be worked out methodically.

Could the Rightist parties, many of whose members were faithful servants of the Prusso-Teutonic forces, no longer be useful in the Reichstag, as in Bismarck's time? Granted—but what difference would this make? The Prusso-Teutonics did not intend to bother with the Reichstag—they would use methods completely opposite to those of parliament. Moreover, methods of this type would be closer to the traditions of the Prusso-Teutonic group than would any parliamentary procedure. Bismarck himself had accepted the parliamentary system only after much hesitation and with a certain amount of resignation. He had found it a difficult task to get this system accepted by his Junker friends. These new methods, which at the same time were very old, called for *terror through assassination*.

#### *Familiar Memories*

The Prusso-Teutonic forces, never acting openly, had the ingenious idea of reviving and making use of a Germanic institution of the Middle Ages, the Fehme. The Fehme was a sort of secret society which set itself up as a tribunal in all

matters. Its members were at the same time judges and executors of decisions.

In the three and a half years following the Armistice, from 1919 to June 24, 1922, the date of Rathenau's murder, some 354 political assassinations were perpetrated in Germany by the various "national revival" organizations. For only two of these crimes, the assassinations of Rathenau and Eisner, was any punishment meted out, and this was extremely light. Despite the fact that the various State police forces were officially republican organizations, usually they allowed the assassins to escape. In those cases, however, where the killers were actually arrested by overzealous officials, they were acquitted, or at best fined or condemned to imprisonment for a ridiculously small period on some silly ground, for example, the carrying of guns without a permit.

Count Arco, who had assassinated Eisner, leader of the Bavarian Left, was sentenced to death in January, 1920, but his sentence was commuted to imprisonment for life. This actually consisted in his doing some vague farm work near the prison. Finally on April 13, 1924, his sentence was suspended and he was set free. Shortly thereafter he was appointed director of the "Sueddeutsche Lufthansa," a major aviation concern controlled by the Reich.

These assassinations occurred with a regularity that baffled the general public, and yet they seemed to be part of an organized plan. Soon people began to speak of the "Fehme" in connection with these crimes, comparing the assassinations with the "executions" of the notorious secret German tribunal of past centuries—which the recent crimes resembled in many respects. In 1920, 1922, 1924 and in 1931, the German writer, E. J. Gumbel, published works which attempted to expose the organizations responsible for these outrages, and to draw the attention of the German public to the criminal complicity of the judicial machinery of the Reich and the other authorities with the Fehme murderers. In his four books, Gumbel assem-



bled considerable documentation concerning these post-war "executions." But his appeals and warnings were in vain, and the Fehme was able to continue its activities unhindered.

Despite public belief to the contrary, Gumbel did not relate these crimes to the blood tribunal of the Middle Ages. He considered the word "Fehme" simply an expression well chosen by the murderers to point up the actual resemblance between the two institutions. We shall probably never know exactly what information was contained in the heavy file the Bavarian deputy, Karl Gareis,\* had planned to present to the Bavarian Landtag concerning the political crimes of that time. A few days after he announced his intention of discussing the material he had assembled, he was shot to death in the street. The two men who participated in his assassination escaped and were never apprehended. In any case, we know this much: that Gareis had spoken of a "conspiracy going back a thousand years" which he intended to reveal. He must have been referring to one of the only two German organizations which stemmed from the Middle Ages: the Fehme and the Teutonic Order.

The history of the Fehme tribunals was independent of that of the Teutonic Knights. The Order had always claimed that it did not have to submit to the jurisdiction of the terrible Fehme. But actually the frightful practices of the Fehme had widely penetrated among the Order's circles. Kotzebue related, in speaking of the Grand Master Winrich von Kniprode, that at his time many Comthurs (regional commanders) of the Order were members of the Fehme, and the Grand Master himself was suspected of being one of its leaders. "One morning, two Knights who were beyond reproach were found hanging from an oak tree outside Marienburg—marked by the Fehme," says Kotzebue. "The Grand Master was asked to prosecute the murderers. He did nothing. The others, en-

\* See page 3.

raged, again requested action from him, and now he declared in dead earnest: 'One should abstain from passing judgment on such things.'"

After the seventeenth century, the Fehme was rarely heard from. Finally, people believed that the organization must have been dissolved, despite the fact that no laws or decrees suspending or condemning its practices had ever been promulgated. But whether or not the Fehme, as a regularly constituted organization, actually survived until 1918 is of but relative importance. In any event, its Middle Age practices were well remembered in the spoken traditions of many German families. When, following the Armistice of 1918, the Prussian Junker organizations decided to revive these bloody practices, they were well aware of the traditional streams that might be tapped in the interests of their cause. They used methods which evoked familiar memories throughout Germany.

#### *A Thousand-Year-Old Conspiracy*

What were these notorious traditions of the Fehme? They were founded on the old German law giving all "manorial lords" the right to judge freely over their serfs. This practice was maintained particularly in Westphalia. In a later, undetermined period\* it gave rise to the secret tribunal of the "Holy Fehme"—a tribunal which meted out but a single kind of punishment, the death sentence.

The Fehme originated from a pre-Christian, pagan moral conception, despite the fact that it claimed to be Christian. This institution served no more of a religious purpose than did the Teutonic Order, despite the religious façade which both organizations had found useful at their inception. (At the time of their foundation all institutions had to be Christian.) The Fehme represented a revolt of Teutonic law against pre-

\* German historians have placed the origin of the Fehme at various times between the reign of Charlemagne and the fifteenth century.

vailing Roman law, which latter was the basic code of the official German tribunals. The existence of the Fehme was known, but its operations were secret. It was subject to no authority except the Emperor's. The latter, at a time not clearly defined in German history, had delegated this authority to the Archbishop of Cologne who was head of the Fehme, at least nominally. Indeed the Fehme tribunal had among its principal official tasks the punishment of crimes against religion; but in practice its activity was entirely different.

The Fehme soon became simply a means of terror against all individuals who might be in personal conflict with members of this powerful secret organization. The Christian appearance it assumed was but a cloak; and, moreover, in no other Christian country was there a similar organization. The Fehme was of purely German conception, and the morality underlying its judgments was a Teutonic morality in direct contradiction to the principles and customs of Christianity. In common with the Teutonic Order the Fehme affected Christian aims; yet beneath this disguise—so suitable to the times—it pursued ends which were purely Teutonic. *The survival in Germany of the traditions of these two institutions based on pre-Christian morality—the Teutonic Order and the Fehme—provides the only satisfactory explanation for a series of contradictory phenomena by which Germany, in her recent history, has so frequently confused the people of western civilization.*

Fundamentally, therefore, we witness the clash of two opposing civilizations—and it was our fond illusion that one of these ceased to exist in the far distant past. This error comes from the fact that *since the period of the Christianization of Germany, the civilization of the barbaric ages has been hidden beneath a Christian cloak and has survived there. In this manner it has succeeded in preserving its institutions for ends clearly opposed to those of Christianity.*

It is in facts such as these that one must seek the explanation

of the "thousand-year-old conspiracy" which Deputy Gareis had dared to mention—thus sealing his own fate.

### *The Red Earth*

The tribunals of the Middle Age Fehme operated in Westphalia, but they claimed jurisdictional power over all of Germany. Westphalian "Freigraf" presided over the meetings of the Fehme. They said that their families had received this privilege from Charlemagne, and that they had to hold sessions exclusively on Westphalian soil. In the characteristically symbolic language of all Middle Ages secret associations, Westphalian soil was designated as "Die rote Erde" (the Red Earth)—(an expression associated perhaps with the blood spilled in the course of Fehme judgments) and it was stated that the tribunal of the Fehme was always to hold court on "Red Earth." (It is interesting to note that one of the most influential Nazi newspapers, published in Westphalia, is called *Die Rote Erde.*)

In the course of judgment, the Freigraf was assisted by the *Freischoeffen* (jurors). It was under the name "Freischoeffe" that each Fehme member was known. All Fehme members were therefore qualified to participate in judgment. But the *Freischoeffen* were not only judges or jurors; they were hangmen as well. In effect they were charged with executing judgments pronounced by themselves or by other *Freischoeffen*.

At one time it was estimated that there were over 100,000 *Freischoeffen* in all of Germany. Actually, while the Fehme tribunal functioned only in Westphalia, the *Freischoeffen*, who were its police and executionary organs, were present everywhere, scattered throughout the various German countries. The *Freischoeffen* kept their functions absolutely secret, identifying each other by secret signs. But even if they were not recognized by the average citizens, everyone knew that they managed to lay hands on their victims, wherever

they might be hiding. Its occult aspect contributed largely to increasing the terror which the Fehme inspired over all of Germany.

There were a great number of Fehme tribunals in Westphalia. Generally they held sessions on some elevated spot beneath an old tree—preferably a linden. The Freigraf and his Freischoeffen sat there before a large table on which was placed an unsheathed sword and a rope. The plaintiff and the witnesses had to swear by the sword, while the rope was used for execution of sentence.

If a complaint against someone was made by a Freischoeffe before a Fehme tribunal (Freischoeffen alone were allowed to appear as plaintiffs before the Fehme) a summons was issued against the accused. The latter rarely responded to the summons since it was well known with what difficulty acquittal was obtained; and further that but one type of punishment was decreed by the Fehme—the death penalty.

If the accused did not make an appearance, the plaintiff had the right to bring him in by force from any section of Germany, seizing him with the assistance of his "Eideshelfer" (sworn deputies), who were witnesses in support of the original complaint and who were, in addition, his deputies.

Originally it seems that only two witnesses for the plaintiff were necessary, but later the number was raised to six. The defendant might try to clear himself by having his own Eideshelfer, or "witnesses of defense," sworn in in greater number than the witnesses of accusation sworn in for the plaintiff. But the latter could neutralize such effect by increasing in turn the number of his own witnesses. The number of witnesses allowed to the defense and the prosecution was fixed by law as two, six, thirteen or twenty. If one party produced two witnesses, the other party had to produce not less than six in order to have a chance to win his case, since any other number would not be recognized by the court. In turn the opposing party had to produce thirteen witnesses, so that he might

win at least a temporary advantage from the other side. His opponent, finally, in order to win his case, would have to produce twenty. If the plaintiff succeeded in presenting twenty Freischoeffen in support of his complaint, no defense witnesses in greater number were allowed and a death sentence was made mandatory.

The witnesses had to swear to the effect that they knew the plaintiff well as an honest man and his word was good enough for them if he accused the defendant. On the other hand, witnesses for the defendant would swear that they knew him to be innocent. The plaintiffs and the defendants always had to swear in addition to their own witnesses. Consequently the total number of oaths administered was three and seven (numbers which appear frequently in the symbolism of the Middle Ages), or fourteen and twenty-one (multiples of seven). This all made for progressive "outbidding" in the number of witnesses. It was understood, however, that witnesses for either side had to be Freischoeffen. For one who was not himself an influential Freischoeffe it was obviously difficult to find sufficient numbers of other Freischoeffen prepared to swear on his behalf. Since the plaintiff was of necessity a Freischoeffe, the defendant, even if he was himself a member of the Fehme and particularly if he was not, was already at a disadvantage when he presented himself before the tribunal.

Where the defendant was present, the death sentence was carried out at once. The Freischoeffen, co-judges of the tribunal, seized the condemned man and hanged him from the nearest tree.

If the accused deemed it prudent to stay away, or if the summons could not be served on him, the Freigraf, president of the tribunal, would call for a "heimliche Acht" or "secret session." Indeed it was considered important to keep the procedures secret, particularly in cases where the accused was absent. This was to prevent the condemned man from learning of the sentence, which would enable him to hide out in an

effort to avoid execution. If, after convening in secret session, it was noticed that an outsider, a non-Freischoeffe, remained in the vicinity (every outsider was supposed to leave), the Freigraf would stand up, call the man, place the rope around the neck of the unfortunate fellow and have him hanged from the nearest tree by the Freischoeffen. Such action was taken even where the outsider did not realize that he might be trespassing.

After having ascertained that the defendant had not appeared, the Freigraf had his name called out four times, and then asked if anyone were present to defend the accused. Next, the plaintiff swore to the truth of his accusation, and his witnesses in turn took an oath, declaring that they believed the plaintiff incapable of perjury. The proof was thus considered sufficient, and sentence was pronounced.

#### *The Knife in the Tree*

According to ancient law-books of the Fehme, the Freigraf pronounced sentence in the following formula:

"The defendant by the name of 'X': I hereby deprive him of peace and of the rights and liberties granted by Kaiser Charlemagne and approved by Pope Leo; and further attested under oath by all princes, nobles, knights and vassals, freemen and Freischoeffen in Westphalia; and depose him and set him outside of all peace, all liberty and all rights, by virtue of the King's ban and malediction, abandoning him to the greatest misery and disgrace; and make him unworthy, outlawed, deprived of his seal, dishonorable, without peace and not entitled to share in the common law; and abduct him and 'verfehme' him [put him under the curse of the Fehme] according to the rules of the 'heimliche Acht' [secret tribunal]; and vow his neck to the rope and his corpse to the beasts and the birds of the air—to be eaten by them until nothing remains; and commit his soul to God in Heaven in

His authority; and vacate his life and property; and his wife shall be widowed and his children orphans."

Here is the procedure which followed, according to the prescriptions contained in the books of the Fehme:

"The Freigraf shall take the rope which is braided from willow switches and throw it outside the tribunal, and then all Freischoeffen standing in presence of the tribunal shall spit, as though the outlaw were to be hanged within that very hour. Following this, the Freigraf shall command all Freigrafen and Freischoeffen, reminding them of their oaths and their honor as members of the 'heimliche Acht,' obliging them, the moment they have seized the outlaw, to hang him from the nearest tree, according to all their strength and might."

The Freigraf now handed the plaintiff a document which by his seal confirmed the sentence, and in which all Fehme members were requested to lend him their support in the execution of sentence. The bearer of this document departed immediately in search of his victim, being careful not to mention his mission to anyone, with the exception of other Freischoeffen, lest the condemned be warned in time, and flee from punishment. Frequently the condemned lived in a part of Germany at some distance from Westphalia. This made no difference, since Freischoeffen were found everywhere, and it was the duty of each, were he so requested, to assist in the execution. He was first to look over the official sentence which bore the seal of the Freigraf; or if such document were lacking, it would suffice for three other Freischoeffen to swear before him that the individual being pursued had actually been outlawed by the Fehme. Having thus received the requested proof, he could not neglect his duty, even if the condemned were his best friend or his own brother.

The execution was usually carried out by three or four Freischoeffen. They would seize the condemned, who in most cases was not, until that moment, aware of his having been

sentenced by the Holy Fehme. Without further ado he was then hanged from the nearest tree. In order to make clear that this was no ordinary crime but an act of the Fehme, a knife was stuck into the tree. Where the condemned resisted, the Freischoeffen had the right to kill him in any manner possible. In such cases they would hang his cadaver—and, as usual, stick the knife into the tree.

It happened from time to time that a Freischoeffe, having learned of the condemnation of one of his friends, would try to warn him discreetly so that he might escape, even though he knew that he thus risked his own life. The harmless words pronounced casually: "It's just as well to eat one's bread elsewhere than here," became a formula whose significance was understood by non-initiates. Such was the fear inspired by the Fehme over all Germany that if these words were addressed to any man—even if he were the most influential citizen in town—and if he understood their meaning, he would gather whatever possessions he could and overnight would become a vagabond, travelling under an assumed name, living the rest of his days far from his wife and children.

If it became known that someone had been outlawed by the Fehme, no other individual would dare to help him, for by being seen in the company of someone sought by the Fehme he would be risking his life. The condemned man, abandoned by all, would hide where he could until he was finally discovered by the Fehme.

The range of crimes coming under the jurisdiction of the Fehme was extremely wide. In line with contemporary thought, crimes against religion and the Ten Commandments are mentioned first, despite the fact that no evidence is found that the Fehme ever functioned as a religious tribunal. Following this are enumerated "all crimes against honor and law—treason, murder, robbery, perjury, defamation, rape, and abuse of power." The intentions of those who had originally assigned to the Fehme jurisdiction over these crimes were no

doubt excellent, but in practice anyone coming in personal conflict with a member of the Fehme risked condemnation by the blood tribunal; for it was always simple to discover a "crime against honor" as a basis for accusation, and an influential Freischoeffe had no difficulty in finding others to present as witnesses, supporting his accusations.

### *The Noose Around The Neck*

The slightest betrayal of Fehme secrets by a Freischoeffe was punished by death, and in such cases execution took place without a trial. On this subject we read the following in the Fehme law-books:

"If a Freischoeffe brings into the open the secrets and password of the 'secret tribunal' [heimliche Acht] or tells outsiders anything of this, whether small or large portions, then he shall be seized without trial by the Freigraf and Freischoeffen who will tie his hands together before him, place a cloth over his eyes, throw him on his belly and rip his tongue from out of his throat; a three-strand rope is to be slipped around his neck and he shall be hanged seven feet higher than a condemned 'Verfehmt', outlawed criminal."

Non-initiates who tried to discover the secrets of the Fehme, or who simply dared to glance at a Fehme document, were led before the tribunal and executed on the spot. Those books and archives of the Fehme which have survived until today carry a strict warning that anyone opening them who is not a Freischoeffe is subject to jurisdiction of the secret tribunal. The fear which such methods inspired was so great that even in the nineteenth century one could still find unopened Fehme documents in the German archives, their Fehme seals unbroken. They bear the inscription: "No one is allowed to read, or to have read to him this letter, unless he be a true Freischoeffe of the secret tribunal [der heimlichen beschlossenen Acht] of the Holy Roman Empire."

The Freischoeffen were granted such broad powers that they could execute any man, even without trial before the tribunal, if three Freischoeffen saw the accused in the very act of committing a crime punishable by the Fehme. Further, the confession of a crime was considered equivalent to its actually having been witnessed. Thus if someone boasted in the presence of several persons that he had committed any of the crimes under the jurisdiction of the Fehme, without realizing that at least three of such individuals were Freischoeffen, the latter were required—at the first opportunity they might find to do so without being discovered—to seize the man and hang him from the nearest tree. We can well imagine the number of abuses to which such methods gave rise.

The terror spread by the Fehme proved at the same time to be its best recruiting agent. To be a member of the Fehme was considered insurance, at least to a certain extent, against being unjustly condemned by the secret tribunal. In effect, it was always easier for a Freischoeffe to defend himself than it was for an outsider. In the early days, when a Freischoeffe was accused he could clear his name by swearing his innocence. Later this advantage was withdrawn, and all defendants, regardless of their affiliation, had to present a sufficient number of witnesses in their defense. Yet obviously an influential Freischoeffe would much more easily find a great number of witnesses among his fellow Freischoeffen than would a non-member of the Fehme.

While in the early days, the Freigrafen had seen to it that only men of unimpeachable virtue were to be admitted to Fehme membership, at a later time men of doubtful moral character invaded the ranks of the Freischoeffen. The opportunity to do as one pleased was so appealing that all sorts of adventurers did everything in their power to become members of the Fehme. One can visualize the reign of terror which followed as a consequence, and the blackmail, abuse, and mean

vengeance which it was possible to practice under the cloak of the Fehme. A man innocent of any crime would awaken to find a summons stuck to his door by some unknown person, calling for his appearance on a specific day before this or that tribunal of the Fehme. Such men knew that certain death awaited them there, and that they had better flee, or hide themselves as best they could. Another who had never been served by summons would one day unexpectedly be seized by three Freischoeffen, not aware that he had been condemned by the Fehme until he felt the noose around his neck.

#### *The Junkers and the Fehme*

This barbaric institution had terrorized Germany for centuries. One can imagine what services it could render to an unscrupulous group pursuing its own purposes and it was inevitable that such an institution should become the instrument for all sorts of private interests. When the Fehme returned to Germany following the 1918 Armistice, its reappearance was due to the initiative of two groups of interests, the Junkers and the leaders of heavy industry in Westphalia. In any event, every clue to the crimes of the revived Fehme uncovered by German tribunals or contemporary newspapers in their exposures led directly either to the Junkers or to heavy industry. Financing of the organizations responsible for the Fehmic crimes came from one or the other of these groups. A number of such crimes were committed on the very estates of the Junkers where numerous Fehme units were in hiding, available for Fehme activities. Moreover, the Prusso-Teutonic Junkers and officers seem to have been very directly involved in these crimes—to have been the immediate instigators. The rôle of the leaders of heavy industry was probably to finance such projects.

This cooperation consolidated the strange alliance which had been established between two such different economic

groups—Westphalian heavy industry and the Junkers—the existence of one based on the most modern industrial methods, of the other on the most backward exploitation.

In a description of the Prusso-Teutonic group of today, one really must include the heads of these industries, together with the Junkers, officers and officials previously cited. At the time of the Teutonic Order, nothing comparable to heavy industry existed. Today this industry is a force with which the descendants of the Order must reckon. There may have been some economic friction between the two groups during the period after World War I, when there was rivalry in connection with tariffs on agricultural products and manufactured goods. This, however, disappeared completely when Germany in 1931 established a system of absolute protectionism based on exchange control, which benefits equally both groups—big industrialists and landowners—at the expense of mercantile interests, small farmers and consumers. The warlike atmosphere dear to the Prusso-Teutonics is equally desirable to heavy industry, the logical supplier of munitions. (We shall draw no conclusions from the curious coincidence that the leaders of heavy industry in Germany are descendants of old Westphalian families. There is good reason to believe that in the Middle Ages their ancestors were members, perhaps even chiefs, of the Fehme movement, of Westphalian origin. In any case it is curious to note this fact concerning the alliance between the Junkers and heads of Westphalian heavy industry: these two groups are present-day descendants of men who participated in the two German institutions whose traditions most directly oppose Western civilization, the Teutonic Order and the Fehme.)

The renewal of the Fehme seemed to rest with the Junkers whose secret “self-defense” societies stemmed in a direct line from the ancient Society of Lizards and indirectly from the Teutonic Order. These societies were in a position to make an immediate decision to revive the Fehme terror—which was

indispensable to their aims—and then to organize it at once. Such a reign of terror would never have spread spontaneously, nor could it have resulted from the decision of a few members of the same caste on the spur of the moment.

The principal aim was to execute, one by one, the leaders of the young German Republic. Almost overnight the numerous sub-organizations, functioning under various names, became executors of the restored Fehme. Through their good offices hundreds of democratic leaders were put to death in post-war Germany. In the democratic nations outside of Germany, no attention was paid to these murders because they were considered a German “internal affair.”

All Fehme assassinations after 1918 can be traced back to the same organizations. The two groups which were the executors *par excellence* of Fehmic crimes were the “C” *Organization* (Consul) and the *Roszbach Organization*. All clues led to them. But the men active in both these organizations often figured as well in the activities of other societies or associations, all of which seemed to be pursuing the same ends and carrying out the same instructions. E. J. Gumbel, recognized specialist in the history of German political crimes after 1918, whom we have mentioned earlier, explains as follows the entanglement of interests existing among these various groups:

“The official program as well as the name [of these organizations] changes in accordance with what seems politically the most appealing at the moment. The real tendency, however, remains the same. Therefore it would be wrong to assume that all these societies existed individually side by side. In many cases one rose from another, and societies with entirely different names might be identical. For the same individuals made it a practice to hold simultaneous membership in a whole list of associations.

“The constant change of names often serves the purpose of veiling the complete structure of the organizations so as to

make practically ineffective any dissolution by order of the government or under pressure of public opinion. The purpose of the founding of new societies under new names and with new members was often to exclude those individuals who were no longer considered completely trustworthy, without provoking the enmity of such individuals by specifically expelling them."

The number of persons engaged in these activities cannot properly be estimated by adding up the members of the various existing associations, since there are numerous duplications in their lists. We can figure that at the most 200,000 individuals were active members of such organizations.

Here are the names of some of the societies of this character which abounded at this epoch. They often assumed professional or athletic guises, but always pursued the same secret ends. (Certain associations mentioned in this list preferred to keep their very existence secret):

Academic Werdandi Guild, General German Peoples Turnverein, Old Comrades (secret), Andreas-Hofer Bund, Arminius Bund, Arian Wandervogel, Bartelsbund, Bismarck Youth of the National German People's Party, German Veterans' Bund, Friends of Edda Bund, Bund of the Faithful, German Sailors Bund, New Pathfinders' Bund, German Wrestling Bund, German National Training Bund, German National Lawyers' Bund, Franconian Bund, Bund for German Rebirth, Bund for German Public Teachers, Christian German Revival, German Academic Guild of Nibelungen, German Oak, German Bund for Local Defense, German Women's Society of Ostmark, German Herold, German High School Circle, German Sailors, German Order, East German Bund, German Ostmark Society, German Employees' Bund, German Writing Bund, German Day, German Society for Rural Relief and Local Care, German Arms Bund, Society of German Faith, German Order's State, German Social

Employment Society, German Social Party, German Pathfinders' Bund, German National Academic Society, Siegfried Youth of the German Peoples, German National Youth Bund, German National Writers' Bund, German National Students' Bund, German Economics Bund, German Wandervogel, Eros (secret), Brotherhood of Travellers, United Field Artillery, Pine Tree Society, Irminsul Boys' Society, Frontbund (secret), Germania, Germania Ring, Germanic Faith Society, Germanic Conscience Society, Germanic Youth Bund, Society of Friends of Conscience, Society of National Germanic Morality, Geusen, Grail Bund, Seekers of the Homeland, Germans' Bund, Germans' Order (secret), Hubertus, Youth Group of German Kyffhäuser Bund, Jungborn Bund, Young German Pathfinders' Bund, Young Teachers' Bund of Baldu, Young National Bund, Innklub, Small Arms Society (secret), Knappenschaft, Kronacher Bund, Kultur Council, Mitgart Bund, National Society of German Officers, New Gobineau Society, Non-Jewish Bund, Aid Society (secret), Patriotic Veterans' Relief Society, Black-White-Red Reichbund, Reichsbund of Former Cadets, Reichs Gegenzins Bund, Reichs Hammer Bund, Reichs Officers' Bund, Order of German Legion of Honor, Schlageter Memorial Bund, Silver Shield (secret), Signal Bell, Tejabund, Bund of German Artists of Bavaria, Bund for a Better Life, Theodor Koerner Turnverein, The Bold (secret), Prince Bismarck Youth Bund of the Fatherland, Society of Friends of German Art, German Students' Society, National Women's Group, National Wandervogel Bund.

Through these societies the conspiracy secured useful associates in all circles of the population, but to these were revealed only small portions of the true aims. The real "acting agents" seemed to come from the Consul and Rossbach organizations, at least insofar as the actual assassinations were concerned.



*Army and Navy Assassins*

The assassins were all former officers, and in exceptional cases non-commissioned officers. When this curious fact was revealed in the course of the various trials and investigations concerning Fehme crimes in Germany, the public accepted without a murmur the too easy explanation that the war had lowered the moral standards of the combatants. In reality this state of affairs was due to nothing so simple, but to deeper causes: the Prussian officers, faithful members of the Prusso-Teutonic Caste were themselves obliged to take charge of these delicate tasks of the Fehme assassinations, since they were the only "men of arms" within the caste. In the traditional way of doing things, the other Junkers' rôle was to finance the various secret organizations with the aid of heavy industry and to provide them with hideouts on their estates; the officials who were devoted to the common cause were actively represented among the various police organizations, where they could help the assassins to escape, or if that proved impossible, to arrange, as prosecutors or judges, either their acquittal or their sentencing to an easy term. By 1918 Prusso-Teutonic affiliates could be found here and there among the officials of all German countries, even in places quite distant from Prussia. Since 1870 the Prussian spirit had had time to spread to a certain extent all over Germany.

The "bloody task," the actual killing, was considered the privilege of the officers—the descendants of the ancient Knights of the Order. The C Organization consisted primarily of former naval officers, the Rossbach Organization of army officers. Had a regular air force existed at the time of the first World War, it is probable that a third organization would have been formed, to be staffed by officers formerly active in that branch of service.

In 1920, the anti-Republic factions in Germany attempted

a vague *coup d'Etat*, known as the "Kapp Putsch." Corvette Captain Ehrhardt participated in this together with his naval brigade. Ehrhardt had succeeded in keeping this brigade in existence after 1918. He kept it functioning as an illegal organization. Its financing came through unknown interests whose identity can easily be guessed. A writ of arrest was issued against him in 1920 by authorities of the Republic but it was never executed. While the writ was still in effect Ehrhardt moved freely about the corridors of the Reichswehr Ministry. The official purpose of his discussions in the Ministry was "to find employment for his men." His real purpose was to elaborate quietly a scheme for collaboration between the Reichswehr and the future organization he had decided to found by using the men of his brigade as a nucleus. Since direct action in the "Kapp Putsch" had not had satisfactory results, he planned from that time on to devote his efforts to under-cover action. The newly created "C Organization," or "Consul Organization," was named for Ehrhardt who was its leader: in the secret code of the association each member had a special name and Ehrhardt was called "Consul."

Outstanding Germans often tried to fight the Consul Organization and the other secret associations, but in vain. On September 22, 1921, Dr. Trunk, President of the State of Baden, made the following revelations in the Diet of Baden concerning the by-laws and aims of the C Organization:

"The by-laws call for:

"(a) Spiritual aims: development and dissemination of national\* thought; struggle against all anti-nationals and internationalists; struggle against Judaism, Social-Democracy and

\* The word, "national," is used here as the antonym of "international." The German nationalistic circles considered the men behind the Weimar Constitution as "internationalists" and they looked upon themselves as the only ones who thought in "national" terms.

the radical left parties; struggle against the anti-nationally conceived Weimar Constitution by word, writing and action; enlightenment of the widest possible circles of the population as to the real nature of this Constitution; support of the only possible constitution for Germany, one based on Federalism.\*

“(b) Material aims: Organization of men among the armed forces determined to prevent the complete revolutionizing of Germany; the prevention, through constitution of a *national* government, of the recurrence of present-day conditions; and, as far as possible, the preservation of armed forces as well as armaments for the nation.

“The organization is a secret one, the members of which are bound for mutual defense and protection through a pact by which every member of the organization is assured of the utmost assistance from all other members. The members pledge themselves to become a force to be reckoned with, so that when necessity, the honor of the Fatherland, and the realization of their aims demand it, they shall stand in the united strength of their closed ranks. Every member pledges absolute obedience to the organization’s leaders. Jews and in general men of foreign races are excluded from membership in the organization. Membership expires: (a) through death; (b) because of dishonorable activity; (c) because of disobedience to the leaders; (d) through voluntary withdrawal. *All members involved under (b) and (c) and all traitors are to be disposed of by the Fehme.* The pledge of allegiance reads: ‘I declare on my word of honor that I am of German descent. I pledge on my word of honor, and through a handclasp, that I will subject myself to the by-laws

\* So long as the central power in Germany, following the events of 1918, rested in the hands of republican groups, the reactionary groups called themselves “Federalists.” When, following the rise of Hitler, power fell into their hands, they were to become supporters of centralization to a much greater extent than even the republicans.

and will act in accordance with them. I vow absolute obedience to the highest Leader of the organization, and to observe utmost secrecy concerning all its affairs.’”

During the trial in 1924, following the assassination of Rathenau, a zealous Reich prosecutor, Ebermayer, spoke as follows about the activities of the C Organization:

“I believe it my duty to point out that during the time of the investigation of the case and even immediately before the trial, a certain number of facts were produced which permit us to suppose and almost to conclude that certain organizations and societies are hiding behind the accused—and I go further, that they have perhaps inspired their crimes. I must emphasize above all that in all political outrages of the last few years, in the assassination of Erzberger, in the outrages against Scheidemann and in the assassination of Rathenau, which concerns us here, the same circles—I might almost say the same individuals—have always been involved. In the assassination of Erzberger—Schulz and Tillessen play a rôle; in the attempt against the life of Scheidemann, the brother of Tillessen was active. Tillessen, Plaass, Fischer, Kern, Schulz, Techow—all these men are the same group. All have widespread personal contacts—either because they have known each other for a long time or because they are all members of the different organizations. Thus, whether or not it is to our liking, we gain the impression of running up against the links of a common chain—of a single association to which all these men are affiliated.”

During the trial, the C Organization was seldom mentioned by name. The fear which checked the witnesses, the prosecution and the judges in speaking of it was clearly evident. The presiding judge mentioned, however, that during the closed hearings which had been ordered, the relationship between the C Organization and the Reich Government was discussed.

Everyone understood that in reality the matter of discussion was the relationship between the C Organization and the Reichswehr—this in reference to secret rearmament. The trial was conducted in such a way as to establish that the C Organization had rendered important “patriotic” services in the cause of secret rearmament and that under these conditions it would be preferable not to insist on denouncing the assassinations, which were not crimes but Fehmic executions. Finally all the accused were set free.

It is illuminating that in the following year, during another trial, the same prosecutor, Ebermayer, referred to the C Organization in an entirely different manner. To his mind, now, the Organization was not carrying on “secret activity.” It is true that it was struggling against the Weimar Constitution, but it was doing so through “legal means.” The intimidation of the Fehme had had its effect on the good prosecutor Ebermayer during the time between these two trials.

It has been established that there was a close connection between the Consul Organization and a whole series of associations serving as its “front” from time to time: Brueder vom Stein, Hauptverband der Schlesier, Bund der Aufrechten, Jungdeutscher Orden, Verband nationalgesinnter Soldaten, Nationalbund deutscher Offiziere, Bayrische Holzverwertungsgesellschaft, Norddeutscher Bund, a number of student societies and finally the *Wikingbund* (Viking Bund), an association which had some importance.

In 1923, the Press Bureau of the Thuringian government characterized this *Wikingbund* as follows:

“It appears that the National Association of German Soldiers, which was suppressed by law, has given rise to a substitute organization, the so-called *Wikingbund*, which at the same time functions as a branch of the Ehrhardt Brigade [Consul Organization]. Characteristic of the way in which ordinary members are deceived is the fact that, according to a declaration by a leader of the organization, no information

is allowed to be given out to unimportant members as to the connection between the *Wikingbund* and the C Organization. The *Wikingbund* as the ‘latest edition’ of the Consul Organization operating in Thuringia, inclusive of Prussian provinces, has been divided into eleven district sections which are directed from the regional office in the city of Erfurt. According to statements of individuals involved it has come out that there also exists a Fehme within the organization. The duty of the Fehme is to preserve through the most rigorous methods the secret character of the organization and of its activities. Members who are suspected of being traitors or ‘stool pigeons’ are shot, according to various statements of people who have participated in such actions. In the well-known manner of such bunds the members have to swear ‘life and death’ obedience to their leaders. It has been further established, according to confessions of individuals who have been arrested, that one of the purposes of these organizations is also to put out of the way any leader or statesman of the Republic who upsets their plans.”

The by-laws of the *Wikingbund*, drawn up in 1923, contain conclusive proof as to the connections of this Bund (and indirectly of the C Organization) with the *National-Socialist Party*. Among these by-laws is written:

“The Bund is an association of industrious German men; it strives on a national basis, for a moral, cultural, economic and political rebirth of the German people. The leader of the Bund is its founder, who shall have absolute authority. Membership is open to anyone who is above reproach and who is of Aryan German descent. On entering the Bund, each new member must take the oath of allegiance to the leader and his aims, pledging himself irrevocably to obedience. Sentences must be executed by those chosen for this purpose by the leader. *The political program is that of the National Socialist German Workers’ Party.*\* The Bund is a militant patriotic

\* The italics are mine. P.W.

organization." This is signed: "B. Reiter, Leader and Founder of the *Wikingbund*."

### *A Job Well Done*

The C Organization as a unit, or its members, can be traced in most of the post-war assassinations of outstanding political personalities. In the regulations of the revived Fehme, where the "punishment of traitors" is mentioned, not only those who actually betray secrets of any of the organizations involved are intended. All who wanted Germany to take the path of democracy were considered "traitors"—traitors because they opposed the direction desired by the Prusso-Teutonics, the only direction "worthy of a German"—according to the very particular understanding of this clique. Since they were traitors, they must be killed. . . . And as a result of this reasoning, the German democratic leaders were all disposed of, one by one. Of course the Fehme had even better reasons for acting promptly in cases such as that of the Bavarian Deputy Gareis in 1921, when Gareis threatened to expose the Fehme crimes and those responsible for them.

It must be admitted that the methods applied were effective. By 1920 all the democratic parties had lost their leaders through assassination. Those who remained at the head of these parties were men who had neither power nor prominence—and they were terrorized. (It is thus not surprising that the German emigration which followed Hitler's accession to power has not yet been able to produce an able leader from among the German statesmen of the different democratic parties.)

Thus the stage was set for the seizure of power by a group which would control Germany according to the desires of the Prusso-Teutonics and which would serve as a front to the latter. The Nazi Party, which was one of the candidates for this rôle, was mentioned more and more frequently. Less

and less was said about the Fehme crimes and the Consul Organization. Since the tasks entrusted to this organization had been finished the latter could now sink into oblivion.

By 1930 we can find the men who had been Ehrhardt's trusted lieutenants occupying important posts in the Navy, in the Administrative offices of the Admiralty and in the General Staff of the Fleet. Werner Tillessen, one of the foremost "men of many tasks" in the Consul Organization, whose name, together with that of his brother, had figured frequently during the course of most of the trials involving Fehme assassinations, was by then Vice-Admiral. Services rendered were well paid! When the officers had accomplished their tasks as Fehme assassins, they returned to the Army or the Navy—holding higher rank than before because of time passed in the performance of "duties of a special nature."

### *The Black Reichswehr*

While the staff of the Consul Organization consisted of naval officers, that of the Rossbach Organization was composed of army officers. Both organizations worked hand and glove. No difficulties arose between them, and from time to time they lent each other their strong-arm men. The absence of conflict between these two terrorist groups, which one might expect to find competing with one another, can easily be explained by the fact that both organizations were acting in separate spheres but on behalf of the same controlling interests.

The C Organization was concerned primarily with disposing of major political figures—men in the public eye. The Rossbach Organization was dedicated to the execution of lesser lights, who might hinder the Junkers as well as the day-by-day work of secret rearmament. The C Organization functioned throughout Germany, and was particularly active in areas where a certain strengthening of the democratic

parties was noticed. The Rossbach Organization was more active in Prussia itself, looking after the local interests of the Junkers, on whose estates the units of the organization had been set up. Therefore the connections of the Rossbach Organization with the Junkers were of necessity more apparent than those maintained with the same interests by the C Organization.

The Rossbach Organization was founded in December, 1918, by Lieutenant Gerhard Rossbach of the 175th Infantry Regiment with the remnants of his regiment. He tried to keep together the men who rallied around him after the débâcle by hiding them on the estates of the East-Prussian landlords. Out of this a few months later Rossbach formed a "Sturmtruppe" (assault troop), now admitting to membership officers and soldiers from all the armed forces. The Rossbach forces called themselves an "Arbeitsgemeinschaft" (work cooperative) to conceal the military character of their organization from the Armistice Commission. They were to be placed in small units on the estates of the Junkers where they would carry out their activities.

The Junkers had decided to hide on their estates the implements of war which the army was able to salvage after Germany's defeat. For the Prusso-Teutonic these were a powerful trump, to be used in the future reconstruction of their forces. They had no doubts as to this reconstruction, although they did not yet see clearly the exact form it would take.

It is enlightening that the secret rearming, which was being carried on in defiance of the Armistice Commission, took place mainly on the very estates of the Junkers (*i.e.*, in the only section of Germany controlled entirely by the Prusso-Teutonic). It is also interesting that all Junkers thus placed their lands at the disposal of the cause without a moment's hesitation; and that not one traitor was to be found among them who dared to oppose the shouldering of these obligations or to carry tales to the democratic parties. The reason

for this lay in the strict secret organization of the Junkers. If this secret organization had not existed, a simple "community of interests," would certainly not have been enough to force decisions so rapidly and to insure secrecy and perfect synchronization of all actions.

The only leakage which the Junkers had reason to fear might have come from their farm workers. The latter, of course, unlike the Junkers, were not bound by the secrecy of the Junker organizations. They were, further, in a position to know and reveal the spots where arms had been hidden. It was a question, then, of terrorizing these workers and impressing on them the fact that by talking too much they would be risking the wrath of the Fehme. The organization of this Fehme unit was the task of the various "work cooperatives" composed of ex-service men. Among these "cooperatives," the Rossbach Organization soon became outstanding by virtue of the initiative and ruthlessness of its leader.

Collectively these secret units were known as the "Black Reichswehr." Indeed, their purpose was to keep together the staffs of the former army. These staffs could not remain in the official Reichswehr, which had been considerably reduced in accordance with the terms of the Armistice. A close liaison was maintained between the two Reichswehr. This was considerably facilitated by the fact that officers of both were serving the same cause and obeying the same orders.

#### *An Honorable Enterprise*

The Rossbach Organization established central offices in Berlin. It was from here that recruiting was carried on and that contact was maintained with leaders of the Reichswehr. These offices themselves organized a front known as the "Deutsche Auskunftei" (German Information Bureau). The Deutsche Auskunftei was under the official direction of Lieutenant Rossbach, and one can imagine what was meant by the

official description of the services rendered: "Investigations, Shadowing, Escorted Journeys." The prospectus of the bureau contained the following directions:

#### DEUTSCHE AUSKUNFTEI

Main Business Office: Berlin Wannsee, Otto W. Erichstrasse 10;  
 Open Day and Night. Telephone Wannsee 613 and 793  
 Branch Office: Berlin W 62, Bayreutherstrasse 10—3rd floor.  
 Business Hours: 10—4. Telephone Steinplatz 11663  
 Agents and Representatives sent out on your request by phone  
 Private automobile service from Berlin or Wannsee Terminal on  
 request  
 Cable Address: Deutsche Auskunft Wannsee  
 Bank References: F. W. Krause & Co. Berlin W Behrenstrasse 2.  
 Industrie und Landwirtschafts Bank Berlin, Markgrafenstrasse  
 35  
 Criminal Division: Criminal Police Inspector Wilss (retired)  
 Political Division: Executive Director—First Lieutenant Rossbach  
 (retired)—Major von Berthold  
 Information, Stock Exchange and Cashiers' Division: Director M.  
 L. Eberhardt  
 Guards and Protection Division: First Lieutenant D. H. Lukash  
 (retired)  
 Legal Department: Major Bartold (retired)—Kurt Oskar Bark,  
 Editor  
 Telephone Service connects with all departments.

The German democratic press of that period tried in vain to unmask the Deutsche Auskunftei by demonstrating that all its resources were of Junker-Prussian origin; that it had been organized to provide those forces with strong-arm men—the so-called "detachments of guards" for their estates; and that it had been responsible for all Fehme assassinations in Prussia east of the Elbe.

If a Prussian landlord had the slightest difficulty with his farm workers, if he suspected them of wanting to organize a strike or of wishing to betray the rearmament activities, the

"Rossbach volunteers" would show up immediately and attack the workers, with clubs; they would not hesitate to kill those who might become too troublesome. All "volunteers" were armed with guns, knives and blackjacks. They were obedient to the strictest military discipline, going so far as to snap into "at attention" in the presence of their superior officers, although they were generally in mufti.

Despite the name, "Work Cooperative," they were not concerned with any actual work. In a tight spot, however, the Rossbach volunteers were prepared to furnish large armed forces at almost a moment's notice.

#### *Petty Executions*

The responsibility of the Rossbach Organization for some of the assassinations was clearly established in the course of trials which also ended without any significant results. The democratic press conducted inquiries and made some interesting revelations. Gumbel tried very hard to demonstrate the connecting links between all these Fehme assassinations but his efforts did not arouse public opinion.

In July, 1920, the non-commissioned officer Max Krueger, of the Rossbach corps stationed at Stecklin, learned that one of the farm workers, Willi Schmidt, age twenty, wanted to abandon his job—and that it was being whispered in the village that he intended to inform the police of the spot where certain secret arms had been cached. The local Fehme of the Rossbach corps decided to take action immediately.

Four members of the organization, Heines, Bandemer, Vogt and Ottow, paid a visit to Schmidt, pretending to be police inspectors. Intimidated, Schmidt left with them, supposedly to attend a hearing at the police station. Actually he was led to an isolated spot in the vicinity and there Ottow beat him over the head with a blackjack. It was decided to take him to the Kehrberg forest and his wounds were dressed. On the way

there Schmidt tried to draw the attention of passers-by and cried out: "They want to kill me." No one paid any attention to him.

Two other members of the Rossbach corps, Baer and Fraebel, now joined the others. At last Heines ordered Baer to shoot Schmidt. Baer could not quite make up his mind, so Heines himself shot at Schmidt twice. He was joined by Ottow, who also fired twice. Schmidt still had sufficient strength to cry out for help. He was knocked down and his face was pushed into the ground. Fraebel trampled on his head and finally Ottow finished him off with ten raps of the blackjack.

Baer now dug a pit in which the corpse was buried. But the pit was not deep enough. A few days later the knees of the victim pushed up out of the ground and people in the neighborhood began to speak of the assassination. After that the assassins went back to the grave and buried their victim in a much deeper pit.

Walter Cadow, age twenty-three, employed as overseer on an estate at Wismar in Mecklenburg, had been admitted into membership in the local Rossbach volunteers, having been a second lieutenant during the war. After some time he was suspected of intending to turn witness against the Rossbach Organization, in a trial concerning the Organization's activities, then in session.

On May 31, 1923, following previous arrangements, members of the local Fehme got him drunk, and then all his papers were removed. It was midnight. He was placed in a car with eight men, who, under the command of Second Lieutenant Hoess, held their guns against him. The car was driven out to the woods. Cadow was dragged out, stunned by blackjack blows, and, dripping with blood, was put back into the car. They now drove him to a clearing, where he was knocked to the ground. The entire gang trampled him with booted feet.

One of these men, Wiedemeyer, slit his throat, and Second Lieutenant Hoess finally killed him with a bullet in the head.

Jurisch, one of the members of this particular unit, later became remorseful and recounted the incident to the *Vorwaerts*—socialist newspaper of Berlin. The crime was thus brought to the attention of the attorney-general, who could not refuse to act. Two minor helpers in the assassination, as well as the informer, were arrested. Finally all three were released.

The local chief of the Rossbach Organization hurriedly transported those who had participated in the assassination to other estates in Upper Silesia. He thus made sure that the affair would have no further repercussions. Later it was learned that he reprimanded Hoess, leader of the unit, severely: "If you had been a member of the Rossbach Organization for a longer time, you would have known how such affairs should be handled. Two men and one bullet—at night in the woods—are all that is needed."

Around 1922-1923, the Rossbach Organization found means of introducing its methods into the Reichswehr itself. In numerous areas throughout Germany, local cells were organized within the regular army. These cells were named "Reichswehrblock Rossbach" (R. W. B. R.)—Rossbach Reichswehr Section. Indiscretions had exposed the relations between the Rossbach Organization and a certain regiment of Magdeburg. Following this, the local R. W. B. R. issued, in May, 1932, the following command (later revealed by the Left press):

"In the name of the Chief: In view of the prevailing espionage, the leaders have decided to form a so-called Fehme-unit. This will be composed only of trustworthy men, who have been trained in pistol shooting, and shall be under the direct command of the leaders. It will be the duty of the Fehme to observe the movement of those who appear suspect to the

leaders and to dispose of traitors as well as politically undesirable individuals. Because of the difficulties of this work, and the great demands it makes, only the most reliable and trustworthy men are to be chosen."

Fehme assassinations increased in number within the Reichswehr and the various Black Reichswehr organizations. The magazine *Das andere Deutschland* published in its issue of January, 1927, the following "confession":

"I, the undersigned, Hubert Caida, worker at Wreschen, was, in 1921, a member of the 'self-defense' organization, section Dedewitzhof, near to Twerkau, district of Ratibor. On the night of the 18th or 19th of May, 1921, I, along with another member of the organization, received orders from Lieutenant Petrich to follow the tavern proprietor Miketta, from Dedewitzhof to Benkowitz, and to shoot him dead, somewhere along the way. On the road from Dedewitzhof to Twerkau, Miketta walked a few steps in front of us, his hands in his pockets, smoking his pipe, and without suspicion. We said that we would accompany him right up to the door of his house where his wife awaited his return. Miketta was three steps ahead of me when, in accordance with my instructions, I shot him in the head. He died on the spot. I am sorry to have killed Miketta, but I thought I had to carry out the orders of my superior, Lieutenant Petrich.

"Wreschen, November 27, 1926  
Hubert Caida."

Erich Pannier, a young baker aged twenty-one, was active in a Ruhr detachment of the Black Reichswehr in 1923. He became suspect to his superiors and when, in May, 1923, he did not return from a leave within the required time, Sergeant Schirmann was sent out after him, arresting him at the home of his parents. On the street, Pannier slipped away from Schir-

mann, cried out for help from the Black Reichswehr, and begged a policeman to protect him. Despite protestations by the Sergeant, who showed his papers to the policeman, the latter conducted Pannier to the police station. The commissioner there telephoned the general staff of the Third Army Division, requesting instructions. He was told that a second lieutenant would be sent over immediately to call for Pannier. Later a second lieutenant and another man presented themselves to the commissioner, and they took custody of Pannier, whom they then led away. The commissioner did not realize that the officer was really Second Lieutenant Benn of the Black Reichswehr. (In the course of the trial, where these incidents were revealed, it was never explained how a telephone call to the general staff of a regular division of the German army could have led to the dispatching of men of the Black Reichswehr.) Two days later, on orders of Benn, Pannier was killed in the woods with an axe by Sergeant Schirmann and Privates Aschenkampf and Stein.

The day following the crime, Schirmann left for Berlin carrying a letter addressed to Lieutenant Paul Schulz, whose name figures in many of these assassinations. Schulz seems to have been one of the principal organizers of the Black Reichswehr Fehme. Sergeant Fahlbusch, who made accusations against Schulz during the course of a trial of Fehme crimes, was later, in January, 1931, found asphyxiated in a motor boat. His death was never cleared up.

### *The Nazis and the Fehme*

It is curious to observe the relationship between the post-war Fehme organizations and the Nazi party. That numerous murderers from the C Organization, the Rossbach Organization and the various detachments of the Black Reichswehr became members of the Nazi party around 1930, is in itself not astonishing. It can be explained simply by the general



attraction which the party held for the masses, and particularly among nationalist elements. But we have seen how, as early as 1923, the Wikingbund, closely connected to the C Organization, adopted in its statutes the program of the National-Socialist party as its political ideal. On the other hand, Rossbach was official representative for Hitler in North Germany during this same period. When the police of Thuringia on January 26, 1923, arrested 373 members of the Rossbach Organization, including forty officers (as related in the *Frankfurter Zeitung* of January 28, 1923), it was discovered that all of them were to report to the Congress of the National-Socialist party, convening in Munich. The police found numerous guns and blackjacks on the men, and in many cases they wore uniforms beneath their civilian clothes. A great many of them wore swastikas.

In 1923, the Nazi party was not yet as feared and as influential as it was to be at a later time. Nevertheless the two powerful Fehme associations, the C Organization and the Rossbach Organization, maintained consistent connections with it. This was due only to the fact that all three organizations were agencies acting for the same group of interests.

The ties of the C Organization with the Junkers and with the Reichswehr, loyal servants of the Prusso-Teutonics, were clearly revealed during the course of various trials. That there was a connection between the Rossbach Organization and the Prussian landlords was an open secret, since almost all of their activity had taken place on lands of the latter. It is clear that by maintaining a regular relationship with both organizations, the Nazi party was cultivating its connections with the hidden powers which were at the same time behind both organizations—the entire Junker-Prussian clique.

Yet there had been reason to believe from time to time that the Nazi movement would one day come to a head in a *separatist* revolt of the different German regions against Prussian centralization. This was true especially when Hitler

—in the beginning of his movement—had close ties with the Bavarian separatists under the leadership of Kahr. The Number Two leader of the Nazi party, Gregor Strasser, thought he could maintain great independence with respect to the Prusso-Teutonic forces. Captain Roehm deluded himself with the idea that his "Praetorian Guards," the S. A., were sufficiently strong to enable the party to realize its own ends without the necessity of submitting to any outside forces. Hitler himself, entirely without scruples, did not oppose his lieutenants. He welcomed *all* alliances, and *all* slogans, so long as these might be of value to him. Basically, he was never under any illusion as to what were the truly dominant forces in Germany. He knew very well that his assumption of power in Germany some day would be made possible only if he gave these forces absolute guarantees that he would serve them faithfully from the moment he had the controls.

Despite his passing flirtations in other directions, Hitler wisely maintained contacts with the Prusso-Teutonic elements through Rossbach and Ehrhardt, and through his own henchman, Goering. This state of affairs continued until the time in 1932 and particularly in January, 1933, when he concluded a "life and death" alliance with the Junker forces. This became possible only after the "neutralization" of Hindenburg, who alone among these elements had, up to that time, refused to approve the choice of the Austrian corporal as the "super factotum" selected to serve the Prussian cause.

As early as 1924, when appearances ran counter to the conclusion he set down, E. J. Gumbel in his book, *Verschwoerer*, published in Berlin, had written the following:

*"In its deepest foundations, National-Socialism contains but little more than Prussian militarism."*

## CHAPTER V

### THE PRUSSO-TEUTONICS APPROACH THEIR GOAL

ON THE FIRST OF OCTOBER, 1927, two extremely dignified gentlemen in frock coats and striped trousers called on Marshal Hindenburg, President of the German Republic. They were the "secret adviser" (Geheimrat) Duisberg, head of the famous chemical firm I. G. Farben and one of the leaders of German big industry; and the royal chamberlain, Elard von Oldenburg-Januschau, mouthpiece of the Junkers and official representative of the Reichs-Landbund, the Junker agricultural organization. They came to present to Hindenburg a "gift from the German economy"—title to the Neudeck estate, castle and grounds.

Neudeck had belonged to the Hindenburgs from the time of Frederick the Great, though the Marshal himself had never owned landed property. Tomorrow the whole country would be celebrating his eightieth birthday and on this occasion the Junkers and big industry had decided to restore the estate of his ancestors to him.

#### *A Stroke of Genius*

The idea had been conceived by the designing Oldenburg-Januschau, who was a close friend of Hindenburg. This "king's chamberlain" was a kind of liaison officer to the Marshal, permanently delegated by the Junker organization to safeguard their interests in the Presidential office. Oldenburg had worked effectively. The contribution of the Junkers to the cost of the gift was trifling. The greater part of the funds came from big manufacturers, whose purse-strings were

looser than those of the Prussian landlords, always in debt. Nevertheless the moral benefit of this princely gift to the Marshal-President would revert equally to both groups. In this there was a certain justice: the industrialists had supplied the money, the Junkers the idea.

Industrialists and Junkers were hoping by this gesture to obtain a stronger hold on Hindenburg. But the Junkers hoped to secure an additional advantage of their own. By being transformed from an army officer without property into a landowner, Hindenburg would become a genuine Junker like his forebears. He would have the same day-to-day economic anxieties as they, and would be better qualified to understand their ideas and aspirations.

Bismarck himself had been a great landlord, owner of three domains: Schoenhausen, Friedrichsruh, and Varzin. His entire economic policy conformed to the special interests of the Junkers. Under his regime import duties on agricultural products were steadily increased, to the disadvantage of other classes of the population. Under his successor, however, things had gone less smoothly.

#### *A Junker Who Forgot to Be a Junker*

When the young and impetuous William II decided that Bismarck should retire, he replaced him by Count von Caprivi, a general, member of a Junker family, who at first had the confidence of Prusso-Teutonic groups. But Caprivi possessed no fortune of his own; he was simply a soldier. Moreover, he pursued economic policies directly opposed to what the Junkers believed to be their interest. Between 1892 and 1894 he concluded commercial treaties which represented evolution toward free trade with Austria-Hungary, Italy, Belgium, Switzerland, Roumania, Serbia, and Russia. They provided for a decrease in duties on imported agricultural products, in exchange for similar concessions granted by the

various countries for admitting manufactured goods which Germany wished to export.

Young German industry was happy, and the public gladly experienced a general reduction in the cost of living. But the Junkers were furious. Because of their unprogressive methods of exploiting their soil they could make profits only if they could sell their products at exorbitant prices, artificially bolstered by high import duties. So they decided on the fall of von Caprivi who had become increasingly *persona non grata* to them.

A campaign of unusual violence was launched against the chancellor. Finally in October, 1894, the Emperor, while visiting on the estate of Count von Eulenberg, one of the most influential Junkers of the time, decided without apparent reason to recall Caprivi. The "powers behind the throne" had received full satisfaction.

Hindenburg became President of the German Republic in 1925. Descendant of an old Junker family, he was elected with the support of the Junker class, but once in power he seemed at times to forget that his sole duty in his new office was to serve the special interests of some 13,000 Prussian lords.

True it was that Hindenburg, like Caprivi, owned no land. His fidelity to Junker principles, therefore, originated simply in the traditional alliance between the corps of Prussian officers and the Junker class, and not in any direct personal interest. For an officer younger than Hindenburg, the entangled interests of the Reichswehr and Junker organizations might have been an argument strong enough to warrant total submission to orders from the manor lords. But Hindenburg was a hero of the Great War as well as President of the Republic, elected for a term of seven years at the age of 78. He could therefore consider himself sufficiently independent to act merely as one who wished to leave posterity the recollection of a man devoted to the public interest.

At the beginning of his term as President, Hindenburg

seemed unwilling to accept orders from anyone, and, in spite of his antecedents, was ready to serve the Republic faithfully. The Republican parties were agreeably surprised, but this independence was unbearable to the Junker class. It had to be stopped at all costs. Neudeck was the bait held out to him. By one operation Hindenburg was made a debtor of the Junker class and heavy industry. In addition to this, as owner of a great estate in East Prussia he was henceforth to have the same worries and interests as other Junkers. The case of Caprivi had been a lesson, and the remedy found was an excellent one.

### *A Fruitful Alliance*

The alliance between Junkers and big industry in this overture to Hindenburg was not an innovation. It was the same fruitful cooperation which we have seen at work behind the Fehme murders. At first glance the interests of the two economic classes do not appear identical. The Junkers favored high tariffs on agricultural products to prevent competition, while it was to the advantage of industrialists to conclude commercial treaties facilitating exportation and allowing in exchange importation of agricultural products. In signing his series of commercial treaties Caprivi had yielded to considerations of the latter sort.

But German industrialists of 1927 were no longer like those of 1892. The latter saw their future in natural expansion of their export markets, in healthy competition with manufacturers of other countries. The industrialists of 1927 had already been brought into line by the Junkers. They had been made to understand that as German manufacturers they need not think along the lines of Anglo-Saxon economy. In free competition with foreign industries they could hope at best to secure one of the three first ranks in world markets. But Germany, according to Prusso-Teutonic schemes, should not

be content with one of the first places, but ought to obtain *complete domination of all markets*.

The plan for achieving this purpose was simple. Instead of facilitating trade with other parts of the world by concluding commercial treaties which successively lowered tariffs, they must, on the contrary, increase duties on imports and set themselves apart from the rest of the world. (Later this isolation was to be effected much more thoroughly with the aid of exchange control introduced under Bruening's regime by Dr. Luther and perfected under Hitler by Dr. Schacht: control of exchange which subjects all importing to the control of the State.) The plan anticipated the following stages: economic isolation; considerable rise in cost of living; misery and discontent of the people; blame traced back to parliamentary institutions and the Allied nations; then a twofold result: discredit of parliamentary institutions and rearmament.

At this point industrialists were promised these advantages: huge arms orders as an ample compensation for lost export business; high tariffs on imported products of heavy industry; successive subsidies by the State to German industry to allow a certain amount of exporting as a method of dumping (in exchange the State obtained foreign currencies which it needed even with control of exchange); and finally, because of discontent of the people and as a result of rearmament, war; then conquest by blood and fire of new territories, each becoming an economic outlet totally submissive to German control.

### *The Right Kind of Competition*

In this line of reasoning the point of view of the Hanseatic League no longer prevailed. That ancient trading association of free German cities had struggled to gain control of world markets by every legitimate means of free commerce. The Hansa's contests with English merchants had been sharp but

honorable for centuries, and had been carried on according to rules identical on both sides. The League, if its traditions had prevailed in the economic life of Germany, might indeed have become a real threat to other countries in the markets of the world, because German merchants were ingenious and industrious. But that threat would have been perfectly legitimate, conforming to the rules of the game of economic competition, and would have stimulated the competitors of the Hansa merely to show greater ingenuity in their turn.

The new economic plan had been conceived in order to produce a threat to Germany's competitors of an entirely different sort. It was no longer a matter of playing the game fairly to win as much as one could from one's opponent, but of overpowering him and taking everything away from him. The Junkers had succeeded in getting German industrialists to accept their robber-barons' tactics and discard traditional Hanseatic methods from the German economic scheme.

There is a time-honored conflict between the two principles. In the middle of the fifteenth century the bloody war of the German Hanseatic cities against the Order had had its origin in the same conflict. In 1466 the Hanseatic cities had been victorious over the Teutonic Knights. In the twentieth century the descendants of those Knights, the Junker class, succeeded in driving the Hanseatic economic concept out of Germany.

### *World Dominion or Ruin*

The Junkers were anxious to have a good presentation for their "new economic theories." Prusso-Teutonic theorists of the nineteenth century had supplied the necessary presentation and at the same time an exact outline for applying their plan. (We have seen the advantage they managed to derive from the economic theories of List, put into practice by Dr. Schacht.)

But if that "presentation" had been useful in getting their plan accepted by the rest of Germany, including the industrialists, the Junkers were concerned with something simpler: their own immediate interests. These immediate interests demanded higher tariffs on the import of agricultural products to allow them to raise their prices and make greater profits. Their concern was to perpetuate the comfort in which they had lived as long as they were able to profit by the virtual famine that reigned in Germany during the post-war years. Here is what a German writer, Rudolf Olden (*Hindenburg*, Paris, 1935) says on the subject:

"The famine which continued in greater and lesser degree until 1924 had been the big opportunity for German agriculture, a period of easy success and luxury for everybody who produced comestibles. Hardly had this time passed when the great landowners immediately asked for protective tariffs. On this point also Germany stood at the crossroads. On the one side fulfillment of the Treaty of Versailles, peace, disarmament, flourishing of commerce and industry, cultural progress, satisfied labor; on the other side, high tariffs for grain and wine, isolation from the world market, refusal to make reparations payments, rearmament, class struggle from above, provocation of a war of revenge."

One may clearly discern the precise plan of Prusso-Teutonic organizations, the secret Junker societies, behind the "unilinear operations" of the Great Elector, of Frederick the Great, of Bismarck, of William the Second and of those who, under the Weimar Republic, conducted the Fehme and prepared in secret for rearmament. The extraordinary homogeneity of these operations would of itself suffice as indication of their common origin. But one need not imagine that 13,000 Prussian manorial lords—*i.e.*, all the Junkers—had been initiated into the full scope of the plan. That is not the way secret societies work.

The Junker class as a whole, assembled in the "professional

organization" known as the Reichs-Landbund, and in the social and political society known as the Herrenklub, envisaged only their immediate interests. But those interests had been presented to them in such a way that they coincided with the combination of goals pursued. The procedure was simple enough. The Junkers wished to isolate themselves from the rest of the world in the matter of importing products of the soil, in order to sell their own at higher prices. To attain their purpose, they needed the political support of heavy industry; and to obtain that support they had to make promises to industry as to the rearmament program. Moreover, they had to introduce into every German economic circle a complete plan that would encompass the realization of their own immediate ends.

This complete plan lay ready for use. It was an elaboration of the precise plan that had directed every phase of Prussian growth, the plan which had inspired the fantastic dreams of the Prusso-Teutonic writers of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth. This plan evidently satisfied the imagination of the Junker class as a whole, but to them it was fundamentally only a fortunate way of presenting their most immediate and much more limited purposes. The Junkers had to make every influential group in Germany accept the idea that for their country it was a matter of life or death to embark on a course of world conquest. The theory, "world dominion or ruin," came anew to the surface, and they attempted to make people believe that the fate of all Germany was at stake in this breath-taking dilemma. Actually if anyone was threatened with ruin it would be only the 13,000 Junkers—ruin which the Junkers could have avoided by other means: by modernizing their farm operations and restricting expenditures. But such modernization and restrictions were inconceivable to these feudal lords. To avoid them all Germany had to be drawn into an interminable period of "cannon versus butter," and strife with the rest of the world.

*The "Osthilfe" Scandal*

The "gift from the German economy" given Hindenburg in 1927 in the form of the domain of Neudeck was to provide the Junker class with a hold over the octogenarian Hindenburg profitable in many respects. Several irregularities came about in connection with the gift. First of all, it was arranged to save on the transfer taxes. Taxes on gifts as valuable as Neudeck were extremely high, amounting to 44 per cent of the assessed value. The revenue authorities allowed themselves to be persuaded to make an exception and formally waive these taxes on the ground that Neudeck was a kind of "national gift."

This exemption could have been vaguely justified if it had actually been a matter of transferring property to the name of the Marshal-President. However, the deed to the property was not recorded in the name of Marshal Paul von Hindenburg but in that of his son and aide-de-camp, Colonel Oscar von Hindenburg. Indubitably it was a matter of avoiding the inheritance tax in the eventuality, probably close, of the aged Marshal's death. Neudeck was worth a million marks; the inheritance taxes saved in addition to the gift taxes mentioned above amounted to 100,000 marks. Incidentally, by registering the property in Colonel Hindenburg's name the Marshal's other children were deprived of their rights.

The Marshal, entirely under his son's influence, offered no resistance. He did not realize that each of these irregularities opened a door through which pressure could later be brought to bear on him. Henceforth he could no longer allow himself the luxury of being a President caring only about the national interest. If he had ever dreamed (ingenuous thought!) of being able to free himself of his antecedents, and of acting simply as a soldier and German statesman, *not* as a Junker, he must now dispel that dream. He sank to the level of the other Junkers. He became their partner of destiny in a "combine," disclosure of which might well embarrass him because

of his position much more than it could embarrass the instigators of the transaction.

Oscar von Hindenburg had a fatal influence on his father. Eager to take advantage of his exceptional position, he was part of every political combination between 1925 and 1933. It was an open secret in Berlin that one could easily get what one wanted from the Marshal by being on good terms with the Colonel. Member of the Herrenklub, the "social front" of the Junker class, where details of political deals were debated day in and day out, Oscar in the end was completely dominated by the Prusso-Teutonics.

On his eightieth birthday the Marshal, now a landowner, was exultant. He was enjoying Neudeck as a child enjoys a new toy. His dream at last had come true. He would no longer be a poor officer without soil or root. This was what had troubled him so during his youth when he used to compare himself with his more fortunate army comrades. If he wished to relax from his wearying duties he could now rest in his own castle, hunt on his own grounds; and when he died he could leave this lovely estate to his son. The latter would have the advantage of it at an age when the father had had to be content with being a poor guest on the property of friends.

At Neudeck Hindenburg was the neighbor of Oldenburg-Januschau. The two saw more and more of each other and the Marshal had an even more attentive ear than before for the suggestions of the man whom he considered his benefactor. Oldenburg in his conversations emphasized the "difficulties of agriculture." Indeed, the golden age which had reigned for the Junker class, due to the famine in Germany, had come to an end. The Junkers could no longer sell their products at exorbitant prices and profit by the misery of others. Their yields on the agricultural market at current prices were no longer enough to allow them to continue the extravagant living and drunken carousing to which they were accustomed.

A good share of Junker money was also going to finance illegal detachments of the Black Reichswehr concealed on their properties. All this was no longer possible with the reduced finances which the Prussian lords now had at their disposal. Besides, they were running further and further into debt.

Hindenburg, who was touched by Oldenburg's recital of the "misfortunes of agriculture," consented to intervene with the government to find a possible remedy. This was how the famous *Osthilfe* (Eastern Aid) was created, a fund amounting to 250 million marks. The avowed purpose of the *Osthilfe* was to "come to the aid of small farmers and peasants who had been ruined in the period of inflation." But in the few years of its existence *Osthilfe* money brought about the "refinancing" of some 10,500 big Junker manor lords (of the entire 13,000), by payment of their debts and by according them new credits on practically unlimited terms. On the other hand, Rudolf Olden shows that of two million average farmers, only one out of forty-five received loans, and of three million small farmers in Germany, not one obtained a thing. Accordingly, tremendous bitterness arose among the peasant class on the subject of the *Osthilfe*.

Von Oldenburg-Januschau himself received over 600,000 marks from the *Osthilfe*. When certain people hinted later that he had gotten so much because of his initiative in the matter of the Neudeck gift, others pointed out that when a person bears the name von Oldenburg-Januschau he needs no further argument to get a heavy slice of the cake.

The distribution of funds was in the hands of Junker officials. Investment of the money was carried out by a so-called "guarantee procedure" (*Sicherungsverfahren*) directed by trustees appointed for this purpose. All the trustees were Junkers who in their turn were profiting by the refinancing of their own properties. Thus neighbors superintended each other, and made mutual grants of large sums.

One of the duties of the trustees was supposed to be to verify that the money granted under the title "debt repayment" actually went to creditors. However, creditors found themselves generally deprived of the greater part of their equity, with very small hope of ever seeing their money.

Some big Junker landowners were refinanced as many as four times, each time declaring their estates bankrupt in order to rid themselves of all indebtedness. Frequently this did not prevent their having money on the side, invested in prosperous businesses. Others continued their reckless spending in accordance with the old Junker custom. When refinancing was no longer possible in their own names they transferred their estates to the names of members of their families, frequently minors, and the same game went on *ad infinitum*.

The development of semi-military organizations gained new intensity with the aid of this manna from Heaven distributed by the *Osthilfe*. A deputy speaking of these abuses before the Prussian Parliament said:

"The concealment and feeding of SA groups, of Stahlhelm troops and similar organizations, showy festivities on the occasion of Nazi and Deutsch-national electoral successes, excessive personal expenditures and other similar things could continue on a wide scale everywhere because of the good offices of the 'guarantee procedure.'"

Throughout Germany people began to whisper at first, then to talk more openly of the "*Osthilfe* scandal." The names of Hindenburg and his son were frequently mentioned in this connection, and it was said that being on friendly terms with the Colonel was sufficient to obtain ample sums from the *Osthilfe*. Olden, Hindenburg's biographer, says:

"A great number of Hindenburg's neighbors or people from the same social group as he—friends, or friends of friends—directly contacted the President or his son. All old Prussia came to new life. What counted was whether you belonged to the same Regiment, to the same student frater-

nity, from what period your family had lived in a certain neighborhood, whose cousin or in-law one was. . . . Friendships and cliques looked for and found their way into the Palace of the President of the Reich. Junkers managed to be recommended to the source whence the flow came. The landlords from east of the Elbe [*i.e.*, the Junkers] had always—at all periods of their history—been insatiable. They hurled themselves gluttonously upon the overflowing abundance.”

The Osthilfe scandal, and later that of Neudeck, hovered in the background of the history of the governments preceding the Hitler regime. The Catholic Centrum party and the Socialists stirred up the scandal, cautiously at first, then with more courage. This created great uneasiness among the Junker class. But even the Nazis, directly or indirectly, made revelations concerning these matters in order to keep attention focused on them. It was because of the continual pressure thus exerted on the Junker class and Hindenburg that the Nazis were finally able to seize power and maintain their position with Junker support.

#### *A Paralyzed Parliament*

From March, 1930, until May, 1932, Dr. Heinrich Brüning was Chancellor of the Reich. He came from the movement of Christian labor syndicates, was a devout Catholic and member of the Centrum party. In principle he was opposed to the Junker class, as was his party. Actually, he could stay in power only so long as he tolerated their abuses and resigned himself to act, in spite of his better feelings, in accordance with Junker schemes. He had to yield office as soon as he tried to prove himself independent of them.

When Brüning took office the democratic parties of Germany had already lost all initiative. The Fehme, faithful tool of the Prusso-Teutonic class, had suppressed the most enterprising democratic leaders and intimidated the rest. This had

brought about sterility in parliament. The democratic parties, dispossessed and without true leaders, could do no constructive work, opposed as they were by an extremely active and Machiavellian Nazi minority. This was all the Junkers could ask. They had succeeded in suppressing their most dangerous opponents. If parliament (which they detested, though they had been forced to tolerate it from Bismarck's time on) now wound up by making a fool of itself and becoming paralyzed, nothing could give them greater delight.

Brüning, not knowing how to govern with an impotent Reichstag, resigned himself to using an expedient which he was able to devise in accordance with provisions of the Weimar constitution. He decided to introduce a system of decree-laws, *i.e.*, decrees which had the force of law and depended merely on the signature of the President of the Republic. True, he was obliged to submit these decree-laws later for approval of the Reichstag, but if this approval should be refused he could immediately dismiss the Reichstag by using a decree of dissolution signed in advance by the President. Comparative parliamentary stability lasted, therefore, only under permanent threat of such dissolution.

President Hindenburg thus became the source of all power. He had already become accustomed to giving orders to politicians who had access to him, treating the Chancellor and members of the government the way a commander-in-chief treats his staff officers in time of war. So great was the respect which this military chief inspired in the Germans that no one found anything amiss. From now on his power became still more absolute. But Hindenburg in turn was under the influence of the Junkers, especially since the deed of gift to Neudeck. Oscar von Hindenburg received daily orders from the Reichs-Landbund and the Herrenklub and continually whispered them to his father. So the Junkers' meddling with the government became quite direct.



Bruening at first tolerated the abuses of the Osthilfe. He had, moreover, a still greater merit in the eyes of the Prusso-Teutonics, for it was he who, in July, 1931, introduced "control" of the mark, which separated the destiny of German currency and German economy from the rest of the world.

#### *A Financial Wizard Enters the Game*

Before 1923 the mark had passed through a period of acute inflation due to the effects of defeat. In 1924 Dr. Schacht replaced the German unit of currency, almost completely devaluated, by the "Reichsmark," based on gold. The Reichsmark circulated freely and became a choice international coin. Dr. Schacht had succeeded in making the world believe that henceforth Germany had decided to participate in international exchange and become an integral part of world commerce based on gold and free competition. The world's greatest financial institutions then offered Germany credit and her empty coffers were quickly filled. But the Prusso-Teutonics had not given up the plans of List. They figured that they could derive no advantage from the prosperity which Germany would achieve as a result of intensified international trade. The good fortune to which they aspired was of an entirely different sort. For them it was essential to become isolated from the rest of the world and avail themselves of the sufferings and prejudices excited by that isolation to get the country started on the path to conquest.

In recalling to mind the theories of List we have already briefly indicated the rôle played in their execution by Dr. Schacht. The remarkable rise of Schacht is worth considering.

Hjalmar Schacht was born in 1877. His father had returned to Germany from America only the year before Hjalmar's birth. The Schachts were a family from the frontiers of Schleswig-Holstein and Denmark, who had, after annexation

of Schleswig-Holstein by Bismarck, received German citizenship. But the Schachts had a leaning toward Denmark, and the occupation of their country by the Prussians was, for several members of the family, a reason for emigrating to America. Hjalmar's father was one of these. In the United States he acquired American citizenship and steeped himself in American democratic ideas. But reverses forced him to come back to Europe, and in 1876 he accepted a position as accountant in Germany. For this reason his son was born on German soil. He named him Hjalmar Horace Greeley Schacht—Hjalmar to recall his Danish origin and Horace Greeley to show his admiration for the great American journalist and for American ideals in general.

We have seen that List, creator of the economic doctrines of the Prussian school, had been an American citizen. It is a curious fact that Schacht, who was primarily responsible for putting these ideas into practice in modern times, was also of American background. This background unfortunately tended to inspire confidence in Dr. Schacht among American and English bankers, and made easy the successful and conspicuous part he was to play in Anglo-Saxon financial circles.

Schacht started his career as a financial journalist. He was next employed as financial expert in one of the largest German banks, the Dresdner Bank. During World War I he was assigned to the army to help organize the economic occupation of Belgium. After two years he was recalled to Germany, because he had been accused of having used his official authority to the advantage of his own bank in transactions involving occupation currency. In the course of his career he was frequently taunted about this "Belgian affair" by political adversaries.

After the war we find Schacht at the Darmstaedter Bank, another of the three largest German banks. Jacob Goldschmidt, head of the Darmstaedter—who was at that time in

the vanguard of the speculation brought about by the wild inflation of the mark—had recognized in Schacht a pliant and subservient henchman.

Goldschmidt was the man responsible for the rise of Schacht, for it was on his advice that the German government put Schacht in charge of the Reichsbank. His mission there was to bring to an end that astronomical inflation, after it had impoverished the entire middle class of Germany, to the enrichment of a few big speculators.

The stabilization of the mark was accomplished by October 11, 1924. Dr. Schacht received all the credit for the work, although various experts had paved the way. In any case, he did have the knack of creating in Germany and abroad the psychological atmosphere necessary for a successful stabilization. He effectively spread the belief throughout the world that the mark was now definitely on a gold basis and that Germany in the future would honorably participate in world exchange based on free trade.

No one doubted that these intentions were sincere, for they felt that Germany had everything to gain by taking such a course. Indeed, they thought that by playing the game of free competition, German industrialists and merchants, whose abilities were unquestionably first-class, would have every chance of securing a high place on the world's economic roll.

#### *A Most Unorthodox Financial Plan*

Reasoning thus, international financial experts failed to recognize one thing: that in the administration of Germany's affairs under the direction of the Prussian clique, what one might call "the German national interest" had but small influence. It was the special interest alone of a restricted group, directing the affairs of Germany from behind the scenes, which decided what course was to be taken. Or rather, what that group, because of its "robber baron" spirit *believed* to be

its interest. For that group, the job in mind had to be done in several stages. This was accomplished as follows:

1. The purpose of the first period, inflation, was to permit the looting of the entire German middle class. This was accomplished to the advantage of the Junker class which was able to make money by the tremendous rise in prices, due to scarcity of agricultural products,\* and also to the advantage of bankers and big industrialists speculating directly on inflation, like Stinnes, Thyssen, and Krupp. These men succeeded, during this period, in buying up tremendous quantities of industrial properties with borrowed money which they were able to repay easily after the currency was devaluated.

2. After October 11, 1924, the next step was to encourage the inflow of foreign money under the guise of long and short term credits. Without these fresh funds there would indeed have been nothing left to pick from German pockets. The small German merchants and manufacturers had lost all their reserves during inflation. It was therefore essential, above all, to inspire confidence throughout the world regarding the mark, so that foreign credits would begin flowing in heavily. Sums amounting to from twenty to thirty billion marks were thus lent to German business in the period between 1925 and 1930.

3. During the years 1929-1930 the direction of this operation was reversed. There was more and more talk of the heavy burdens borne by Germany after payment of reparations. In reality, these payments amounted to scarcely ten billion marks. The peace treaty did not, on the country's balance sheet, represent much of a burden, because of the re-entry of gold as foreign investment worth twenty to thirty billions during the same period.

German financial and governmental circles, painting the

\* When inflation reached astronomical proportions and this advantage of the Junkers became illusory, they then agreed that stabilization should take place at once.

country's situation in darker and darker colors, artificially created a panic. This produced, in German and foreign financial circles, a "flight from the mark."

From the middle of 1930 to July 1931, about two or three billion marks poured out of Germany. Finally, on July 13, 1931, under Bruening's administration, the financial authorities of Germany took advantage of the climax of the panic they themselves had provoked, to have the government declare a moratorium on internal and external debt payments, and they instituted "control of exchange" on a permanent basis.

This control of exchange again took Germany off the gold standard. Its first result was to make impossible repayment of credits which had been accorded to German economy. All short term credits became automatically long term ones, or rather, credits of "indefinite term," *i.e.*, frozen credits. The same performance which allowed the spoliation of the whole German middle class during the period before 1924 now took place at the expense of financial interests the world over.

4. The introduction of control of exchange on July 13, 1931, represented complete seizure by the State—and by groups hiding behind the State—of all export and import business. All foreign currencies accruing from export must now be yielded to the State. All importing not deemed useful to the interests of the State was forbidden. Officials whose decisions were not subject to parliamentary control ran everything, and behind them was still the same influential crowd. Import of products useful to the public at large was considerably slowed up, with preference given to entry of raw materials needed for making armaments.

Heavy industry grew increasingly prosperous. Private business suffered and prices of commodities doubled. Misery sprang up again among the middle and poorer classes of the population. The "masters of Germany" were satisfied with the execution of their plan. Misery and discontent of the peo-

ple were excellent arguments for ultimately compromising the parliamentary system which they so hated. In addition, the same arguments were invoked to excite the German people against France and England. This promoted psychological conditions favorable for the rearmament program, and prepared the way for the foreign conquest long anticipated by the Prusso-Teutonics.

5. Properly speaking, conquest—and the attempt at economic domination of world markets which it implies—may be considered the fifth phase of the same program.

#### *Dr. Schacht Prepares the Panic*

Following the stabilization of the mark, Dr. Schacht was responsible, either directly or by his action behind the scenes, for the execution of the entire financial scheme described. When, in 1924, he had brought about stabilization he was acting in full accord with the Prusso-Teutonic class and the financial circles of Germany. The tactics corresponded perfectly with what they wished.

Only the Nazis, with their customary violence, criticized the stabilization. At that time their interests were not yet identical with those of the Prusso-Teutonics. They acted as free-lances, sitting in many anterooms. They did have some connections with the Prussian clique, but had not yet placed themselves totally at their service. The aim they pursued above all else was to capitalize on the discontent of the people to raise themselves, by demagogic means, to power. Therefore they were fierce opponents of a measure such as stabilization which might eliminate one of the main causes of discontent. The advantages which Prusso-Teutonic circles hoped to gain—foreign loans destined to fill the empty cash boxes—did not interest them at all, for they had nothing to gain thereby.

On June 22, 1925, the Nazi organ *Voelkischer Kurier* attacked Dr. Schacht and called stabilization "the greatest

swindle ever committed at the public's expense." Other Nazi newspapers said that Schacht was of Jewish origin and that his real name was "Hajim Schachtl." Alfred Rosenberg took up this attack on Schacht in a work published in 1926 under the title "Novemberkoepefe." These attacks did not bother Schacht much, for at that time the Nazis were not very powerful and he knew that he was under the protection of a much more influential group.

During the period after the inflation Schacht tried to inspire the world with confidence in Germany. In his frequent talks with directors of other government banks he showed himself to be a conservative, cautious financier. At that period he conformed in every detail to the classic ideal of a great banker who could personally guarantee to the world the healthy condition of Germany's financial affairs, as well as the sound basis of world-wide investments in the mark.

In 1929, when the coffers were almost filled, Schacht became bolder. Phase number two could give way to phase number three. On April 16, 1929, one of the regular conventions of national bank heads of various countries was held at the Hotel George V in Paris. As usual, the conference was to discuss the question of reparations, examining different financial aspects of the problem. Suddenly Dr. Schacht took the floor and began, to the surprise of his colleagues, introducing political factors into the discussion. He stated that Germany could not continue to make reparations payments unless she received in exchange the Polish corridor of Danzig, Upper Silesia, and "a colonization spot somewhere in the world."

Such talk surprised and shocked Dr. Schacht's colleagues utterly. What—this conservative financier who had made them believe all along that Germany was on the road to financial recovery, and who had during previous conferences argued only about financial difficulties of a technical nature—was he suddenly subordinating the financial relationship

between his country and the rest of the world to political demands?

The international bankers were quite familiar with these demands. They had been the favorite theme of a small group of German nationalists, including the Nazis. But in the past bankers had been made to believe that these groups had no influence, that the German Republic sincerely intended to respect its obligations, and that Dr. Schacht especially, as high master of German finance, cared only about stabilization of the international financial situation and the development of thriving trade. But now didn't it look as if he were borrowing the arguments of his country's extremists? *Et tu mi fili Brute?*

The disappointment of the financiers was great. Moreau, Governor of the Bank of France, demanded that the conference be immediately closed. Finally it was agreed to diminish the shock by inviting Dr. Schacht to submit a written report. Political matters were not discussed further during the sessions following, and the bankers left the conference with a semblance of agreement on financial questions. But the warning had been a fierce one and had made its impression.

Dr. Schacht now speeded up the steps to follow. Phase number three of the program was ending. In frequent interviews with his great friend, Montagu Norman, Governor of the Bank of England, Schacht brought out more and more plainly the internal difficulties of Germany. *It was no longer a matter of inspiring confidence in the world, but of slowly and methodically preparing the way for panic which would sometime soon justify suspension of reparations payments and the freezing of foreign loans.*

Late in February, 1930, Owen Young received a cable from Schacht informing him of his intended resignation. Young felt it proper to forward this cable to the German Embassy in Washington. That was how Germany and the world at large learned the surprising news.

The roundabout way Schacht chose for revealing his intentions is astonishing. Nevertheless, it was in line with Schacht's purpose. This direct communication to the American delegate was expected to disclose the disagreement supposedly existing between Schacht and the leaders of Germany. Thus he gave the world clearly to understand that he could no longer personally guarantee the stability of Germany's financial situation—which was the best means of hastening panic. Besides, by communicating directly with the American financial expert Schacht hoped to preserve for himself the sympathies of American bankers (those of London were already insured by reason of his friendship with Montagu Norman. Furthermore, it is not known whether he simultaneously sent a similar message to Norman which the latter had not felt obliged to divulge.) The impression Schacht gave was as if he had said, "I have done my best, prepare for the worst. After me, the deluge."

On March 7, 1930, Schacht's resignation became official. The painful surgical intervention which had been planned as the end of phase three of the program—panic, moratorium and exchange control—approached. By retiring to private life in time, Schacht avoided all blame for the operation, in Germany as well as abroad. He knew that he could always come back later, washing his hands like Pontius Pilate.

All this appears clear today in the light of subsequent events. At the time, everyone found the reasons for Schacht's departure somewhat mysterious. Writing on March 9, 1930, in the *Vossische Zeitung* of Berlin, the great publicist, Georg Bernhard, said: "No one knows the real reason for this resignation." Today we know it only too well.

The departure of Schacht contributed greatly to the German capitalists' "flight from the mark." Large sums of money were invested abroad. Dr. Hans Luther, named by Bruening to replace Schacht at the head of the Reichsbank, did little to repair the damage. The die was cast and it was now simply

a matter of regulating the rhythm and speed of the program. Finally, taking advantage of a heavy run on private banks, among which the Darmstaedter Bank (the bank Schacht came from) was the first, Bruening's government, on July 13, 1931, decreed a bank moratorium and "control of exchange" which was to become permanent. Phase three of the program was finished and Germany now became financially isolated from the world.

### *The Plight of "Poor Germany"*

The operation had so far been successful and the plan approached phase four without a hitch because nearly all the international financial interests had allowed themselves to be taken in by the touching "plight" of "poor Germany." Nevertheless, the *Financial Chronicle* of New York in its issue of July 18, 1931, revealed clearly the German government's responsibility in this course of events.

"The flight from the Mark that resulted in the present situation of Germany is due both to the demand for foreign currencies by fearstricken Germans who recalled vividly their worthless holdings of German securities and currency eight years ago, and the withdrawals of their short term credits by foreign investors. The signal for the withdrawals was given, it must be remarked, by the German government itself. Chancellor Bruening and Foreign Minister Curtius advertised rather too well, during their visit to London in June, the precarious state of affairs produced in the Reich by the worldwide economic depression and the heavy reparations burden. Pleas then made, together with the German government decree imposing heavier taxes, started a unanimous export of capital which finally exceeded the capacities of the financial institutions of the Reich."

In these events Bruening's responsibility is indisputable, but how far it went is not clear. The former Chancellor of the

Reich, now living in the United States, has not seen fit, up to the present time, to give *his* version of the story of his years in power. Possibly he was not fully conscious of the rôle he was made to play by the Prusso-Teutonic clique, who remained masters of the situation under his regime also. But the extent of Bruening's personal responsibility is only relatively important. Certain it is that in tolerating, over a period of two years, the practices which prevailed in the distribution of Osthilfe funds, and in creating the financial isolation of Germany, he did render conspicuous service to the Prusso-Teutonic class. Moreover, if it were not for this weakness, or blindness, or temporary compliance—whatever one chooses to call it—Bruening could not have kept himself in power for two years.

#### *The Totalitarian Plan*

Between the two world wars, Germany was thus the first country to destroy, on a large scale, the effect of the stabilization of her currency, and to break away from international free trade based on gold. It was she, therefore, who supplied the "evil inspiration," and within a few months several countries followed suit. The avalanche was let loose. Finally many countries adopted a kind of "control of exchange" which became, during the period before the war, the primary obstacle to international commerce.\*

The control of exchange introduced by Germany was extremely strict. A veritable financial "wall of China" was built around the country. Without this seclusion, whose rules were established and perfected under a regime still bearing the title "Republic," Hitler's totalitarian scheme could not have functioned. The new measures were part of the Prusso-

\* The state of war added other obstacles such as transportation difficulties and prohibitions on exporting. In addition, during the war the few countries which were still allowing free export of currency finally adopted, almost without exception, a system of more or less strict control of exchange.

Teutonics' plan, and they had definitely decided that, from that time on, the country was headed in a totalitarian direction.

At that moment it was probably not yet clear in the minds of the real masters of Germany *who* should be entrusted with the task of putting this totalitarian orientation into practice. Although Hitler was already a serious candidate for the enviable post of "sublime henchman," and was the protégé of several persons of influence, the forces running Germany from behind the scenes still, in principle, had free choice. One may well imagine that they might have put someone else in charge of the execution of an absolutely identical plan, provided that they could have found one as well qualified as Hitler to dispatch the business. It was Hitler's good fortune that at the time no other man existed in Germany who had his peculiar qualifications to put into execution the Machiavelian plan of the Prusso-Teutonics. Von Papen, who was the only other serious candidate, was simply an amateur in comparison. He did not have the qualities required of a "good professional."

#### *The "Robber Baron" Concept*

After the advent of Nazism only the method of a "financial wall of China" could permit German economy to be placed practically on a war basis and to work for total national rearmament. (Secret rearmament in accordance with a definite plan had never ceased since the Armistice.) It was this financial arrangement which paved the way for Hitler's demagogic argument\* that *other nations were refusing Germany the raw materials she needed, and therefore she must conquer to get them*. It was this argument that made it possible for Hitler to get his people to accept the harsh policy,

\* If the Prusso-Teutonics had chosen another "henchman" he would have used the same argument.

“cannon instead of butter,” and the sufferings of war. By virtue of the same argument he got people in certain foreign circles almost to excuse his policies because they bewailed the fate of “starving Germany.”

We have already touched on this question, but one cannot insist too strongly on the fallacy of this line of reasoning. As long as she remained on the basis of a free financial system Germany could always have procured all the raw materials she needed. They were at her disposal in free markets throughout the world, and could be bought in a few seconds at any time by means of a simple cabled order. Countries much smaller—Belgium, for example, which was as industrialized as Germany—were also in the same position and never complained of a “dearth of raw materials” or of “lack of vital space.” This dearth, this lack of vital space, was deliberately produced by a series of measures, the first of which was the introduction of control of exchange on July 13, 1931. Those who defend the German point of view try to prove that the financial panic provoked by the introduction of control of exchange was not brought about deliberately by the group ruling the affairs of Germany, and that consequently control of exchange was inevitable. The reverse is easy to prove, but even if we admit for a moment the correctness of this thesis, we must say that the solution by control of exchange as a *permanent* measure was the worst that could have been chosen. One may compare Germany in panic to a bank on which there is a run. Obviously, the doors must be closed for a time, but permanent closing, or opening subject to all sorts of restrictive and annoying rules imposed on patrons, would be the best way one could imagine to avoid entirely restoring normal life to the bank. One need not wonder why a bank choosing such methods goes to its ruin. The only solution by which one might hope to save a bank in straits would be to put persons in charge who inspire confidence, and start to function again by opening the cashiers’ windows wide.

Germany’s seclusion from the normal economic world exchange was also in perfect harmony with what one would expect from “robber barons.” Henceforth it was a matter of gaining possession of raw materials by force and *consequently of the territories which produced them*, even if it was possible to buy and pay for these materials with the product of one’s labor, provided, of course, that one was inclined to supply such labor. Most people—and most nations—feel that this procedure is simpler, healthier and more satisfactory. The robber barons, and the powers governing Germany, felt (and still feel) exactly the opposite way.

People committing acts considered dishonest under the law always try to excuse these acts by saying that they have been obliged to act so because the society in which we live does not allow them to live otherwise. Just the same attitude was adopted by Germany from 1931 on; Hitler merely accentuated it by developing the theme of “vital space.” But the plans providing for this attitude were established long before 1931 by the powers behind the German scene.

#### *Dr. Schacht Chooses Hitler*

In 1930, at the time of Schacht’s resignation, the Prusso-Teutonic powers did not yet seem to have chosen Hitler as final executor of their schemes. The agitation which he had created in Germany had a certain utility for these aims; therefore they helped him when occasion offered but had not yet decided to entrust him with the “supreme task.”

If the combined Prusso-Teutonic powers had not yet made their choice, Schacht had made his. From 1930 on he was staking everything on Hitler.

Known to the public as a man of democratic convictions, Schacht had in reality always been in close touch with the Prusso-Teutonics and in particular with the “heavy industry” wing of that group. He was no fool; he knew who wielded

the real power in Germany. All his activity as head of the Reichsbank, the stabilization of the mark and his fruitful efforts to attract foreign capital, had been undertaken in perfect agreement with the Prusso-Teutonics.

We have seen that at that time the Nazis were not in agreement with him, for they knew that stabilization and influx of foreign capital would bring order and prosperity back to the country. And nothing could have a less favorable effect on the success of their demagogic agitation than order and prosperity. No wonder, then, that they attacked Schacht's stabilization measures. Not yet admitted to the "inner councils," Hitler and his friends did not know that stabilization and the prosperity it was designed to bring about were to be of short duration, according to the intentions of the very ones who had decided on the introduction of these measures.

Toward the end of his regime at the head of the Reichsbank Dr. Schacht contributed greatly to preparations for the panic which was to reach its climax in July, 1931, a year and four months after his return to private life. Attracting foreign capital no longer concerned the Prusso-Teutonics. Now they were occupied with achieving successively financial and economic autarchy in Germany and ultimately keeping the foreign capital which had been invested there. This pleased the Nazis better, since panic and privation resulting from autarchy would furnish a fertile field for their agitation. The points of contact therefore between Hitler and Schacht were quite obvious. Meetings between Schacht and Nazi leaders took place and after his departure from the Reichsbank Schacht saw Hitler personally. No Nazi again accused Schacht of being named Hajim Schachtl. During March, 1930, the National Socialist deputy Feder was the only one to defend Schacht in the Reichstag while deputies of other parties attacked him for his "unmotivated" resignation which was bound to have a harmful effect upon Germany's financial prestige.

Immediately after his retirement from office in 1930 Schacht procured subsidies for Hitler from his friends in heavy industry. About that time Schacht introduced Dr. Walter Funk to Hitler. Funk was to become head of economic affairs in Germany under the Hitler regime. Schacht had known Funk when the latter was a young economic journalist working chiefly for publications financed by industrialists of the Ruhr. His presence close to Hitler represented a further guarantee to the industrialists that their plans would be faithfully executed by Hitler. Schacht and Funk had long conversations with Hitler on matters concerning the economic future of Germany, and explained List's ideas to him. In this way Hitler's economic training was shaped in a direction coinciding in every particular with Prusso-Teutonic conceptions and traditions. He understood the full meaning of List's economic thesis, which recommended rigid economic isolation from the rest of the world in order to have to conquer it by force. All the speeches made by Funk from the time he began to represent Germany in the economic sphere were obviously inspired by this thesis.

In the fall of 1930 Schacht set out on a journey which took him through several countries: Denmark, Sweden, Switzerland and America. He went "as a private citizen" to visit his friends in banking circles. He was well received everywhere, for the halo of the stabilization still surrounded him. People did not realize that he was actually just as responsible for the recent deterioration of German finances which he had promoted from the wings. Schacht was still looked upon as a man of the Weimar Republic, a sincere democrat. Foreign bankers therefore wondered why during his trip he openly defended the Nazis and predicted a great future for them, using the *Leitmotiv*: "They are not as dangerous to big business as people say." On his return to Germany the National Socialist deputy von Reventlow made a speech in the Reichstag thanking the former President of the Reichsbank for having



so well explained the Nazi point of view in the United States.

In spite of the position taken openly by Schacht in favor of National Socialism, people were astonished when on March 17, 1933, he returned as head of the Reichsbank. Hitler had taken office only six weeks previously, on January 30. The Fuehrer had decided to allow free rein in financial matters to the man who had considerably aided his accession to power by winning confidence toward him of a section of the Prusso-Teutonic group as well as of German and foreign banking circles.

### *Bruening's Blunder*

Bruening was much less "in the know" than either Schacht or Hitler. In spite of services he had consciously or unconsciously rendered the Prusso-Teutronics, Bruening was sacrificed by them in 1932. Indeed the Chancellor, though he had been obedient in the beginning to pressures to which he had been exposed, was naïve enough toward the end of his term in office not to recognize the precise extent of influence exerted by the Prusso-Teutronics over the affairs of Germany. The misery of the peasant class had been aggravated as a consequence of the very measures which were enriching the Junkers. Bruening committed the tactical error of heeding his humanitarian feelings, a dangerous luxury for a German statesman. He had been moved by the peasants' misery, and to bring about a remedy had envisaged a plan of settling small farmers on land taken from poorly exploited large estates. This land would have to be condemned at prices to be determined.

This *Siedlungsplan*, although quite modest in extent, alarmed the Junkers exceedingly. They began to conduct a campaign against Bruening, speaking of his "agrarian Bol-

shevism." Bruening aggravated his mistake in the eyes of the Prusso-Teutronics by retorting with a dangerous argument. To justify his plan he hinted that he would let the Osthilfe abuses be brought up again and he threatened to prosecute the people responsible for them. He ingenuously imagined that it would suffice to pronounce this threat in order to win the argument. Actually the argument was dynamite and caused an explosion. The stable Bruening regime which had lasted more than two years disappeared in a trice.

Representatives of the Landbund and the Herrenklub had worked on Colonel von Hindenburg and he interceded with his father, only a few weeks after the Marshal-President's re-election in which Bruening had helped considerably. The Marshal felt a certain gratitude toward his Chancellor and was embarrassed to have to sacrifice him. But what could he do when Bruening had committed the blunder of definitely displeasing those Landbund gentlemen? And then had not Oscar remarked that if too much were said about the Osthilfe business, people would end up by wondering similarly about the circumstances under which the deed of gift to Neudeck had been made?

Hindenburg called Bruening into his office and the interview ended with the latter's resignation. The Chancellor had been able to govern only with the aid of the famous "decrees of dissolution" of the Reichstag, signed in advance by the President. Since the Marshal no longer accorded him his confidence and refused to sign the necessary decrees from that time on, Bruening had to leave.

Three men chiefly had contributed to Bruening's fall, three ambitious men who depended upon different sources of strength: von Papen, General Schleicher, and Hitler. They had thus succeeded in eliminating one rival who had been in their way. The problem now was for each to eliminate the other two.

*The Man of the Junkers*

Franz von Papen was the man of the Junkers, or at least, recognized their strength, intended to serve them faithfully, and derive thereby well deserved advantages. He was not a Junker himself, in the strict sense of the word, for he did not come from the eastern provinces. He was descended from a noble Westphalian family. His ancestors had participated in the terrible practices of the Fehme of Westphalia but were not part of the circle around the Teutonic Knights. Von Papen, a member of the Herrenklub, had nevertheless been accepted by the Junkers as one of them, and he conducted himself as a faithful executor of the Landbund's designs.

Attaché of the German Embassy at Washington until 1916, von Papen had been responsible for numerous acts of sabotage carried out to obstruct American manufacture of armaments. He later joined detachments of the German army in Turkey and after the war became active in politics. A devout Catholic, he was at first a member of the Centrum party, the Catholic party *par excellence*. Then, having realized that the real power was in the hands of the Junker class, he swerved further and further away from the Centrum, whose platform opposed the Junkers', and applied himself exclusively to the promotion of Prussian policies.

By reason of his Westphalian origin von Papen had close connections with the big industrialists of the Ruhr. He exerted himself therefore to strengthen the bonds long existing between Junkers and heavy industry. Not ignoring the influence which the Nazi movement appeared to be gaining in the wake of the Junker movement, he procured subsidies several times for Hitler from the industrialists. In these efforts he was later matched by Schacht. Each time, of course, he acted with the full approval of his masters, the Junkers. Finally recognizing the prestige surrounding Marshal von Hindenburg and taking account of the fact that as long as he was President of

the Republic he would wield great authority, von Papen attached himself particularly to his person and acquired considerable influence over him.

Von Papen's intrigues contributed greatly to Bruening's fall. Member of the Centrum party like Bruening, he should normally have formed a common front with him. Actually he set a trap for him. After getting him to talk privately about his plans for dividing land into lots, he hurried to report these conversations to the Herrenklub and to Hindenburg. He gave them to understand that Bruening was promoting a policy contrary to Junker interests and that it was necessary to get rid of him.

*The Man of the Reichswehr*

General Kurt von Schleicher was above all else a soldier and in his political attitude depended chiefly on the Reichswehr. He was also considered the more or less official delegate of the army in the political world. This was the rôle he intended faithfully to perform. He hid in the shadow of the different governments which succeeded each other—the ever alert watch-dog over the interests of that powerful organization, the Reichswehr. His mistake was to believe that the Reichswehr was a power in itself which could get along without every other power, including the Junker class.

In spite of his Prussian origin Schleicher didn't like the idea that the Reichswehr had to receive orders from the Landbund, but at the outset he did not show his displeasure. To strengthen his position he sought allies outside the Reichswehr. He believed he had found them in the persons of Gregor Strasser and Captain Roehm, two men who represented, within the Nazi party, tendencies opposed to the Junkers.

Schleicher figured that Roehm, who was at the head of the 600,000 men comprising the SA, and Gregor Strasser, who

came immediately after Hitler in the Nazi hierarchy, would be the real future masters of the Nazi movement.

Gregor Strasser was the sincere fanatic of the movement, a direct antithesis of the Machiavellian Hitler. Strasser still believed in the program represented by the name "National Socialist" and took a very censorious attitude toward the Prusso-Teutonics' hold on Germany's affairs. Gregor Strasser was, moreover, strongly influenced by his brother Otto on this subject. The latter, though clearly the more intelligent and discerning of the two brothers, did not have the prestige of Gregor because he was younger. Cognizant of Hitler's lack of sincerity and of his servile submission to the Prusso-Teutonic powers, Otto Strasser left the Nazi party in July, 1930. Gregor stayed because he imagined that with the great influence he wielded over the militant members of the party he would succeed in making his ideas triumph.

Through Gregor Strasser, Schleicher hoped to secure the help of the Nazis and their parliamentary representatives who were very strong in the Reichstag. Roehm did not have the sincerity of Strasser. He was a simple adventurer, but, South German like Strasser, he disliked the strong influence of Prussian lords on German affairs.

His cohorts of the SA struck terror everywhere. They were composed of hoodlums of every sort, including some elements from the Consul and Rossbach organizations. These had not been able to find other employment after dissolution of those organizations, and finding themselves abandoned by their former bosses, ended up by joining the first free gang willing to feed them.

In spite of the presence of these elements on its roll, the SA, under Roehm's leadership, did not incline toward the Junkers. Roehm figured that the Nazi party would soon be the sole force of importance in Germany. Since he was at its core with his 600,000 SA men he would wield the real power.

Schleicher expected to use to advantage his identity of

feeling with Strasser and Roehm on the subject of the Junkers. Certainly the Reichswehr was, *to his mind*, the really supreme power in Germany. But if he were to oppose the Junkers, the Nazis, especially if they were of the complexion of Gregor Strasser and Roehm, would be welcome allies. Consequently as a service to his newly acquired friends he violently opposed General Groener, War Minister in Bruening's cabinet, when Groener decided to dissolve the semi-military organizations of the Nazis, including Roehm's SA.

Groener usually acted as a man of politics rather than as a general. As for Schleicher, he knew that he could count on the full support of the Reichswehr even if there were conflict between himself and Groener. Moreover, the latter, who was not of noble birth, had always been considered by the other generals as an upstart plebeian. Schleicher now showed the generals clearly that the Nazis could be of great use to them and that the SA would end up by augmenting the Reichswehr troops. Their dissolution must be avoided at all costs. Schleicher and the Reichswehr were therefore in agreement with von Papen and the Junkers in the matter of getting rid of Bruening and Groener. This facilitated the abrupt dismissal of the Chancellor by Hindenburg, for the Marshal heeded the counsel of the Reichswehr.

Von Papen and Hitler rubbed their hands. Thanks to the aid they had received from Schleicher, they had got rid of one of their rivals for power.

#### *Hitler Chooses His Masters*

Of the three people left in the poker game after Bruening was "cleaned out," Hitler was by far the best tactician and at the same time the most hypocritical and Machiavellian. Ever since the beginning of his career he had had but one goal: personal power. To achieve it he was always ready to make any concession or any compromise. He also knew exactly for

whom to reserve these concessions and compromises, for he judged accurately the importance of powers opposing each other and figured that he should always ally himself with the strongest.

Hitler knew that the democratic parties in Germany were completely paralyzed, at first as a consequence of acts of the *Fehme*, and later because of the rise of his own party which had been effected with all the cunning of demagogism and terror.

There remained the Prusso-Teutonic group which controlled Germany's affairs to a greater and greater extent. Hitler realized that he must reckon with several divergent forces within this group.

The Junker organizations, with their "professional" offshoot, the *Landbund*, and their "social" outgrowth, the *Herrenklub* appeared to be the most powerful. The bulk of the Junker class were interested only in maintaining their feudal privileges, but the secret Junker organizations, descended from the Society of Lizards, seemed to have kept alive the most fantastic, most ambitious Prussian expansion schemes.

The big industrialists of Westphalia ran second. They had by this time definitely chosen their path of industrial expansion: the rearmament of Germany. Hugenberg, who controlled a powerful press and the "Deutschnazional" party in the Reichstag, was their agent. The industrialists felt inferior to the Junkers in the matter of secret organization. Their infiltration into the machinery of the State was not as complete as that of the Prussian lords. Nevertheless, they were superior in financial means.

The third component of the Prusso-Teutonic group was the Reichswehr. Sprung from the same roots as the Junkers, joined to them by a thousand ties, and generously serving their interests, the Reichswehr still had an existence of its own, determined by its own professional ambition. Groener was an example of a general who had almost completely escaped the

grasp of the external powers which controlled the Reichswehr. Schleicher, mouthpiece of the Reichswehr until 1933, at first had a meek attitude toward the Junkers, but later tried to save the army from their influence.

These tendencies show that the army officers, proud of their professional knowledge, had at times an exaggerated opinion of the influence which their armed forces gave them in the internal political scheme, and did not always look favorably upon the rôle which the other elements of the Prusso-Teutonic group made them play. In spite of this fancied independence, the Reichswehr on the whole was still an organic component of, and faithfully submissive to, the Prusso-Teutonic group.

The officials sprung from the old Prussian school, descendants direct or spiritual of "officials of the Order," did not form so coherent an entity as the Reichswehr, for example. They could be found scattered here and there throughout the machinery of administration. They could not be distinguished, on the surface, from officials of another type of a more modern and more democratic background. By now they could also be met—and this had been true for some time—well beyond Prussian frontiers, in other parts of Germany. Prussian centralization had functioned well in Germany since Bismarck's times: Prussian officials were sent all around the country and local officials were brought closer and closer to the Prusso-Teutonic type of thinking through the influence of the numerous patriotic and professional organizations under Prussian control. Not necessarily allied and related to the Junkers and officers, but sometimes merely coming from schools steeped in the old Prussian spirit, they were faithful servants, in most cases reaping the personal reward for their devotion. If they committed abuses, or closed their eyes to the abuses of others, this was always because of their devotion to what they thought—sometimes correctly, but often mistakenly—a higher German cause. Highly disciplined them-

selves, and disciplining others—therefore very intolerant—, highly conscious of what they called a “Prussian sense of duty,” they may well be considered chiefly the victims of their traditions. They were victims as well of the dark intentions of the rest of the Prusso-Teutonic group.

Characters of every background and description gravitated about the Prusso-Teutonic group, serving its interests and gaining advantages in exchange. Writers, university professors, bankers, etc., in large numbers, had realized that they could count on the success of Prusso-Teutonic plans and became their ardent propagandists.

But all these folk were not an organized entity. Hitler, who sought only personal power, was therefore not in the least obliged to reckon with them as factors in the internal political scheme. Furthermore, for the same reasons he could also neglect the functionaries, in spite of their numerical importance. Hitler, who was a good judge during his entire career of the political importance of people and groups he encountered, knew that all these elements would follow him without hesitation, from the moment he succeeded in coming to terms with the three great contemporary branches of the Prusso-Teutonic group: Junkers, industrialists, and Reichswehr.

### *The Men Who Mattered*

In order to achieve such an arrangement, Hitler figured that he needed either to come to an agreement with the men in whom these three blocs placed their confidence, or else eliminate these men. The men who mattered were Schacht, Hugenberg, von Papen, and Schleicher.

Schacht had influence over heavy industry and the banking circles which were behind this industry. Hitler knew, after his talks with Schacht in 1930, that he could thenceforth count on him unreservedly. Furthermore he himself had given Schacht and his friends absolute pledges regarding the execu-

tion of the financial and economic plan in which they were interested. Schacht had secured Hitler's promise that after he seized power Schacht would be allowed to return to the direction of the Reichsbank and would be able there to finish the job of financially isolating Germany from the rest of the world. Behind the wall of isolation, rearmament could be ceaselessly pushed and heavy industry would be generously supplied with orders.

On Schacht's suggestion, Hitler was also willing to accept the service of that other faithful servant of the aims of heavy industry: Dr. Walter Funk. Schacht and Funk were to have, from then on, *carte blanche* in everything concerning the economic action of Nazism. (Goering later tried to eliminate Schacht, whom he considered a competitor in the economic field. Although Goering himself had succeeded in establishing strong ties with the Prusso-Teutonic group, he could not get rid of Schacht completely because the latter right down to the present has been supported by big industry.)

Hugenberg was the political and journalistic henchman of the industrialists. Hitler figured that he would be easy to satisfy. A post in the cabinet when Hitler succeeded to power, advantages granted his newspapers, would be sufficient to keep him quiet so that he could later be relegated to the background.

Von Papen had as strong an influence over the Junkers as he had over the industrialists, and over the old Marshal as well. He had often played the rôle of liaison officer between all three and this had given him additional influence.

Schleicher in his turn had the full confidence of the Reichswehr.

Von Papen and Schleicher were therefore, in the eyes of Hitler, the two men with whom he must first reckon if he wished to prepare for his advent to power. He used his formula in connection with them first of all: *either come to an agreement with them, or eliminate them.*

To come to an agreement with both at once seemed to him impossible. The possible grounds for understanding were different in each case.

Von Papen, with whom Hitler maintained a close personal relationship, seemed entirely devoted to the feudal interests of the Junkers. On the other hand, Schleicher became more and more critical of these feudal tendencies and maintained relations with the anti-Junker wing of Hitler's own party: Strasser and Roehm. Hitler was kept informed of talks between his lieutenants and Schleicher, and Gregor Strasser tried to persuade him to ally himself definitely with Schleicher. He had to make his choice.

Weighing the power and influence of each, Hitler arrived at the conclusion that the Junkers were the most important force within the Prusso-Teutonic group. Next came heavy industry. These two forces, furthermore, got along quite well, and von Papen was the man of both. He must therefore treat him with respect.

Schleicher was the man of the Reichswehr, and the Reichswehr itself only executed the commands of the two other groups; therefore it was a less important force. Hitler's choice was made: he chose, as usual, the stronger. He could get rid of Schleicher without risk if he were supported by von Papen and the powers behind him. The operation he had in mind was not so simple as it sounded. It was a matter of discarding Schleicher and molding von Papen to his wishes. To succeed in this he knew of an infallible method: to set the two men against each other and make them do the job he had in mind. After the fall of Bruening von Papen was a logical candidate for the office of Chancellor. If Hitler could succeed in getting von Papen overthrown through the good offices of Schleicher, and Schleicher later overthrown through the aid of von Papen, the trick would be turned and Hitler himself could succeed to power.

By instigating this double action without bringing him-

self into the picture, Hitler foresaw the advantage of having both men find themselves in direct opposition to each other without getting himself involved. This was the classical system so frequently applied in Prussian history when competing nations were divided by getting each to believe the Prussians were on their side. Thus Bismarck succeeded in dividing and isolating Denmark from Austria on the one hand, and Austria from France on the other. The same Prussian system was to be used later by Hitler in the international game when he tried to make the nations allied against him believe—one after the other—that he intended to ally himself with that nation against the others.

Hitler used this system successfully in 1939 when he managed to separate Russia from England; and in 1940 when he made the France of Pétain believe that Nazi Germany could be a more valuable ally for France than England. And it was this same system that Hitler tried to apply in 1941, this time without success, when he attempted to persuade England and Russia alternately to conclude a separate peace with him so that he could later turn against the other. The game was becoming too transparent for him to succeed *every* time. But it's true also that the time-honored systems of "confidence men," though often exposed, nevertheless continue to claim new victims.

A further parallel may be drawn between Hitler's actions in inner German politics and the methods he employs in dealing with foreign nations. To weaken his enemy, internal or external, his preferred method is to use the enemy's "minorities"—whom he wins over to his side—to his own advantage; at the same time his *own* minorities also serve his purposes.

Notwithstanding the traditional fidelity of the Reichswehr toward the Junkers, he knew how to set General Schleicher against the Junkers without putting himself in evidence. He thus succeeded in causing a division among his victims, using the "minority" in the opposing camp, while his own "minority"

ties," Gregor Strasser and Roehm, were, due to their influence on Schleicher, unconscious tools of this transaction. Likewise, Hitler managed to put to good use foreign connections of a man such as Abetz, known earlier for his pacifist activities. Abetz was to bring him several French "leftist collaborationists," Jean Luchaire for example, who had formerly worked hard in behalf of the League of Nations. Hitler knows how to transform former opponents of his ideas into useful tools.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE LAST ACT OF THE TRAGICOMEDY

ON MAY 30, 1932, Bruening resigned. Von Papen followed as Chancellor and was succeeded on December 2, 1932, by General von Schleicher. Von Papen's and Schleicher's governments were the last two before Hitler's advent to power on January 30, 1933. The main trends underlying these events were the following:

(a) When von Papen succeeded to power he expected to have Hitler's support. It was with this in mind that he had procured subsidies from the industrialists for Hitler. The latter's support would be very useful to him, for although he governed with the aid of Presidential "decrees of dissolution," no Chancellor could afford to dismiss the Reichstag too often. The Nazis were the most important party in the Reichstag. Although they did not have a majority at their disposal, their support was nevertheless of great value to a government head. Besides, Hitler was an excellent "bogyman" who could serve to hold in check the parties of Germany's left, and intimidate countries abroad. The latter, under the effects of this intimidation, would be much more apt to make concessions to Germany in the direction desired by the Prusso-Teutonic. Von Papen figured that the bargain he had concluded with the Fuehrer was fair and satisfactory to both. He therefore expected it to last, the more so because Hitler could not hope to accede to power himself. Indeed the Marshal had pronounced an absolute veto of this possibility and the Reichswehr did not look upon it favorably either.

(b) Von Papen knew that he could count on the support

of the real masters of Germany, the ruling Junker clique and heavy industry. He served them well and had no doubts about his reward. Also, he had been on an equal footing with Schleicher in the overthrow of Bruening, and the general accepted a place in his cabinet as Minister of the Reichswehr. The Reichswehr would therefore be behind him too. Possessing, in addition, Hindenburg's friendship and counting on Hitler's integrity, von Papen imagined that he would remain at the head of the government for many years.

(c) Von Papen, believing his regime to be a lasting one, let it be understood that he had plans reaching far into the future. To consolidate his position positively he projected a *reform of the Weimar Constitution, a reform which would have procured him quasi-dictatorial powers and would have put an end to the parliamentary system, condemned to death by the Prusso-Teutonics. Then, in the field of foreign policy, von Papen recommended ideas in the direction of a "European Federation" under German control, and spoke of a rebirth of the Holy Roman Empire.* He had not, of course, taken any of his ideas from Hitler but rather from purely Prusso-Teutonic sources. Nevertheless one may say that if he had been able to maintain himself in power he would have tried to carry out, internally as well as abroad, schemes almost identical to those which Hitler was to produce later.

The result would have been practically the same and probably Prussian Germany under von Papen's control would have taken a direction about identical with the one she took under Hitler. True, von Papen would have carried out some of his plans at a different tempo, not possessing Hitler's brutally determined spirit. But what he lacked in brutality he compensated for in subtlety and his regime would doubtless have deceived foreign countries much longer. Hitler's one merit is that of having brought the danger into the foreground, into the public eye. The characteristic brutality

of his expression and action has resulted in making the world aware of the threat for which actually the Prusso-Teutonic forces are responsible—more aware than if a more commonplace individual, von Papen, for example, had pursued the same course.

The reason why von Papen was not the one finally to put these plans into practice for the Prusso-Teutonics was that Hitler did not intend him to be. Hitler was incontestably the stronger of the two. He was not going to allow von Papen to get the credit for the performance, nor to content himself with the rôle of "bogyman." He might consider this rôle but only if he could play it as a star. He had realized that von Papen expected to maintain himself in power as compensation for his faithful service to the Prusso-Teutonics. He therefore decided that he would not let him have that privilege: that he himself would occupy that post and serve the same interests with even greater devotion, allowing von Papen at most a position in the background.

#### *Blackmail and Intrigue*

The following sequence of events developed from the interplay of the motives discussed above:

1.—Von Papen organized his cabinet with Schleicher as Minister of War and representatives of the Junkers as holders of the greater number of portfolios. Von Papen dismissed the Reichstag and prepared, in agreement with Hitler, new elections in which the Nazis expected to increase their number of seats. The von Papen-Hitler alliance seemed firmly cemented.

2.—On July 20, 1932, von Papen forcibly removed from office the Socialist government of Prussia. As a reaction against the feudal powers secretly controlling public affairs, the people of Prussia had placed Socialist governments in power in the state of Prussia after the Great War. Since



Prussia represented about two-thirds of the area and population of Germany, its Socialist governments were a nuisance to the feudal powers who intended to keep effective domination over Germany's affairs. By putting an end, with his *coup d'Etat*, to the contradictory situation existing in Prussia, von Papen rendered another important service to his friends. The Prime Minister of Prussia, Otto Braun, and Severing, Minister of Interior (both of whom were Socialists), were frightened by the terroristic acts of the Prusso-Teutonics and did not dare to resist, although they had a considerable police force at their disposal. The legal excuse given by von Papen for his *coup d'Etat* was clearly on uncertain ground and was later invalidated by the Supreme Court of Leipzig. No matter; control of Prussian affairs was to remain in the future directly with the Reich.

3.—Von Papen managed to satisfy his "bosses" on all matters. Decrees authorized wage reductions. Osthilfe subsidies were granted wholesale to the Junkers. Satisfaction was given the Nazis as well: the measure calling for dispersal of the SA and SS, issued under Bruening, was suspended.

4.—New elections were held on July 31. The Nazis now obtained 230 seats in the Reichstag out of a total of 608. Hitler did not yet have a majority but he had nevertheless won the day. His future now looked most promising.

5.—On August 13, at von Papen's suggestion, Hitler went to see President von Hindenburg. The Chancellor thought that Hindenburg's authority would be sufficient to persuade Hitler to accept a post within the cabinet. Von Papen hoped that as part of the government, Hitler would continue his support. Hitler told Hindenburg frankly that he did not want a subordinate place in the cabinet. He wanted to be Chancellor or nothing. Hindenburg went into a rage but it did no good. Hitler gave him to understand plainly that from that day on he would be on the opposing side. The Hitler-von Papen alliance was terminated for the time being. It had defi-

nately served Hitler's purpose because he had obtained the new elections he wanted and had come out of these stronger than before. He had also avoided the dissolution of his "self-defense troops" which the previous regime had considered. Having secured what he wanted Hitler could now go into opposition to the government. From then on the government was again in danger.

6.—Hitler carried out his threat on September 12. The government met with a reverse in the Reichstag, Nazis and Communists voting against it. The result: 513 against, 32 for. Nevertheless von Papen did not resign; he dissolved Parliament. Elections were set for November 6. In the meantime von Papen arranged to have the industrialists cut off Hitler's subsidies. The Nazis would therefore find themselves in financial straits during the electoral campaign and the election returns would reflect this. Only twelve millions voted for the Nazis instead of the fourteen million at the last election, and as a result the National-Socialist party lost thirty-five seats.

7.—Von Papen, by forcing Hitler into elections without the financial aid he used to procure for him, hoped to put him into a position of inferiority. He expected that a new agreement with Hitler would thus be easier to achieve. The Nazi party was indeed passing through a severe moral and financial crisis. For the first time the most faithful members of the party began to doubt Hitler. Creditors became threatening. But the Nazis, in spite of their losses, were still the most important party in the Reichstag.

Von Papen thought he had brought Hitler into line and again offered him a post in the cabinet, even proposing to him the office of Vice-Chancellor. Hitler refused. He was still playing "all or nothing."

8.—The expedient of dissolving the Reichstag could not be repeated *ad infinitum*. Von Papen therefore put into execution an idea which he considered a stroke of genius. On November 17, 1932, he offered the President his resignation. He

knew that he would be asked to form a new cabinet. He would take advantage of the crisis to prove that it was quite impossible to constitute a government which would have a majority in the Reichstag. Under such conditions it could be shown that if any government were to be stable and effective the constitution would have to be changed. Von Papen as Chancellor would receive under the new constitution quasi-dictatorial powers.

9.—A strong government might perhaps have been able to effect such a change in the constitution, equivalent, without the approval of the Reichstag, to a *coup d'Etat*. In order to establish a government of this nature it would have been essential for von Papen to be able to count on full aid of the Reichswehr. However, at the last moment this aid entirely failed him. Schleicher actually declared that he did not wish to be in the new cabinet. At first von Papen thought it was a trick. He continued to bargain with the General, who remained adamant, his position taken. Under such conditions there remained no choice for von Papen but to announce, on November 30, that he was unable to organize a new cabinet.

10.—By leaving office von Papen thought he was taking a step which would add to his prestige; he expected to return some day. He retained Hindenburg's confidence, as well as that of the Junker-heavy industry group. He did not feel too strongly against Hitler for not supporting him, for the Nazi leader had for a long time given him plainly to understand that he was not disposed to cooperate except on condition that top place be reserved for him. As for Schleicher, who had stabbed him in the back, von Papen wished to wreak vengeance upon him at the first opportunity.

11.—What had inspired Schleicher's attitude? Negotiations with Gregor Strasser, Hitler's second-in-command as head of the Nazi party, had been the cause. For a long time Strasser had been dissatisfied with Hitler's close connections with the Junkers and heavy industry. He knew that these con-

nections had of late been passing through von Papen. As we have seen, Strasser still held to the old "Socialist" conception of his party and would have liked to free it of its servitude to the Prusso-Teutonics, toward whom he had always been critical. With this aim, he inclined in the direction of an alliance with Schleicher who willingly let himself be designated as the "Socialist General."

Such was the integrity of Strasser that he kept Hitler informed of his negotiations with Schleicher. Hitler encouraged them, for he saw in them a good way to separate Schleicher from von Papen. Urged forward by Strasser, and indirectly by Hitler, Schleicher had formulated a plan to organize the cabinet himself, succeeding von Papen, whom he dropped from then on, and taking Strasser with him as Vice-Chancellor. Hitler pretended to be willing to accept this combination, but stated his conditions.

12.—While waiting for the matter of Gregor Strasser's entry into his cabinet to be settled, Schleicher organized his government on December 2, hoping Strasser would join him in a few days. One of Hitler's conditions had been that Strasser ascertain, before accepting the post of Vice-Chancellor, that Hindenburg's veto regarding himself was still valid. Schleicher took Strasser to the Marshal, who gave him his word of honor that "the Austrian corporal would never be Reichs-Chancellor." Strasser considered the matter definitely verified. He informed Hitler of his interview and awaited Hitler's permission to accept the post of Vice-Chancellor.

Hitler was to arrive in Berlin on December 8 to discuss the question. Strasser waited in vain at the station. Hitler was not on the train. Later in the day Hitler rushed to Strasser's house and violently reproached him, accusing him of having lied. Hitler said that he had just seen von Papen, who had assured him that Hindenburg's word had not been final.

Since then Otto Strasser has recounted his brother's interpretation of this scene. Gregor, very devoted to Hitler, could

never see the full extent of his Machiavellism and attributed Hitler's reproaches to the intrigues of Goering and Goebbels. Indeed Goering and Goebbels had for some time been very jealous of the position occupied by Strasser in the party. Strasser, still confident of Hitler's good faith, felt that only under the influence of Goering and Goebbels could Hitler have believed that his most faithful lieutenant had lied to him.

Actually it is plain that Hitler, in spite of Strasser's interpretation, had been putting on an act during all these discussions. He had never had any intention of allowing Strasser to accept the office of Vice-Chancellor, for he knew that this would give Strasser practically first place in the party, which would not have suited him at all. Moreover, by entering the cabinet Strasser would considerably fortify Schleicher's position, and this again would not be to Hitler's advantage. Hitler had nevertheless pretended to approve of Strasser's negotiations, only for the purpose of eventually separating Schleicher and von Papen. Once Schleicher's cabinet had been formed and this separation accomplished, he could afford to reverse his position. The scene he had played before Strasser when he spoke of lies and betrayal, and quoted the testimony of von Papen, Goering, and Goebbels, was merely one of those sensational, dramatic stunts which Hitler always uses to good advantage when he wants to extricate himself from a difficult situation. Strasser let himself be deluded (like so many before and after him) into believing in the sincerity of the actor he was watching.

13.—Gregor Strasser was too weary to continue the struggle. Grieved and deeply shocked that Hitler should believe him a liar, he resigned his position in the party and left for a vacation in Italy. Hitler rubbed his hands with satisfaction; everything had gone as he had hoped. The danger of a *strong* Schleicher cabinet had been avoided and he could now study the best means of ultimately compromising the "Socialist General."

14.—Schleicher resigned himself to the fact that he could not count on direct aid from Gregor Strasser to improve the position of his government. However, he thought that his tie with the Reichswehr was enough to give him the requisite strength. He did not realize that Hitler, considering him a dangerous rival, had decided his fate. Hitler did not attack in the open, although he had at his disposal in the Reichstag the necessary strength to lead such an attack against Schleicher with every chance of success. But for Schleicher a Reichstag defeat would have been "honorable." As its sole consequence he would have been forced to resign temporarily, with nothing to prevent him from returning to power later.

15.—The only positive way to prevent any return of Schleicher would be to compromise him in the eyes of the forces actually in control of affairs: the Prusso-Teutonic. The left wing of his party again became the unconscious tool of Hitler. Nazi delegates of Strasser's group (that is, anti-Junker) introduced a question in the Reichstag on the matter of the Osthilfe abuses. General Ludendorff, whose ties to Hitler were well known, led a violent campaign against Hindenburg concerning the circumstances surrounding the deed of gift to Neudeck. In this way Ludendorff gratified his personal jealousy of Hindenburg. For Hitler, this was but one additional use of blackmail to enable him to succeed to power.

Schleicher also fell into the trap. Believing—as Hitler intended he should—that these attacks had been launched with Hitler's consent, he hoped to secure legislative support from the Nazis by promoting the airing of the scandal in the Reichstag and the press. The Socialists, glad of an opportunity to deal the Junkers a blow, joined in the chorus.

16.—Meanwhile Hitler, directly and through the medium of Goering and Goebbels, maintained close contact with von Papen and through him with the Junkers. He pointed out that Schleicher represented a danger to them because he was

favoring the exposure of the Osthilfe affair. The fact that the flames of this campaign were constantly fanned by Hitler's own acolytes did not embarrass him at all. He explained that he could discipline the fanatics in his party and guarantee that such incidents would not recur in the future only if he were appointed to the office of Chancellor.

17.—It was all blackmail, but von Papen was thinking only of his revenge on Schleicher. Besides he had finally realized that Hitler would accept nothing short of the Chancellorship. Hitler, needing von Papen's contacts with the Junkers and the industrialists, had given him to understand that he would be quite ready to cooperate with him on condition that von Papen content himself with a secondary rôle. The Westphalian was probably already resigned to this. He did not feel himself quite equal to a contest with Hitler and preferred to have him as a friend rather than an enemy. A decisive interview took place between the two men in Cologne, at the home of Baron Schroeder, financier of the heavy industry. Hitler gave assurances to his interlocutors that if he were granted the reins of power he would put an end to the socialistic sallies of his party's left wing.

18.—Von Papen had no difficulty in persuading his friends, the Junkers and industrialists, that they should henceforth place their bets on Hitler. Only the latter was ready to guarantee that the Osthilfe scandal would no longer be discussed. Besides, Hitler could carry out as well as he—or perhaps even better, he must admit—the scheme already outlined by von Papen on which the entire Prussian clique had agreed: constitutional reform with complete concentration of power in the hands of the Chancellor, continuation of the work of rearmament behind the screen of Germany's financial isolation, inaugurated in 1931; and finally, reconstruction by stages of the Germanic Holy Roman Empire. All this had hitherto constituted the Prusso-Teutonic scheme as expounded by

von Papen. Hitler would take charge of it thenceforth for the benefit of the same silent partners.

19.—On January 12, Schleicher was "guest of honor" at the Landbund banquet. A Landbund bulletin was passed around containing a violent attack on the Chancellor. Schleicher demanded an explanation. It was not given. He was made to feel that the article expressed the feelings of the Landbund members and that was all. Schleicher rose and left the hall accompanied by the generals present. He still did not understand that his fate was already sealed. Junkers and the Landbund had let themselves be persuaded by von Papen, and in the end by Hitler, that Schleicher was dangerous to their interests.

He did not realize that nothing could save him now, that only the method of his departure was left to be arranged. Jan Barginhusen writing in the magazine *Die Weltbuehne* \* on January 24, 1933, said:

"The amount of personal authority with which Schleicher assumed office is already terribly diminished. The Landbund in particular has treated him badly . . ." Barginhusen concluded his article with the words: "*The German Reich is a Republic. All power comes from the Landbund.*"

20.—The last act of the tragicomedy took place at the presidential palace. Hindenburg still was hesitating about dropping Schleicher, who seemed to have the generals' support. But his son, Oscar, made it clear that Schleicher was promoting revelations about the Neudeck affair and if that continued, a scandal very embarrassing to father and son might well break out. True, the army still favored Schleicher, but on the other hand the Junkers were absolutely against him and this counted much more. Faced with these considerations the aged Marshal no longer hesitated. On January 28, 1933,

\* Published by C. von Ossietzky, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, who was later to die in a concentration camp.

Schleicher asked Hindenburg for the famous decree, signed in advance, which provided for dissolution of the Reichstag. This decree had been granted his predecessors who had ruled with the aid of the threat it contained. Schleicher had no doubt that it was a simple formality and that the decree would be granted him without difficulty. But Hindenburg refused, and Schleicher understood that the President had withdrawn his confidence. He was deeply hurt and resigned.

21.—Nothing remained to be done but to appoint his successor. Von Papen was prepared to let Hitler have the post. The Junkers agreed. Heavy industry agreed. Why shouldn't they, since there was no other candidate available to accomplish what had been planned?

22.—Only Hindenburg was still unable to reach a decision. He had given his word of honor that the "Austrian corporal" would not be Chancellor. The Junkers therefore arranged a final stunt to speed things up. On January 30, 1933, one of their leaders, Count von Alvensleben, rushed to the Presidential palace with the "scoop" that Schleicher had put himself in command of the Potsdam Garrison and was marching on Berlin to arrest Oscar von Hindenburg, Papen, and Hitler. The "news" was pure fabrication but it had its effect. Under the stress of emotion Hindenburg finally consented to have Hitler form a government with von Papen as Vice-Chancellor. The Nazi regime was born.

On January 30, 1933, began the *Gleichschaltung*. The various parties were liquidated in succession and a single party, the Nazi party, was left. Henceforth it was to be the only front for the interests which had promoted its rise to power.

People had the impression that from then on Hitler was sole master of Germany. Everyone wondered at the ease with which he had gained possession of the helm, meeting with no resistance either from left or right. They forgot that the

leftist parties, weakened by underground efforts of the secret societies, were no longer prepared to resist.

As for the forces behind the rightist parties, these had all agreed to consider the Nazi party as their front for the future. No other parties would be necessary. The old garments had served their purpose. They could be thrown away.

## CHAPTER VII

### PRUSSO-TEUTONIA— ALIAS NAZILAND

AFTER JANUARY 30, 1933, every one of Hitler's decisions, without exception, accorded with Junker interests. No act of his can be found which in the slightest degree harmed these interests. From the moment he took the reins of power no one ever spoke of the Osthilfe scandal again (although previously it had often been stirred up by Nazi Deputies in the Reichstag) or of "colonization" on Junker land. The different anti-Junker slogans of early Nazism were definitely buried by Hitler. The Junkers and Hindenburg breathed a sigh of relief.

This business disposed of, work began in earnest on the Prusso-Teutonic scheme.

The entire plan carried out by Hitler corresponded point by point with Prusso-Teutonic intentions. The details are well known. Decree-laws gave Hitler dictatorial powers all along the line. This meant the end of what still survived of the representative system and individual liberties in Germany. These transformations had been planned for. It was only the methods of accomplishing them that were original and bore the Hitlerian stamp. The burning of the Reichstag on February 27, 1933, was arranged to make people believe that the Communists were responsible for it and make them admit that it was necessary to vest unlimited power in Hitler to save the country from Communism. In contrast to the previous regionalistic character of Nazism, Hitler abolished every trace of autonomy in the various States, and subordinated all Germany to the domination of Berlin. The masses, deprived of their leaders by the Fehme, did not protest.

Making use of his dictatorial powers Hitler took the neces-

sary steps to stand in well with every part of the Prusso-Teutonic group. He introduced measure after measure to satisfy the Junkers and the big industrialists. He flattered the Reichswehr too and tried to make it forget that Schleicher, the man of the Reichswehr, had been replaced by himself as the head of the government. As for Schleicher, the latter's grudge was against von Papen rather than Hitler—because he believed it was the former who had been principally responsible for his downfall. He never realized that, in the last analysis, everything had been organized by Hitler.

#### *Denying the Past*

But Hitler had a revolutionary past which might be embarrassing to the interests he was now serving. He had hoisted himself to power by fulminating for years against existing power, including the Prusso-Teutonic forces.

Originally Hitler was simply an agitator without a definite purpose, ready to ally himself with any group of interests, if he saw some advantage to himself from such an alliance. Among his faithful followers were sincere men like Gregor Strasser, who had strong German nationalist feelings but moved in a direction opposed to Prussianism. They ardently desired a German Federation free of any Prussian tinge. While the National Socialist party had had its headquarters in Munich, it had often displayed a Bavarian-inspired regional resistance to the centralizing pressure of Prussia. From time to time also, the Nazi party had appeared to be a movement with socialistic tendencies, opposed to Junker feudalism. Röehm's views were of this character, though clearly he was Strasser's moral inferior. But Hitler, who did not feel constrained by any basic principles and who made allies where he could (or rather, wherever his alert opportunism might lead him), surrounded himself also with men like Goering, the Prussian officer type; like Alfred Rosenberg, who dreamed

of a new Prusso-Teutonic religion; and like Goebbels, who would have sold his soul to anyone, but who concluded that selling it to the Prussians would be most profitable.

Despite his numerous ties with Prussian interests, for a long time Hitler would eat at anyone's table. His definite alliance with the Prusso-Teutonic forces was not consummated until early in 1933. Without it he would never have been able to accede to power, nor could he have risen to international importance. He would never have been more than a picturesque demagogue in the arena of internal German politics. Hitler was never a world threat until the support of Prusso-Teutonic forces gave him the key to power.

The left wing of his party, Roehm and his three million SA, had taken his earlier promises seriously. These folk no longer understood what was happening. They had believed that the hour of revolution had struck, and demanded changes which might be extremely annoying to the Prussian clique Hitler was now planning to serve. Roehm went so far as to demand control of the Reichswehr by the SA and for himself powers superior to the generals. Decidedly, he did not yet understand what was going on.

The man in Hitler's entourage who had "understood" from the very beginning was Goering. He had always had personal ties with the Prussian powers. He now put himself more fully at their service. Consequently there was to be no change in his relationships with them and he was to be rewarded for his attitude: he would be permitted to set up his "Hermann Goeringwerke, A. G." within the empire of German heavy industry.

Hitler's accession to power became possible because of the confidence of the Prusso-Teutonics. He was well aware that he would be unable to maintain that power unless he managed to preserve this confidence. But the embarrassing activity of Roehm and his troops was imperiling it. Gregor Strasser was still estranged from the throne and his silence signified a con-

stant reproach to Hitler, reminding him that he had been false to his past. Kahr, leader of the Bavarian Separatists, formerly allied with Hitler, failed also to understand the Chancellor's alliance with the Prussian forces against whom they had striven together. This whole set was sowing unrest among militant Nazis and creating difficulties for the new Chancellor.

### *Killing the Past*

In the spring of 1934 the Prusso-Teutonics became increasingly worried over the restlessness in the left wing of the Nazi party. Their cabinet "liaison officer," von Papen, decided to post a warning. On June 17, 1934, he delivered a speech severely criticizing the revolutionary phases of the Nazi regime. This meant obviously that the Prusso-Teutonics were wondering whether after all they had made a good choice in the person of Hitler, and whether they should not replace him. Von Papen doubtless hoped that as a result of this speech Hitler might be forced out and he himself might again succeed to the office. He was adaptable and managed to fit himself into a subordinate office, but if the necessity for change arose von Papen was not averse to playing first fiddle himself, under the baton, of course, of the same band-leaders as before.

But Hitler clung desperately to his office and was prepared for any sacrifice to keep it. To meet the situation he improvised, as so often in his career, and his improvisation bore the usual stamp of his intuitive brutality. Goering had the same understanding of affairs as he, and followed him wholeheartedly, while Goebbels and Hess trailed along in more retiring fashion.

The bloody purge of June 30, 1934, born of this inspiration, was a master stroke. Hitler organized it *solely to regain the confidence of the Prussian clique*. Gregor Strasser and Roehm were executed. They were the ones who had wished to

proceed with the National Socialist revolution and had been reproaching Hitler for his alliance with Junkers and big industry. Schleicher was also killed. Despite his origin he had dared while in power to further a policy opposing Junker interests. Moreover, he remembered his negotiations with Strasser and Roehm and might possibly reveal at some future date the promises both had made *in Hitler's name* (and surely with his consent) for the purpose of arousing him to action against the Junkers. If Schleicher had survived the execution of Strasser and Roehm, he might at any moment have become an extremely embarrassing witness. Kahr naively had signed his own death warrant by reminding Hitler that he had once been on the other side of the fence, with the Bavarian Separatists against the Prussian powers.

Von Papen's arrest on the same date was necessary to make him clearly understand that Hitler had no intention of abandoning the position of "first fiddle." He had to accept with a smile the execution of his assistants. They had been unwise enough to draw up the speech delivered by von Papen and had dared to recommend that the powers behind the scenes accord their confidence to someone other than Hitler. Since they were persons of no importance, no one would protest their deaths.

Eventually von Papen was freed and was permitted to continue "to serve." The bonds between him, and the Prusso-Teutonic forces were too close to allow Hitler to sacrifice him entirely. He deserved a warning and Hitler was satisfied with that much.

By executing Schleicher, Kahr, Strasser, Roehm, and numerous other militant members of his own party having similar tendencies, Hitler had silenced embarrassing witnesses of his past. He had equally in this way arrested any future desire, within the Nazi party, to proceed in a direction opposing the interests of the Prussian forces. Besides he could now say to his Prusso-Teutonic masters: "For you have I sacrificed my

best friends. I have eliminated Schleicher as well, who dared oppose you. What better proof could I furnish of my absolute devotion to your interests?"

True, the Reichswehr, which was part of the Prusso-Teutonic clan, was angry at him for Schleicher's death. But Hitler knew that Junkers and industrialists were more powerful within the group than the Reichswehr, and in the course of his career he had never hesitated to betray weaker interests for the advantage of stronger ones. Possessing the confidence of Junkers and industrialists, he was certain that nothing could happen to him, and now that the general who had been bothering him was no longer present, he applied himself thenceforward to appeasing the Reichswehr too. Like a real "confidence man" he knew the best methods to regain the confidence of those whom he had tricked. Early in January, 1935 he read a declaration before an officers' society restoring Schleicher's "honor," the officers were pleased, and tranquility returned.

The contempt which the Prussian General Staff felt for the Austrian Corporal did not disappear overnight, but they no longer disputed his orders. Despite appearances to the contrary, orders were no longer given in his name, nor in the name of Nazism (which had changed completely from its earlier form). Hitler was now speaking in the very name of the ancient Prusso-Teutonic caste of which the army officers were members, and whose *supreme servant* Hitler had become.

#### *The Anti-Semitic Camouflage*

Since then, what is now known as Nazi Germany has been the very prototype of what the Prusso-Teutonics might have dreamed in their most optimistic moments. Hitler had supplied the methods but it was the Prusso-Teutonic scheme which had taken shape: Hitler had merely contributed the



anti-Semitic note to the choruses, which would certainly not displease the Prusso-Teutonics.

Anti-Semitic camouflage has been put by Hitler to excellent tactical advantage. He knew that he could maintain his influence over the masses if he succeeded in preserving the revolutionary appearance of his movement. In the past he had berated Junkers, heavy industry, Jews and Communists indiscriminately. He could no longer say anything against Junkers and the industrialists—they were now his masters. There remained the Jews and Communists. To make up for what he had lost in area of attack he would *intensify* his brawling against the latter two groups. Former Communists were more numerous in Germany than Jews; it was therefore chiefly against the latter that he loosed his attacks. It was always preferable to march first against the *weakest* minority, thereby winning the sympathies of all who were not affected by these attacks and who consequently believed themselves privileged.

Julius Streicher, filth-mongering editor of the *Stuermer*, had never been in the circle of Hitler's intimates. His movement had evolved on the fringe of the Nazi party. Nevertheless ever since he came into power Hitler drew from Streicher the inspiration for his anti-Semitic campaigns. Once he arrived at the conclusion, for the reasons stated, that it was good policy to intensify this campaign, it was natural, in order to go about it in the best way, for him to call upon the specialist.

One should not for a moment forget that the anti-Semitic movement was, for Hitler, chiefly a "smoke-screen" which served to hide his real intentions. The suffering of Jews in Germany and in territories occupied by the Nazis deserves all our sympathy, but the real danger which Hitler represents is quite another. Hitler prefers to place "the struggle against the Jews" in the foreground of his ambitions and from time to time "the struggle against Communists." The Teutonic

Knights when they left for the Borussian country had constantly on their tongues "the struggle against the pagans," when actually they were thinking of conquest and nothing else. The same class has preserved through the ages, from the thirteenth century to our day, the same ambitions for unlimited conquest. This class and their ambitions have been hidden, at various points in Prussian history, behind different screens. Now this front is called "Hitler," as tomorrow it may be called "Goering," "von Papen," or "Thyssen." The men have changed through the ages but the forces controlling them and the methods employed have remained the same.

We may add that Fritz von Thyssen's "flight" to Paris in April, 1940 was clearly designed to build up his prestige in the eyes of the Allies and to use him, if it becomes necessary to sacrifice Hitler, as a new front behind which the Prusso-Teutonic game could be carried on. Indeed, in the beginning of the war, Germany's masters were somewhat uncertain about the results they might expect from Hitler's blitz technique. Thyssen's trip to Paris was decided upon in order to prepare for a new camouflage in case of an unsatisfactory outcome of the war.

The successful invasion of France made such precautions appear to be superfluous. After Thyssen's return to Germany, "under heavy guard" to keep up appearances, it was learned that he was living quietly in a sanitarium in a fashionable Berlin suburb, instead of having been executed for having turned "traitor"—as everybody would have expected.

### *Serving His Masters*

It is a well-known fact that Hitler succeeded to power through von Papen's intrigues and with the support of Junkers and heavy industry. Nevertheless, most authors conclude that Hitler, after getting hold of the reins of the gov-

ernment, devoted his attention first of all to imposing the Nazi regime upon Germany and subduing every other power there, including the Prusso-Teutonics.

Exactly the opposite is true. Hitler, in order to become Chancellor, concluded a bargain with the Prusso-Teutonic powers and to this day has rigidly adhered to that bargain. It is true that ever since this agreement was made Germany has appeared in the eyes of the world in the guise of "the Nazi regime." It must not be forgotten, however, that Hitler has permitted to remain alive only as much of the Nazi system as suits the Prussian powers. He has suppressed everything that ran counter to those forces, including the "socialistic" and "revolutionary" nature of Nazism. The word "Nazi" has taken, since 1933-1934, a different meaning from what it had before, narrower and broader at the same time: narrower because it no longer corresponds at all to the program of early Nazism, and broader because of its use as a new cloak for Prusso-Teutonic ambitions.

In practice this means that Hitler, unpredictable character though he is, acts as leader only within certain limits, and these limits are prescribed by the powers operating as his "bosses." He has never come to any decision which would not have been fully approved by the Junkers and heavy industry, preponderant elements of the Prusso-Teutonic group. He appears now and then to be in disagreement with the Generals, but then it should not be forgotten that the Reichswehr is only a kind of "junior partner" in the Prussian company. Because of the professional pride which has always characterized military career men everywhere, the Reichswehr does not always submit blindly to the will of its associates. This was evident even in Schleicher's time and more recently as well, when, for example, General von Brauchitsch was recalled. Hitler acts a bit more freely toward the Reichswehr than toward his other partners, for, as in the days of Schleicher, he depends for support chiefly on the Junkers and big

industry who, by reason of their economic importance, are his real masters.

#### *"Nationalists" and "Prusso-Teutonics" Are Not Identical*

What may have deceived those who think that Nazism has overcome the forces which promoted its access to power is the fact that the rightist parties have been liquidated by Hitler just as thoroughly as the parties of the left. Hugenberg was forced to dissolve his party and had himself to resign from the first Hitler cabinet on June 27, 1933.

The misapprehension stems from the fact that one may confuse "rightist parties" with "Prusso-Teutonic powers." The parties of the right were, indeed, liquidated by Hitler but not the forces behind them.

Hitler considered the rightist parties as rivals. It is therefore understandable that one of his first considerations should have been to destroy them. But he knew that these parties were only fronts for more powerful forces. He never attempted to eliminate these forces for which he had always had a great respect. All he wanted was merely to become their sole agent and sole façade for the future. On this condition, he was ready to serve them blindly.

The highly competitive struggle between the so-called German Nationalists and Hitler was perfectly defined by Robert d'Harcourt on February 20, 1933, barely three weeks after Hitler's accession to power, in the French Catholic review, *Etudes*:

"Rarely have two parties waged a struggle as fierce as the Racists have against the supporters of Hugenberg. From the beginning a great gulf opened between them in their differing attitudes toward capital, or fixed fortune. The former group based their stand on the economic depression debilitating Germany. They themselves had more than once quite cynically acknowledged that German misery was their prime

ally. They had found in the bitterness and spirit of revolt of the masses and in the social climate in general, a springboard which they energetically exploited. To the young, and also to the embittered, they appeared to be revolutionaries. Their greatest strength was a vast stock of vague expectations and confidence in the overthrow of things as they were. In the eyes of the discontented unstable element the German nationalists [*i.e.*, the Hugenberg followers] had the disadvantage of appearing as a party of money-bags, of gorged individuals—and at the same time, a mummified group. All the forces of reaction congregated within this party: industrial magnates, great agrarians of the East, capitalists of every color, banded together to obstruct the road of revolution with a strong-box, and raise a wall of money against the barricade.”

The “Nationalists” had made the mistake of permitting reactionary influences which hid behind them to be seen too clearly. This was bound to render them unpopular. It was therefore not surprising that their representation in the Reichstag should have been the smallest. The Prusso-Teutonics had nothing to gain any longer by encumbering themselves with such a troublesome, weak front. It constituted a handicap to them from the moment they were able to replace it by the younger, more vigorous front offered by Hitler.

The exchange was wholly to their advantage. It is not astonishing that they should have accepted it as soon as they believed Hitler’s promises that he would faithfully serve them. These promises had been given directly, as well as through the medium of von Papen, during the weeks preceding January 30, 1933. When in 1934 doubts arose among the Prusso-Teutonics as to Hitler’s sincerity, he felt it necessary to reaffirm his unlimited devotion by the radical act of the blood purge of June 30, 1934. “He goes to the length of sacrificing his most faithful lieutenants for us,” said the Prusso-Teutonics, and they voiced no further doubts concerning his fidelity.

### *A Well-Constructed Hierarchy*

One may wonder why Hitler, who betrayed so many in the course of his career, including his most intimate friends, should never have attempted to betray the Prusso-Teutonics. It is the only bargain Hitler seems to have kept. The reason is simple: he believes them very strong and more powerful than any other group in Germany, and therefore prefers to travel in their wake. It is certainly not moral considerations which prevent betrayal on his part.

Hitler saw, during his long years of struggle to gain control of the ruling office of Germany, that it was always the men momentarily in the confidence of the Prusso-Teutonics who held this post. For years and years he had concentrated, therefore, on becoming that henchman serving the same forces and eliminating all rivals. After concentrating so long on this single aim he was not going to risk, by any false move, alienating the masters in whose power he believed.

If he had wished to revolt against these forces, the natural thought would have been for him to lean on his own party as all the support that was needed. This in short was the solution proposed by Gregor Strasser and Roehm. But Hitler, a cynic, had reached the conclusion that “popular” forces—groups which appeared in the public eye and whose membership was open to the great masses of the people—were much less powerful than occult, closed forces, whose success was guaranteed by their firm internal organization. The Prusso-Teutonics had all the earmarks of a group organized in occult, or at least closed, fashion. In comparison with these forces the Nazi party must be considered an open, “popular” organization. (The fact that the Nazi party had been built up by demagogic means does not detract at all from its open, popular character.) The Nazi party has weight due to its numbers; the Prusso-Teutonic group, to the nature of its conspiracy. (See page 30 for the rôle played, according to the Nazi

writer, Hans Krieg, by a "*Conspirational Community*" in the achievement of aims bequeathed by the Teutonic Knights.) Hitler realized that he could make the mass membership of the Nazi party serve him and he intended in turn to put himself at the service of the Prusso-Teutonic conspiracy. In this there was an hierarchical gradation from which Hitler, contrary to Gregor Strasser and Roehm, has never wished to break away.

Since January 30, 1933, Hitler has devoted himself—with the aid of the Prussian forces—to the achievement of the old plans of the Teutonic Knights, of the great Elector, of Frederick the Great, and of Bismarck.

In international matters, all Hitler's acts and decisions are what one would expect from any agent of the old Prusso-Teutonic scheme. But to a world unprepared for them they are the startling manifestation of a newly risen universal danger.

He spent a few short months exclusively on internal *Gleichschaltung*, eliminating every trace of the Weimar Republic and suppressing any possibility of disturbance from that source. The "authoritarian regime" which has always been a Prussian dream was fully achieved within a very short time.

Then, in the month of October, 1933, Germany withdrew from the disarmament conference of the League of Nations. The whole Prusso-Teutonic class was jubilant and the "heavy industry" wing in their midst feverishly prepared for heavy armament production. A few months of internal unrest followed which suggested the possibility of a split between Nazis and Prusso-Teutonics. But Hitler put an end to all that on June 30, 1934, and everything was straightened out.

#### *The Ancient Conquering March*

Rid of all disturbing elements, Hitler and the Prusso-Teutonics could thenceforth devote themselves completely to

the achievement of their common plan. The stages of this task followed one another in rapid succession. In March, 1935, conscription was again introduced into the German Army and Navy. This occurred in spite of prohibitions of the Versailles Treaty. In March, 1936, Germany occupied the left bank of the Rhine. Occupation of Austria followed in March, 1938; the "peaceful" occupation of the Sudetenland in September, 1938, secured under armed threat; the rest of Czecho-Slovakia occupied in March, 1939; annexation of Memel in the same month through pressure on Lithuania; and finally in September, 1939, occupation of Poland. The ancient conquering march of the Prusso-Teutonics was on again, directed along lines of least resistance; it was only the last of the above movements of expansion that excited world resistance and thereby the present war. The task of secret rearmament, begun by the Prusso-Teutonics immediately after the German defeat of 1918 and completed with the help of the Fehme's activities, had produced its results.

"God has erected our Empire before the Kings of the Earth," wrote Emperor Frederick II, who launched the Prusso-Teutonic forces on the path of conquest. From Frederick Barbarossa, who dreamed of himself as *dominus mundi*, to Hitler, who dreams of similar things, is but a step.

The guiding diplomatic principles are identical with those of the old Teutonic Order. In the expansion of territory, no friendship or treaty is an obstacle and any excuse is valid. The precepts of Prusso-Teutonic theoreticians are followed, such as the teachings of von Buelow, who held that: ". . . it is first necessary to attack one's neighbor, before coming to more distant States. If this rule is not observed, countries separating the two main adversaries may declare themselves either with or against the great empire. Should they declare themselves against this power everything is changed, since a coalition of little States is equivalent to one big State."

*The "New Order" Is an Old Order*

More recent occupations of countries by Germany (Norway, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, France, Yugoslavia, etc.) at first glance may appear as simple strategic occupation. If one examines them more closely one can perceive, however, that the Prusso-Teutonic powers took advantage of each invasion of foreign territory, from the first day of occupation, to prepare in the most thoroughgoing scientific manner for the permanent subjugation of the occupied country. This was accomplished first of all on the economic level, where the Prusso-Teutonics' interests primarily are. They are well aware that economic control leads automatically to political control. German economic agencies follow closely on the heels of armies of occupation and endeavor to transform the temporary hold on conquered countries into a permanent economic control.

Until the present this operation has succeeded much more completely in a country like France, where local authorities have accepted the idea of "collaboration" than in countries occupied against the resistance of their governments. In France capture of control of corporations through forced sale to Germans took place with a show of legality because French authorities and courts, under pressure from Vichy, countenanced these transactions. The Prusso-Teutonics know that military occupation of France cannot last forever. Besides, they have probably considered the possibility of a German defeat which would bring about the fall of the Nazi regime. They must have said to themselves that even in that case conquest of France would have yielded them the key advantages they had hoped to gain: they figured that it would be extremely difficult for the French to find the legal forms to get rid of German control over nearly the whole of their national economy. This control having thus been established within legal framework, according to French law, the task of

destroying it would be arduous and complicated. This would be true even for a government under no obligation to respect the agreements of Vichy. It would of course be more true for any French government recognizing Vichy laws and decrees.

All of this entered into the preparation for what Hitler calls the "New Economic Order." This "New Order" is in its entirety the old Prussian scheme of List, which ninety years before Hitler's reign provided the blueprint for the creation of European economic unity under domination of a Prussian Germany. It also provided for subsequent expansion of this Prusso-Teutonic Europe through invasion of the markets of other continents, and establishment of "protectorates" throughout the world. This scheme had always been close to the hearts of the Prusso-Teutonic powers of Germany and had been placed by Dr. Schacht and Dr. Funk in the foreground of the aims pursued by Hitler. Territorial conquest has a meaning subordinate to economic conquest, according to List's formula.

An army of German accountants and auditors was installed in Paris, following the army of soldiers, to draw up "inventories" of all important French enterprises. After these inventories were drawn up German officials and delegates of private German industry called upon the various enterprises to secure for themselves absolute and quite legal control of these firms by the aid of political pressures of every sort and especially by means of the aid lent by "collaborators" within the French government.

All this is in no sense a product of Hitler's invention or of Nazism. Neither is it the result of private initiative of a "racketeering" sort, springing up perhaps because of the complacency of certain German military authorities. (This is not to say that there is no wholesale racketeering going on in addition to the above transactions.) It is a matter, on the contrary, of initiative completely consistent with the official German scheme, which is the Prusso-Teutonic scheme stem-

ming from List and other theorists of the same school of thought—and has nothing to do with Nazism.

### *The Anti-Christian Current*

Aside from his conquest and these efforts to establish a "New Economic Order" under German domination, Hitler's "innovations" are primarily in the religious domain. In order not to lose the sympathies of that section of German population which is deeply devoted to the Catholic or Protestant Churches, he approached this subject with many precautions during the early period of his rule. For some time, however, this aspect of his regime has come to the foreground in Germany and the world press has long dealt with the evident efforts of Hitler to substitute a purely Germanic faith for all forms of religion having foreign connections. It is openly said in Germany today that *Mein Kampf* should replace the Bible and it is hinted that Hitler will some day replace Christ.

Certain observers called attention to the fact that Hitler had definitely created something new at least in the field of religion. All "religious innovations" now taking place in Germany are generally attributed to Nazism. But if we reread what Professor N. A. Cramb said in 1913 about German aims in the domain of religion (see pages 107-110) we must admit that in this sphere as well Hitler's "innovations" correspond point by point with the ancient Prusso-Teutonic scheme. Creation of a new world religion, purely Teutonic in character, appears in this light to be as important a goal in the whole scheme as the aims of political and economic conquest:

"It is reserved for us to resume in thought that creative rôle in religion which the whole Teutonic race abandoned fourteen centuries ago," young Germans told Cramb in 1913. Judæa and Galilee struck Germany in the splendor and heroism of her prime. Germany and the whole Teutonic people

in the fifth century made the great error. They conquered Rome, but, dazzled by Rome's authority, they adopted the religion and the culture of the vanquished." And Cramb adds: "Thus while proposing to found a world-empire, Germany is also proposing to create a world-religion."

Seen in this light the violent anti-Semitic campaigns of Hitler are blows against the *combined* Judeo-Christian religions: these first blows are directed at the weakest branches of a single tree. The basic idea came from the Prusso-Teutonics and even Hitler's methods of employing it are of old Prussian inspiration: to attack first the weakest of one's adversaries and then only to extend the attack to the others, one at a time. This tactic makes possible clever propaganda which spreads the belief that only the minority group is the enemy, in this case the Jews.

This anti-Christian current is a very ancient Teutonic trend. It is true that the Holy Roman Empire was, in its origins, profoundly Occidental and Christian; but the struggles waged against the Papacy by the Emperors who succeeded one another brought out atavistic, essentially anti-Christian elements in these men as a reaction. Thus there had been, as we have seen, two men in Emperor Frederick II. In his youth he pursued an imperial vision of Occidental idealism. Later he became a *hard* man, the "hammer" of his century, a new Attila whose moral concepts were no longer Christian but quite close to those of the barbarians.

It was precisely this Frederick II—"second edition" (who was not so different from his grandfather, Barbarossa) who had intrusted an imperial mission to the Teutonic Knights. By acting thus he had automatically transmitted to them his basically anti-Christian principles, or at least a-Christian and amoral (according to our concept of the word "moral"). The Teutonic Order has pursued through the centuries this tradition and has, so to speak, crystallized it by giving it permanent form and even accentuating its anti-Christian direction. It is

therefore not astonishing that the Teutonic Order should have been so frequently in conflict with the Papacy. The Prussia created by the Teutonic Knights and the Prussian spirit which evolved finally handed down to the present the anti-Christian tendencies observed by Cramb in 1913.

When Alfred Rosenberg travels around Germany setting up his "Ordensburgen"—in which young Germans are indoctrinated with the principles of the new Teutonic religion—he is definitely inspired by the old tradition of the Teutonic Order. He is, moreover, right in calling these institutions "Ordensburgen," because each ancient "Burg" of the "Order" in the past centuries filled the same rôle as the recent institutions of the same name: The ancient Ordensburgen were outposts of Teutonic thought and expansion in Slavic countries.

The Teutonic Order and its offshoot, the intermingled Prusso-Teutonic forces, have kept alive the Teutonic spirit of revenge against the Christian influence. The tradition of the Fehme has evolved on parallel tracks and was inspired by the same spirit. The spirit of the great mass of the peaceable and profoundly Christian German population has through the ages provided a striking contrast. Observers during all this time have taken account of only this latter aspect of affairs and have not attached sufficient importance to the Teutonic forces which were awaiting their hour.

The belief in a Teutonic Messiah was always alive in these circles: Barbarossa was asleep in his mountain\* and would come forth some day to lead his people toward new destinies.

Hitler expects to be this Teutonic Messiah. In this respect also he intends to take advantage of ideas which were set in motion long before his time. He knows how to "steal the show" in every field. He expects from his faithful that they take him with a respectful seriousness, as becomes a *Barbarossa redivivus*. The salute "Heil Hitler" was introduced precisely in order to superimpose Hitler on the image of Christ.

\* See pages 337-341.

The expression Third Reich was created to recall Barbarossa. The second Reich had been, in the interpretation of Hitler's faithful, that of Bismarck (although the latter had never so described it), and the first, that of Barbarossa. The figure *three* leads back to the figure *one*, as the Holy Trinity symbolizes the one God. Hitler, or rather Hess and Rosenberg—his experts in "mystic matters"—, were clever at choosing their symbols to catch the public imagination.

### *Destruction of the Family*

The Prusso-Teutonics succeeded in liberating themselves completely from the background common to Western civilization: the Greco-Christian moral philosophy. The fight against the Christian spirit is thus an organic part of Prusso-Teutonism; Bismarck's famous "Kulturkampf," directed against the Catholic Church, and Hitler's open battle against all Judeo-Christian religions can be considered logical—simply as a part of this fight.

We must put into the same class the methodical attempts made in Germany to break up the traditional concept of the family as well as the efforts to introduce into the relations between young people of the two sexes a lack of restraint directly opposed to Western ideas. The encouragement of sexual relations between girls and boys of neighboring youth camps and the propaganda advanced in schools to accustom the girls to the idea of having illegitimate children "for the State" or "for Hitler" are not accidental occurrences. They are part of a systematic plan to break up all the social forms and customs on which Greco-Christian society was built.

This program has been extended even to the territories occupied by Germany. Recent reports from Poland and from Alsace-Lorraine seem to confirm that the "New Order" which the Prusso-Teutonics visualize in Europe would mean, in this sphere also, regression to long outdated concepts.

The family idea is very ancient and goes back to pre-Christian times. It was adopted, however, as an organic part of the Greco-Christian moral concept. It evolved out of an elementary philosophy of life in which was latent the idea of the "primacy of the human person." The Individual, instead of being submerged in the Tribe or in the State, forms his own little universe, the Family—and all further development of Society starts at that point. The undermining of the ideas \* on which the family has been built up means something further: the suppression of a unit in which the individual was able to find shelter from the uniformity and the exactions of the Tribe or the State. German policy in the matter of the sexual education of youth thus appears as an organic part of the plan to submerge the individual within the State—the Prusso-Teutonic State, of course, even if the individual is Alsatian or Polish.

No girl should be selfish enough to save herself for her future husband or to be dominated by thoughts of the family she may wish to raise. Such thoughts are no longer a virtue. They are a crime against the State: children should be begotten only for the State. "There is but one virtue—to forget oneself as an individual," said Fichte and von Bernhardt long ago. The individual's thought of procreating should be governed only by the needs of the State. And if these children are born out of wedlock, so much the better: without family attachments they will be much more willing to submit themselves to the State.

#### *The Five Prussian Characteristics*

We may now recapitulate the various traits which are inherent in "Prussianism." We can find *five* such traits, or characteristics. First, there is the threefold mark mentioned in

\* *i.e.*, those opposed to promiscuous sexual relations, those referring to the first allegiance of children to the head of the family, etc.

Chapter II as particularly characteristic of the Teutonic Order. Let us review the meaning of each of these traits:

(1) *The Teutonic harshness of the Knights.* This appeared on many occasions as the barbaric element in Prussianism. This is the trait which goes back directly to pre-Christian days. It explains the many cruelties apparent in the Third Reich which so often shocked the Western World.

(2) *The egotism of caste and the arrogance of the Teutonic Knights.* The Knights were of noble descent. The Order itself was described symbolically as a "Hospital" of the German nobles, a sort of charitable self-help institution with the purpose of procuring due and undue privileges for the caste members. We are facing here the feudal element in Prussianism; in its name were committed the numerous abuses for which the Junkers so often were criticized. This created and encouraged in Prusso-Teutonic Germany an atmosphere of corruption strangely fused with the so-called "higher goals." This element is also responsible for the famous arrogance of the German Junkers and officers which has frequently aroused world-wide resentment.

(3) *The fanaticism and the "disciplinarian" mentality derived from the monastic origin of Prussianism.* The Teutonic Knights acted in the most un-Christian manner and were often in open struggle with the Church. Nevertheless a severe monastic rule reigned supreme within the Order in contradiction to the frequently un-Christian outward conduct of the Teutonic brethren. It is true that in this rule the accent was on discipline and not on Christian spirit. This rule was inspired by the statutes of the two other Knights' orders in the Holy Land, especially by those of the Templar Order. The strictness of these statutes was a guarantee of survival for these Orders. The leaders of the Teutonic Knights wanted to insure survival of their Order by using the same means. In spite of their frequent opposition to the teachings of the Church they



could employ monastic rule because this was not necessarily Christian. The traditions of the Sicilian-Norman State in which Emperor Frederick II had been raised also influenced these statutes toward the same disciplinarian spirit. From this source the Order inherited especially its conception of a State led by officials governed by the same rigid discipline. Out of this monastic fanaticism and disciplinarian mentality evolved the famous "Prussian discipline" of the German army and officialdom; and also the intolerance characteristic of most institutions in present-day Germany. This is the trait in Prusso-Teutonic Germany which is at the antipodes of any "sense of humor." But this monastic fanaticism in the Knights' times also meant absolute devotion to the cause of the Order and utter disregard of the "primacy of the human person." This primacy was a Christian principle but its application was necessarily lost in the rigid monastic structure of the Teutonic Order: the Order's interests took precedence over those of Christianity and mankind. In the course of centuries the Teutonic Order developed into the Prussian State. The absolute devotion which originally had been accorded to the Order now was directed toward the State. This devotion in modern times took shape as the German totalitarian idea applied by the Prusso-Teutonics in connection with the Prussian-controlled German State.

Besides this threefold mark, the Teutonic Order had two further characteristics. These were the ones directly inherited from the Hohenstaufen Emperors: (a) *ambition aiming at world domination*; (b) *fight (undercover or open) against the Christian spirit*. These two aims were closely connected. As we have seen, the Hohenstaufens concerned themselves only with the unlimited extension of their own power in the direction of world domination—toward which the Church took (and had to take by its very nature) a strongly critical attitude.

The Teutonic Order inherited from the Hohenstaufens both these ambitions and the spirit of resistance against the supremacy of the Church and Christian teachings in general. In the isolated hot-house of Eastern Prussia these two "Leitmotivs" grew to gigantesque proportions through the centuries.

These five characteristics were perpetuated by the inner circle of the Order and later by the Junker organizations. They still pervade present-day Prussianism. They have even obtruded themselves into the foreground to such an extent that their sudden appearance in the limelight has surprised the world. It has not been fully realized that this is no spontaneous creation of Nazism, but that these characteristics have for centuries been inherent in Prussianism.

It is due to the five traits or tendencies we have described (two of which were inherited from the Hohenstaufen Emperors, three developed within the Teutonic Order) that Prusso-Teutonic Germany (Hitlerian Germany today) seems to be so utterly different from the rest of the world. And it is also because of the same characteristics that it is so different from that other Germany: the Germany of Greco-Christian culture—which used to be *the* Germany before Prussian domination was established over all German nations; and which may still exist, to a limited extent, in a part of the country—or at least in certain German homes.

#### *The All-Important Fight Against the Christian Spirit*

Of the five characteristics of Prusso-Teutonic Germany, the two inherited from the Hohenstaufen Emperors described under (a) and (b) are the most significant and the most important. These—"ambition aiming toward world domination" and "fight against the Christian spirit"—appear as the basic driving forces. It is quite natural that this should be so, since the Teutonic Order accepted these two aims when it

embarked on the Borussian adventure and consciously carried them forward through the centuries.

The "fight against the Christian spirit" seems to be the more all-embracing of these two aims. It is even a kind of prerequisite to the other aim—unlimited imperialism—because the Christian spirit is necessarily opposed to domination of the world by a single group or State. Also, it was possible for the other three characteristics of Prusso-Teutonic Germany which we have described to develop into what they are today only because of the basic anti-Christian tendency of the Order, and in later times of the Prusso-Teutonics.

The Teutonic harshness and egotism of caste, *lacking all limitations set by Christian morality*, made possible the cruelties and abuses for which the Teutonic Knights were infamous in Prussia, the peculiar practices of the Fehme in the Middle Ages and particularly in its revived, more cruel form after World War I, and the present inhuman mass-killings of the civilian population in the Ukraine, Yugoslavia, etc.

The unlimited devotion to the State *without the humanizing influence of Christian morality* is at the origin of such statements of principles as those contained in the writings of the Prusso-Teutonic theoreticians (see Chapter I)\*—statements which Western people with their Greco-Christian background feel are basically opposed to their way of thinking. This also explains the constant lying and broken promises of the Teutonic Order where advantages for the Order's State were at stake; and also the same attitude in more recent Prussian history—particularly in the case of Bismarck, whose Machiavellism and cynicism are surpassed only by Hitler's. This peculiar type of devotion to the interests of the State finds justification for the most evil actions, provided they benefit the State.

\* For example: "Right belongs to those who are victorious in war"; "The right of conquest is universally recognized"; "Strength is the highest law"; "Without war we would find degenerate races"; "War is a sound panacea for the people"; "Everything has its price"; "The State is an end in itself."

### *Secret Germany*

One may ask whether there is an actual secret organization behind the Junkers and the Prusso-Teutonics or whether the familiar Prusso-Teutonic organizations are responsible for the sequence of events presented in this book.

Really secret organizations seldom betray their existence by outward signs. Nevertheless the founding of the secret "Society of Lizards" (Eidechsenengesellschaft) is an historical fact. Reliable historians have related how this society tried to pull the strings in Prussia while the Order of the Teutonic Knights still existed. Kotzebue attributes to the activities of this secret society the secularization of Prussia.

The unilinear evolution which has taken place since then—in Prussia and in a Germany dominated by Prussia—and which corresponds point by point to the basic principles of the Society of Lizards might be considered sufficient circumstantial evidence of the survival of a secret Prusso-Teutonic organization right down to our time. But there is more. The entire process of Prussian growth seems to be inspired by an uninterrupted organic plan. The continuity in the achievement of this plan while the Teutonic Order was responsible for the growth can well be understood. No interruption in the logic of events is observable, however, even since the time when the Order ceased to manage the affairs of Prussia. The natural thought, of course, is that the Society of Lizards, which was—while the Order still existed—its rival for influence in Prussia, secretly carried forward the same plans on its own; and that the same Society inspired the Great Elector, Frederick II, Bismarck, Wilhelm II, and the different leaders of Germany since 1918.

Our circumstantial evidence goes further: Germany was defeated in 1918 and the old ambitious plans of the Prussian elements seemed shattered forever; yet within a few months somebody, somewhere, behind the curtains in Germany, made

decisions of the highest importance. These decisions meant revival of the old Fehme, the organization of a systematic terror planned to undermine the young German Republic and to facilitate Germany's secret rearmament. So-called "secret societies" sprang up from one day to the other all over Germany—societies which were secretive as regards the details of their decisions and activities, but whose existence itself was a secret from nobody. All these secret societies were closely connected among themselves; and there was no rivalry between them. Their activities complemented each other wonderfully. Even a superficial observer must conclude that all this was possible only if these societies received instructions from the same hidden, absolutely secret sources.

The fact that the Fehme terror sprang up so rapidly, so "spontaneously" after the first World War tends to confirm the view that the decision to institute this terror must have been reached by a very small group operating secretly. It is extremely difficult to imagine that a large, openly organized association like the Reichs-Landbund (the professional organization of the Junker landowners), or a social club like the Herrenklub (to which nobody but the cream of the Prusso-Teutonics was admitted), could overnight have taken such a grave decision as the starting of a new blood tribunal. Matters of this delicate character can be decided only by a few people who are party to the same secret, and bound by the same vows. Unless this condition exists, endless discussions ensue which hinder a quick decision; and the danger of betrayal exists. It is a fact that no time elapsed before the decisions were taken, and the orders were issued to the different executive agencies. Further, nobody ever betrayed the working of the inner circle of the twentieth-century Fehme.

At the end of the nineteenth century, Emperor Wilhelm II, who was nurtured on the traditions of the Prusso-Teutonic Order, actually reestablished this Order in Prussia and Ger-

many. The descendants of those who, acting in the Society of Lizards, displaced the ancient Order from Prussia—and contributed thus to its disintegration—now claimed for themselves the right to appear cloaked in the dignity of those whose place they had taken. (From their point of view they were perfectly right to do so: although they had displaced the Order, they actually were carrying on the Order's traditions. They acted like a man who secures control of a corporation by the foulest means and then, continuing on the original policies of the enterprise, makes speeches to the glory of his predecessor.) Not much was said about the activities of the revived Order, but its yearly conventions in East Prussia were generally noted by the German newspapers. A few months after the beginning of the present war, a short notice appeared in German papers announcing that Hitler himself had been initiated into the Teutonic Order.

No information is published about the internal organization of the contemporary Prusso-Teutonic Order, nor about its exact connections with what—if it still exists—is the present-day survival of the Society of Lizards.

In a word, we cannot expect to find documentary evidence about the precise functioning of "Secret Germany," but we do not need more than circumstantial evidence for our purposes. In this connection it is interesting to note that in May, 1924, when the 700th anniversary of the University of Naples, a University founded by Emperor Frederick II, was celebrated, a crown was found near the sarcophagus of the Emperor in the Cathedral of Palermo with the following inscription:

"Seinem Kaiser und Helden  
Das geheime Deutschland"

("To Their Emperor and Hero, from Secret Germany")\*

This Secret Germany, whatever may be the form in which it

\* From: F. Kantorowicz, *Kaiser Friedrich der Zweite*, 1928.

functions today, may certainly be grateful to Emperor Frederick II, author of the Bull of Rimini, and thereby spiritual father of the Teutonic Order, who enabled Secret Germany to preserve to our times his mystic, world-spanning ambitions.

It is this Secret Germany, this Germany carrying on a centuries-old conspiracy, about which the Deputy Gareis spoke in 1921 in the Bavarian Landtag, and which caused his murder. It is this same Germany which, as we have seen, brought Hitler to power and has enabled him to appear in the eyes of the world as a great conqueror, or a great criminal—depending on the point of view.

If we assume the existence of a Secret Germany, the open Junker organizations like the Reichs-Landbund and the Herrenklub—which also derive from the Order of the thirteenth century—have only a secondary rôle, carrying out instructions of the secret group like all the other recently established societies which we have mentioned. But even if we disregard the circumstantial evidence which proves the actual survival of Secret Germany, we must admit that a straight line can be detected between the Teutonic Order of the thirteenth century and the Germany of today. In this latter case we must assume that the Reichs-Landbund and the Herrenklub are the final source of all decisions because they would be the highest in the hierarchy of all existing Prusso-Teutonic organizations. They would thus have the final responsibility for Germany's present-day rôle.

The facts set forth in this book support the former view.

### *The Barbarian Revolt*

Before the advent of Hitler to power, the German Catholic thinker, Theodore Haecker, clearly recognized that Hitler was the faithful valet of the Prusso-Teutonic forces and that he would act in this capacity when he became head of Germany. Haecker considered the Prussian trend an evil German

tradition, a kind of bastard tradition. Here is what Haecker wrote in December, 1932 (in *Virgil, Father of the West*):

“We are aware that we are living in dark times. We still have in us just enough light to be conscious of the darkness enveloping us; to perceive it through the heavy vapors rising from the second and third Reichs (Bismarck and Hitler: or we know that the advent of the Racists will inaugurate a new age of Humanity which they will baptize the third Reich) and which are exhaled by the impure, hollow declarations of our second and third-rate apostles and prophets of empire. At the bottom of these foul Messianic fermentations is no trace of spirituality [Geist] and even less of the Holy Ghost [Heiliger Geist]. Their sole excuse, perhaps, and even more the excuse of those they carry along in their train, is the spiritual and material distress in which we are living.

“The great trickery, the great fraud is this: from the hour that Prussia incarnated the idea of Empire, this idea of Empire changed in dimensions, ceased to be the common affair of the Christian West, and shrank to the compass of an internal affair, of the Germanic tribes of the Forest of Teutoburg . . . plebeian, cardinally vicious and perverted in its deep essence. From the beginning of its history Prussia has been a State, and nothing more than a State. A State stricken with hydrocephaly. She has never had any ethnic character. She has never been a race like Bavaria or Swabia. She has never been a people or a nation. *She has never annexed a race, a people, a nation except by means of deceit.* . . . \* The Prussian State has introduced into the Germanic idea of the Reich elements which cause it to disintegrate internally, short-sighted State centralism, and an anti-Christian, bestial nationalism.”

The entire background of what we consider the “Hitlerian” regime is here in the words of Haecker published two months

\* The italics are mine. P.W.

before Hitler's accession to the chancellorship. Nazism may have represented many things since its beginning. Since January 30, 1933, it has been nothing more than "Prussianism" and lives only by the grace of Prusso-Teutonic forces which alone count in Germany.

Hitler and his acolytes have taken all the blame for whatever can be said against the Germany of today, while Prusso-Teutonic Germany has succeeded in making the world almost forget that it ever existed—and certainly has succeeded in concealing the fact that it is still there, more than ever responsible for everything that is done in Germany's name.

The forces which in 1933 allowed Hitler's accession to power kept him there on condition that he serve their interests, and that he systematically pursue their cherished plans of conquest. They always preferred to work through some such figurehead, because, recognizing the possibility of a setback to their ambitions, they thought it preferable for others, rather than themselves, to be blamed for any failures. Thus, they would be able to reorganize their activities later under new guises.

Domination over all of Germany was the first goal which attracted the Prusso-Teutonics. Once this was accomplished the rest of the world was to be brought under control.

In what Prussianism has become through the ages it represents a "barbarian revolt" against all that is dear to us in Western culture. Whether Hitler is overthrown tomorrow or not, Prussianism will still be here in all its threatening reality, a real focus of evil which to this day has always escaped the surgeon's scalpel.

Unless, this time, we have the courage to cut out from its depth all of the putrid flesh. . . .

## *Part Two*

CHAPTER VIII  
PRUSSIANISM AND DOWNWARD  
PROGRESSION

IN THE preceding pages we described our Western morality as Christian or Greco-Christian. We shall examine—see pages 261 ff.—the Greek foundations of Christian morality.

The expression “Christian” has not necessarily a religious meaning. Non-religious humanitarian thinking and all *modern*\* social doctrines are also of Greco-Christian essence. We cannot enter here into the debate whether or not the same type of moral philosophy could have spread just as well by means other than the penetration of the Christian religions into different parts of the world. It is a fact, however, that the Christian religions served admirably to disseminate the sort of concept of life which is usually considered essential to Western moral thought. It is cherished both by religious and a-religious thinkers.

*Our Morality and Theirs*

As for the expressions, *moral* and *morality*, we employ them in their broadest senses. We do not use them in connection with the so-called “moral code,” a sort of narrow code supposed to specify day-by-day “dos” and “don’ts”; but rather to describe the basic principles regulating our entire lives. “Morality,” in this sense, is a sort of concept of life which permanently inspires our entire existence, including our political existence.

\* Of course the reader understands that we do not include among *modern* social doctrines the Prusso-Teutonic and Nazi theories—which are definitely *regression*.

We are in the habit of constantly criticizing our everyday moral code ("moral," in this case, in the narrower sense of the word). This criticism is useful in effecting a perpetual rejuvenation of the petty rules regulating our lives. Such constant criticism does not, however, mean that we wish to change the *basic principles*. And it certainly does not mean that we wish to replace them with principles which are simply a return to the distant past.

It is not within the scope of this book to examine whether or not our morality is *higher* than any other morality in general, or the Prusso-Teutonic morality in particular. Certain schools of thought oppose every attempt to differentiate as to the worth of competing moralities. We shall intentionally avoid this issue of the relative or non-relative worth of moral concepts. We shall, however, assume the risk of saying that most of us would not exchange our type of life for the primitive existence of our own ancestors in the Stone Ages or for the superstition-filled lives of some of the savage tribes today in the middle of Africa. We take this position despite the feeling of insecurity created by the present turmoil—which occasionally prompts the easy comment that primitive peoples lead a happier and more desirable existence than ours. Such expressions of natural discouragement cannot change the universal and fundamental belief in progress.

We shall content ourselves with a simplified standard of values for moral concepts. It evolves from the following trend of thought:

Our primitive ancestors (just as primitive people today) had primitive ideas about the physical constitution of the world. Their eyes saw as far as ours but, because they had not yet related all their separate observations, their mental vision did not extend very far. This nearsightedness in laws of the physical world was accompanied by a nearsightedness in moral principles. It amounts to the same thing whether we

say that they had not yet obtained the necessary divine inspiration, or intuitive vision; or we might even say, pragmatically speaking, that they had not yet recognized the *advantages in the long run* of a certain moral attitude over another more primitive one, which had been giving more immediate satisfaction to the egotistical instincts. There seems to be a parallel and uninterrupted progress in knowledge of the physical world and development of moral laws—uninterrupted except for temporary reversions which can be attributed to a sort of pendular movement. (We cannot examine here the rôle of defunct or dormant civilizations which at one time reached great moral heights, perhaps greater in certain respects than ours. It seems that profound intuitive insight into the domain of moral truth has not always been accompanied by sufficient insight into physical cosmic truth. Consequently moral-philosophic thought necessarily came to a dead-end and even deviated into superstitious aberrations—closely following the superstitious short cuts taken by these civilizations in the domain of cosmic truths. This disparity between physical and philosophical research may have been the actual cause of the disappearance or retrocession of these different civilizations. It is quite possible that our own civilization is exposed to the same danger through a lack of balance in the opposite direction: *i.e., if research in the field of moral philosophy is unable to keep pace with our rapid progress in scientific research.*)

For all practical purposes we can say that we prefer to let our lives be ruled by a moral philosophy evolving from a wide knowledge of physical phenomena—a wider knowledge than that of our ancestors in so-called "barbaric" times. We feel fully justified in applying this latter simplified standard of values in choosing between competing moral concepts.

On these terms we are in a position to state that such and such a moral concept is "better" (*i.e., better for us*) than

another—and consequently that we are willing to fight for the former. By stating, in this manner, a definite preference between different moral concepts, we can avoid subtle discussion as regards the respective “heights” of these moralities.

We shall have occasion later in this book to apply this simplified standard of values to the Prusso-Teutonic moral concept and to our Greco-Christian moral philosophy. We have already described in Chapters II–VII the historic background of the Prusso-Teutonic stream of development. We shall now try to discover *what was the original point of separation between the two currents, the Prusso-Teutonic and the Greco-Christian.*

A brief study in this direction may confirm what we have said before: that it is fundamentally its departure from the Greco-Christian way of thinking and morality which makes the Prusso-Teutonic current so dangerous for the Western world.

#### *The Two Basic “Progressions”*

Most readers are familiar with the history of the first thousand years of the Christian era. The feudal organization which was established in Europe in Carolingian times has often been described. We review some of these details in the following pages simply because they have a definite bearing on matters discussed in this book. *Barbarian mentality, feudal system, Prusso-Teutonic conspiracy and contemporary Nazi ambitions* on the one hand; *Greek civilization, Roman legal school of thought, Judeo-Christian religions, humanitarian movements, modern social doctrines, and democratic traditions* on the other hand, represent two different organic progressions moving in opposite directions. We shall call them the “Downward Progression” and the “Upward Progression” respectively. It is important to show all the relationships between the different phases within these two progressions.

#### *The Christian Empires of the Barbarians*

It is commonly recognized that Western civilization stems mainly from Greek and Judeo-Christian sources.

It is true that in political customs, in particular, and in legal traditions the influence of ancient Rome is not negligible. When we want, however, to define the deeper layers of Western civilization, we think much more often of Athens than of the Romans. It is because of this greater depth that Greek traditions are assumed to be a more important influence in our lives.

The teachings of Christ spread rapidly in the Western world during the first 1000 years A.D. It is useless to repeat here the details of this process. The Roman Empire extended from the Atlantic Ocean to the lower Danube and Africa. The Christian religion took root within the different parts of the Empire. Then the Emperor himself, Constantine the Great, embraced it and contributed largely to the Christianization of his people. Several Christian Emperors followed and continued the process of closing down the Pagan temples.

Emperor Theodosius the Great decided to divide the Empire between his two sons. This division was the origin of the two Christian Empires: the Eastern Empire, extending over Ancient Greece, Asia Minor, Egypt and Syria; and the Western Empire, including Italy, Spain, Africa, Gaul and Britain.

The Western Empire was soon overrun by different barbaric peoples, several of which were Teutonic. The Vandals settled in Spain but were overcome by the Visigoths who established dominion over parts of Spain, Portugal and southern France. Into Italy came first the Ostrogoths. Then, after their kingdom had been destroyed, it was the Lombards who invaded the country. Later the Normans settled in the southern part of Italy. The powerful Franks established themselves in the Rhine basin and penetrated into Gaul as far as



the Loire. Britain was overrun by the Angles, Saxons, and later by the Normans.

The Western Emperors courted the various barbarian chiefs in a vain attempt to save their thrones. Toward the middle of the fifth century, Attila's Huns, forever on the move, plundered Gaul and Italy, and then the Vandals ravaged Rome. The power of the Western Emperors had completely disappeared. Their title had become meaningless and was finally dropped.

Now began a remarkable spiritual process among the barbaric conquerors who had settled in different parts of Europe. The mystical power of the Christian religion—which had succeeded in a very short time in replacing the ancient Roman religion—extended to the barbarians as well. Enthusiastic missionaries were at work. All the different conquering tribes, including those of Teutonic origin, one after another became Christian: the Franks, the Alemanni, the Boiarians, the Thuringians.

By the end of the eighth century, the Pope was in continual conflict with the Lombard Kings and the Roman nobles. Pepin the Short, King of the Franks, came to the aid of the Pope and vanquished the Lombards. The Pope thought that the Frankish rulers could be of lasting help to the Papacy. To increase the strength of these valuable allies and their prestige in the Christian West, he had an excellent idea: to bestow on them the crown of the former Western Roman Empire. The memory of the Roman Empire was still alive in the West, although the Empire had actually continued to exist only in the East (as the Eastern or Greek Empire).

In 800 the Pope placed the crown on the head of Charlemagne—or Karl the Great—son of Pepin. The Carolingian Empire, a revival of the ancient Western Empire, was born—this time an Empire under Germanic leadership, but of Christian faith like the earlier one.

The establishment of the Western Empire under a German

Emperor was the culminating point in the conversion to Christianity of the different German tribes. The East Roman Empire was falling into ruin and was no longer in a position to be the shield of Christendom against Islam. The fresh ardor of the recently converted German nations was welcome support to the Church. Furthermore, Charlemagne united under his sceptre the greater part of both the Latin and Germanic nations. His Empire consequently became a very active center of crystallization for what was to be known later on as the Western civilization of Christian essence.

In the beginning the reconstituted Roman Empire was a valuable aid to the papacy. After Charlemagne's death, however, great disorder followed. The Empire soon fell to pieces. Otto of Saxony, who was chosen King by the German princes, reestablished the Empire in 962 under the name "Holy Roman Empire." He organized it in the Carolingian spirit. Otto's "Saxon" house, later the so-called Franconian House, and finally the Hohenstaufen family thus carried forward the tradition of a "Roman" Empire under German rule.

Whether these latter houses actually descended from the Carolingian line or not is immaterial. They can certainly be called Carolingians since they perpetuated the Carolingian ambitions. They all claimed descent from Emperor Arnulf—himself a direct descendant of Charlemagne. According to this version—which has not been historically substantiated—the mothers of Conrad I of the Franconian House, and Henry I of the Saxon House were both daughters of Arnulf. The grandmother of the Hohenstaufen Frederick I (Frederick Barbarossa) came from the Saxon imperial house. In a very broad sense the Saxon, Franconian and Hohenstaufen Emperors can consequently be called Carolingians.

In the course of centuries, the imperial ambitions took on a shape more and more different from what they were under Charlemagne. The accent was no longer on cooperation with the Church, but on domination of it.

So long as the Papacy was willing to take orders from the Emperors there was no conflict between the two powers. New Popes came. They burned with great inner fire and no longer were disposed to subordinate themselves to the Emperors whom the Papacy had helped to power. We have briefly recounted (see pages 31-32) the long-enduring conflict between the Popes and the Emperors. It reached its climax under Frederick Barbarossa and his grandson, Frederick II.

This conflict caused the departure of the Hohenstaufen Emperors from their original Christian principles. It transformed Frederick II into "Hammer of the World." The Emperors liked to appear in the rôle of faithful but disappointed sons of the Church: having met at Rome a different reception from what they had imagined, they nursed their grudge against Christianity itself.

It is true that the Hohenstaufen Emperors had imagined something quite different from what they could possibly have expected. Their imaginations had run away with them. The original pact between the Frankish rulers and the Papacy provided for mutual protection. The Pope placed the crown of the Roman Empire on the head of Charlemagne to give him more prestige in the eyes of the people he had brought under his sceptre, so that he would be better able to protect the Papacy. The reconstitution of the Roman Empire did not, however, imply that the Emperors had been assigned the mission of conquering the world and becoming its supreme ruler—*dominus mundi*—as the Hohenstaufens imagined. Nor did it imply giving to the Emperors a power superior to that of the Pope in all matters, even in things spiritual.

Emperor Henry III of the Franconian line—from whom the Hohenstaufens were descended through maternal lineage—went so far as to name Popes. The Church was on the way to becoming a mere puppet in the hands of the Emperors it had itself created. The danger was accentuated by the fact

that the clergy were being brought into the feudal system which had been established in the Empire in Carolingian times.

#### *Feudalism: Barbarism Under a Christian Cloak*

The very creation of the feudal system was an attempt of barbaric customs to survive under a Christian cloak. It was possible for this system to evolve in the recently Christianized Kingdom of the Franks, and to spread from there throughout the Empire only because neither the Emperor nor the nobles took the real meaning of Christianity very seriously.

The feudal system crystallized and developed numerous inequalities and privileges. Mere possession of riches and force gave definite rights—for example, that of conducting private wars, in which force alone was decisive. The complicated tangle of the rights and powers of thousands of petty sovereigns and holders of fiefs created innumerable injustices. Slavery was being combated by the Church and gradually disappeared—but the system of serfage which developed under the feudal regime was not much better. The only difference between slaves and serfs was that the latter were attached to the soil.

The rapid establishment of the feudal regime in Carolingian times was fundamentally an attempt to nullify the teachings of the Church in the social field by those who feared them. To us it appears as a sort of indirect reaction of barbarism against Christianity. Greek society had contained the elements from which our modern democratic ideas evolved. The same elements were also present to a certain extent in Roman society. Feudal society represented a definite regression from the standards of these two societies.

In the spiritual field Christianity meant the continuance and development of certain Greek ideas. Christianity can be considered a great step forward in comparison with the old reli-

gious and moral concepts of the formerly barbaric tribes which, as part of the Carolingian Empire, accepted the new faith.

In the social field, on the contrary, feudalism was organized according to old barbaric principles, although hidden under the cloak of Christianity. Social development thus represented a regression back to times preceding the civilizations of Greece and Rome.

Consequently the spiritual development, which can be considered as a definite step forward, took place *in spite* of the emergence of feudalism. This paradoxical state of affairs—progress in things spiritual and regression in social matters—characterized the Middle Ages.

Greek moral concepts and Roman law faded into greater and greater oblivion. Feudal law and morality sprang from barbarian concepts. The feudal fief was simply an outgrowth of the homestead of the barbarians. Thousands of powerful warriors set up their own particular little realms and protected them by force. The mass of the people who were subjected to their will were the *serfs* and the *villains*. The serfs were bound to the soil. Their condition differed only slightly from that of the slaves whom they replaced. The villains—villagers—were originally a grade higher. They paid rent for the soil on which they toiled. The distinction between the two classes tended to disappear. Both had to submit to the will of their lord. Without his permission they could not marry, nor change habitation, nor bequeath their goods. He was their judge in all matters—he protected them against neighboring plunderers and himself plundered them at will. No law decided their quarrels—only the suzerain's pleasure. He set the amount of the taxes which were to be paid to him in products of the soil. He subjected their daughters to the *jus primæ noctis*, if it so pleased him.

But the suzerains, unless they were among the most powerful, had to submit in turn to suzerains higher than themselves.

The great majority of the suzerains were thus at the same time both lords and vassals. Fealty of one to another was based on the use of land and was not a personal matter. Certain barons might be vassals of different suzerains because certain of their holdings carried with them allegiance to different lords. Occasionally the various lords to whom the same baron owed fealty engaged in wars among themselves and this created endless complications. The vassal owed his sovereign military service, help in the administration of justice, and financial help on certain occasions. If the vassal died without heirs the fief reverted to the lord.

Castles and fortresses were erected not for the State but to protect the property of the lords and to facilitate plunder of surrounding lands. In case of dispute the barons could ask to be tried by their peers—that is, by vassals on the same level. In practice they took justice into their own hands. This resulted in so-called “private wars,” and personal disputes were decided by duels. Power and not law determined all matters.

#### *Christian Reign or Imperial World Domination*

Imperial power in the so-called Holy Roman Empire flowed down through the complex ties linking princes and barons, all—in principle—owing allegiance to the Emperor. It seemed to be definitely in the Emperor's interest to include the clergy as an integral part of the feudal system. For them this was a means of insuring the submission of the Church to their own power. The manoeuvre was clever: the bishoprics were made secular fiefs and the bishops were invested with rights over vassals and serfs. The bishops were gradually becoming secular princes, living in the same wolfish atmosphere as the feudal lords in general. Often they were given the title “Count” and thus obtained suzerain right over all nobles in their dioceses. The bishoprics were soon prosperous feudal properties, based on privileges like the others. The Kings and

Emperor named the bishops, and possession of the bishoprics went with the investitures. A flourishing trade developed in these titles, although this was considered scandalous by many good souls devoted to the interests of the Church.

A clergy organized according to such principles acts in accordance with worldly and not spiritual considerations. Its first allegiance necessarily goes to the Emperor, from whom it derives, in the last analysis, all its privileges—and it does not go to the Pope.

Christianity was thus in danger of becoming a limited, provincial affair, serving the interests of the Emperor.

The Popes recognized the danger in time. Pope Nicholas II reserved to the Cardinals the right to elect the Popes. Gregory VII abolished the arbitrary choice of bishops and provided for filling of ecclesiastical offices by the clergy. The bishops convoked synods to re-establish unity among the clergy. The Pope also reminded the Emperor that all the latter's power came from the Papacy, that he was crowned by the Pope, and that his oath called for obedience to the Pope and the Church. Gregory intended to insist on this obedience—which had been purely nominal under former Popes.

All attempts of the Popes to re-establish the rights of the Church and to limit those of the Emperor necessarily led to conflicts with the latter. We have spoken of the struggles of the Papacy with Henry IV, which were followed by the humiliation of the Emperor at Canossa; of the investiture of an Anti-Pope, and the events preceding the first Crusade; and of the Hohenstaufens' difficulties with the Popes which had a direct bearing on the matters discussed in this book.

All these conflicts arose out of a fundamental divergence between two diametrically opposed goals: that of the Popes, aiming at the spiritual reign of Christianity; and that of the Emperors, directed at material world domination. The divergence between these two aims is closely related to that between the Greco-Christian and the Prusso-Teutonic currents

(because the latter originated in an enterprise skillfully conceived by Emperor Frederick II to further his revenge against the Papacy).

### *The Reign of the Wolves*

Serfage, private wars, the absolute power of the various suzerains over their vassals, the universal reign of the "law of the stronger," and in general the complete neglect of the "rights of the human person" were basic characteristics of feudalism, all in direct contradiction to the teachings of Christianity. They were simply a survival of barbarian concepts of life, somewhat disguised.

The reign of the "wolves," who gained control over the greater part of Europe at the beginning of feudalism, was not accidental. On the contrary, it resulted necessarily from the basic principles of feudal society, which considered not the "rights of man" but only the "rights of the strong." As a matter of fact, barbarian society itself, as pointed out earlier, had organized feudal society. The former felt that its existence was endangered by the moral teachings of Christianity and reconstituted its way of life under the feudal cloak. It was a measure of protection against the revolutionary social and economic influence of Christianity.

It is true that feudal society changed for the better in the course of centuries, but this happened in spite of its fundamental concepts and almost solely because of the influence of Christian teachings. A civilization whose social structure is based on one sort of morality, but whose members, in their religious life, are taught a morality of quite a different sort, will sooner or later necessarily have to choose between the two. The contradiction between the two schools of thought which influence everyday life makes itself evident each day even to the humblest individuals. As a result one morality gradually displaces the other.

We are not concerned here with the significance of Christianity in the strictly religious domain, but only with its influence on morality. Each religion has a moral content as well. Christianity, in particular, is an excellent vehicle of morality. By "strictly religious domain" is meant such doctrines as those concerning the Holy Trinity, the birth and death of Christ, etc. On the other hand, Christianity has within its "moral content" doctrines of universal love and such teachings as those contained in the greater part of the Ten Commandments. The interdiction against worship of alien gods comes under the first—the "strictly religious" class.

People must have felt that the moral truth of Christianity insures a much more satisfactory, happier way of life than feudalism offered. This is the reason why they gradually replaced feudal morality with another of Christian inspiration.

The Church was not in a position to proceed too quickly. A first attempt by the Popes at the pacification of Europe—the so-called "Peace of God"—completely failed. The Popes declared priests, monks, nuns, shepherds, travellers, school-children and tradesmen inviolate. Asylums were created. But nobody respected them and the Peace of God was eventually forgotten.

The next, more modest attempt to civilize the feudal jungle was the "Truce of God." By this compromise the Popes tried to create a peaceful state of affairs at least from vespers on Wednesday until sunrise on Monday. During this time everyone was forbidden to assault, rob or kill; or to attack or seize castles or other properties. Those who violated the Truce of God were exiled and excommunicated. The Church did not rely alone on the inner truths of Christian moral teachings. It deemed it useful at all times to back up these inner truths by sanctions—spiritual sanctions with material consequences.

By implication the rules of the Truce of God meant the tolerance of all excesses on other days. Moreover, the Truce itself was not observed in many places. But however limited

its scope, it nevertheless had a certain civilizing effect in the moral field.

The Magna Carta itself was written under the stimulus of a Christian way of thinking. The English barons who obtained it from the King declared themselves to be an "Army of God and the Holy Church." Christian moral teachings had by this time (1215)\* taken deep root in England.

The Charter was a move toward the liberation of English society from the excessive feudal power of the King. But it was only a very modest liberation from the feudal yoke. It was not yet an attack on the fundamentals of feudal society. Its main achievement was the securing of certain guarantees of liberty—but only for freemen, not for serfs and slaves. It assured to the individual—so long as he was a free man—protection in accordance with the Christian concept of the primacy of the human soul. It introduced concepts which had not been known in feudal society but which were close to old Roman and Greek concepts. Such concepts, once stated, transcended their original purpose. During the centuries they had an influence toward reform far beyond the granting of specific rights to freemen in 1215.

### *The Logical Plan for World Conquest*

The Hohenstaufen imperial power derived its strength from feudal concepts. The Empire was a sort of super-suzerainty. It was governed by the same principles of utter disregard for the rights of its vassals as those vassals themselves displayed toward their own vassals and serfs. Only it was more difficult to hold together the vast structure of imperial organization than the small domains. As the reverse side of the medal the princes and barons often used their own power to defend themselves against the demands of the Emperor. The spir-

\* This was eleven years before Emperor Frederick II, in the Bull of Rimini, gave a charter to the Teutonic Knights for their future conquests.

itual aid the various Emperors received from the Popes in the beginning of the Carolingian Empire and even later was valuable to them in the firmer establishment of their power over their vassals. Only by virtue of this asset—the divine and miraculous nature of their appointment—were they able to maintain their position above all the other princes and barons.

The very title "Holy Roman Emperor" was based on two intangible elements which appealed deeply, even mystically, to the masses of the people: first, *holiness*; and second, the somewhat vague descent from the *Roman Empire*.

So long as the Emperors were sure of the help of the Church, they could nurture the most ambitious projects, based on accepted feudal traditions. The small suzerains were not contented until they had conquered and plundered all neighboring lands and the Emperor would not be contented until he had conquered and plundered the whole globe. His world-embracing imperial ambitions evolved logically from this feudal type of thought. They were the normal ambition which befitted a super-suzerain.

The valuable mystical aid of the Church was available to the Emperors so long as they were on good terms with the Papacy—and they *were* on good terms, as we have seen, so long as clergy and Papacy were willing to take orders from the Emperors. When they refused, the whole structure was upset.

The law of might now favored the vassals and worked to the disadvantage of the Emperor. So long as the Emperors had been backed by the mystical influence of the Church, they had had at their disposal the collective power of their vassals. Now that the Church no longer supported the Emperors, their mystical aura disappeared and it became impossible to keep in line the wolf-barons who roamed the immense territory of the Empire.

The whole edifice threatened to fall to pieces. To save it, the Emperors had to find a solution: they had to find some

means to carry out their ambitions in spite of the hostility of the Papacy.

### *The Preservation of Lupine Thought*

Emperor Frederick II found this means in the Teutonic Order. Within the isolated domain established by the Order he was able to perpetuate all the principles which he cherished. While the rest of Germany was gradually humanized by the influence of Christianity, the Order, under its religious disguise, carried forward the Emperor's extravagant ambitions. At the same time, to support them, it sheltered the most backward, feudal and in many respects barbaric principles.

The Hansa developed the idea of commercial cooperation in Germany—"cooperation" being an essentially Christian principle, in contradiction to the barbaric (and feudal) method of spoliation and exploitation. When the Marienwerder Bund revolted in the fifteenth century against the Teutonic Order and won—this appeared to be the victory of the "Good" Germany over the "Bad."\*

In the meanwhile Christian moral principles were permeating the rest of Europe even more thoroughly. England, although continuing to use modified and humanized feudal methods in internal politics and in certain imperial activities, started spreading its concepts of commercial *exchange* around the world, thus replacing step by step the feudal concept of spoliation.

France was developing within its numerous monasteries and abbeys an intense religious life. Almost every street corner of Paris is closely associated with some event in the history of the Church. Monks' and nuns' cemeteries spread out under the whole city. The entire colorful French culture developed from Christian roots. A profound mystical thinking radiated from there beyond the boundaries of France

\* See pages 77-78.

and was a great influence in the steady process of civilizing Europe.

That besides this, a certain type of a-religious thought also developed in France, especially toward the end of the eighteenth century, was due to a reaction against the deep penetration of Christianity into France. But whether the process of "civilization" was accomplished by the Church or by the "enlightened" Encyclopedists, who preceded the French Revolution, did not make much difference. Both Christianity and "free thought" were gradually driving European life toward the same humanized moral level.

This situation gave rise to a widespread illusion: people imagined that mankind was moving slowly but surely in the direction of progress. Western Man thought that *decency* and *cooperation* had been accepted as everlasting principles for the guidance of humanity. Our fathers and ourselves did not realize that the *lupine* brand of thought which had once characterized all feudal Europe lived on in Eastern Prussia; that it had accumulated tremendous potential power there during the centuries—as described in the earlier chapters of this book, and that it would spread from there to the rest of Europe.

## CHAPTER IX

### WESTERN CIVILIZATION AND UPWARD PROGRESSION

OUR PURPOSE in the preceding chapter and the present one is to find the point in the history of human thought at which occurred the original split between the Prusso-Teutonic and the Greco-Christian approaches to life.

We shall now look more closely at Greco-Christianism—this only in order to try to establish the relationship between the latter and Prusso-Teutonism.

#### *Greco-Christian Moral Concepts Stem from Mystical Sources*

Whence did Christianity derive the moral content which proved to have a much greater hold on people than barbarian and feudal moral laws? We might assume that this moral content came simply through revelation of divine truth. Or we might say that it stems from Judæa and Greece. The latter double origin is generally accepted and we speak alternately about Judeo-Christian and Greco-Christian concepts.

There is an evident relationship between the Jewish and the Christian religions. The moral laws of the Old Testament, including the Ten Commandments of Moses, passed into the Christian teachings but they were enriched there (we are tempted to say "humanized").

It is not possible to discuss here fully the controversial question as to which elements contributed to the formation of Christianity. Although it is oversimplification to make this statement, we dare to advance the opinion that Christian ideas were born in the world of Judæa because of this very contact with the Greek way of life.

W. T. Stace, in a brilliantly written book,\* makes a comparison between the Western way of thinking and the totalitarian *Weltanschauung*. He also uses the expression "Greco-Christian" to describe our civilization and our morality; but for him the contribution of Greece to our way of thinking goes back to the Greek *philosophers* and to Plato in particular. Stace says: "The spiritual forces which have molded the West are Christianity and Greek philosophy."

There is no argument against the influence of Greek philosophers on Western *philosophical* thought. We believe, however, that, so far as morality is concerned, developments in the philosophical domain have, on morality, a more limited, more indirect effect, than religion. Plato and other Greek philosophers have, of course, had some influence on Western morality. The real Greek influence within the Greco-Christian morality was, however, of a quite different nature. It did not stem from philosophical roots but from religious or rather from mystical ones.†

The Greco-Christian ethos was not born of Greek rational thought on the one side and the Christian religion of mystical essence on the other. A marriage of such disparate elements would never have given the lasting results with which we are familiar. Mystical religious teachings (Christianity) and rational philosophical deductions (Plato) do not mix so well that they could have created a civilization and a morality—both of which have lasted for so many centuries.

\* W. T. Stace, *The Destiny of Western Man*, New York, Reynal & Hitchcock, 1942.

† We disagree with Stace on a further point. He attributes to German philosophers (Schopenhauer and Nietzsche) a decisive part in the formation of German totalitarian theories. In our opinion, Schopenhauer and Nietzsche merely crystallized—with personal variations corresponding to the individuality of each—certain thoughts which stemmed from much deeper sources in Prusso-Teutonia. These thoughts had a more earthly basis than sheer philosophy. Aside from our disagreement with the importance Stace attributes to purely philosophic factors in the formation both of the Western and "German-totalitarian" (for us, "Prusso-Teutonic") concepts of life, we find much merit in his actual detailed juxtaposition of the two concepts.

### *The Great Influence of the "Initiation"*

Any lengthy discussion attempting to prove the last thesis would exceed the limits of this book. We shall, however, try to show what we mean by the mystical (as contrasted to the philosophical) Greek influence on Greco-Christian morality and civilization.

When we think of Greek religion we usually have in mind the Greek gods described by Homer in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and by Hesiod. It is difficult to establish the contributions, respectively, of popular and poetic creation in the concepts of the Homeric gods. Yet there is something non-mystical and earthy about them—something "transparent."

But these charmingly simple Homeric gods do not represent the entirety of Greek religious life. *Mysteries* of a secret, esoteric nature existed in addition to the popular mythology of the Greeks.

Mysteries into which only the initiate were admitted flourished all over the ancient world. In Greece the "*Eleusinian Mysteries*" were predominant. Celebrated in Eleusis, near Athens, they were devoted chiefly to Dionysos and Demeter, a god and goddess mentioned but rarely by Homer. Similar mysteries, all related to Eleusis, were celebrated in other places throughout Greece and later even in Rome.

These mysteries molded Greek thinking and morality to a much greater extent than the teachings of the philosophers, or the moral concepts deriving from the Homeric theogony. Exactly to what extent cannot be examined here in detail.

We do not deny that there was a definite connection between these mysteries and the philosophical theories. This connection existed, however, only to the extent to which philosophers expressed in concise, *exoteric*\* form certain veiled *esoteric* teachings of the mysteries. Plato himself seems

\* See page 266.



to have been initiated into the Eleusinian mysteries. He mentions them several times with reverence, and his teachings appear in many ways to have been inspired by them. Also he introduces his Socrates as an initiate of Eleusis.

The origin of these Mysteries has been ascribed to several sources. Those which are the most commonly mentioned are (1) Egypt; (2) Orpheus and the Orphic school; (3) Various ancient mysteries of the original inhabitants of Greece dating from pre-Hellenic times. It is interesting to note that the Orphic source itself seems to go back, according to certain versions, to Egypt. Indeed it has been said that Orpheus, legendary King of Thrace, went to Egypt and was there initiated into the Egyptian mysteries. Certain Greek authors believe that it was Orpheus who founded the Mysteries of Eleusis.

The followers of Orpheus, members of the Orphic Brotherhood, believed in the "Orphic Life." The latter included a great number of ascetic rules—among others, the ban against animal food. Several other brotherhoods of this sort existed in Greece. The Pythagoreans were among the most famous and have also been associated by various authors with the Mysteries. According to Herodotus, both the Orphic and Pythagorean teachings came from Egypt.

All these secret religious and semi-religious activities seem to have had a very great effect on what we mean by Greek civilization. It is the influence of these various brotherhoods, mysteries, *teletes*, etc., which, through numerous channels, was transmitted to Western civilization. It is here, much more than in the commonly known Homeric mythology, that we can trace the actual Greek influence on the Greco-Christian way of life and on Christianity itself.

This was an extremely rich heritage indeed. Its transmission to Western civilization through the ages followed devious and complicated routes: besides the direct filiation of ideas through the official Christian channel, there were several side-

routes. The various "heretical teachings" of the beginnings of the Christian era originated from closely related sources. All these intermingled or parallel movements seem to have carried forward elements springing from the same initiations, which date back to the Greek mysteries and possibly to Egypt. Their influence on Western civilization is as great as the influence of Christianity itself and should not be overlooked.

The Eleusinian rites shaped to a very great extent the souls of those who were initiated into the Mysteries. The symbolic value of the revelations contained in the Eleusinian Seven Degrees was such that it contributed to the spiritual development of the individuals who participated in them. Of course only a few were admitted to the privileges of the full initiation, but even the lower degrees imparted precious teachings in veiled symbolic form. The successive initiations constituted a most exceptional schooling in the direction of spiritual and moral elevation—even when judged by our present standards.

The secret about the content of the Mysteries was very carefully guarded and those who committed indiscretions concerning them risked the death penalty. Alcibiades was once accused, just before leaving for battle at the head of the armies of Athens, of having profaned the Eleusinian Mysteries. Although he flatly denied ever having done anything of the sort, he found it extremely difficult to justify himself, and his departure for the campaign was considerably delayed.

When attempts are made to define the Greek influence on our civilization, Plato and the other Greek philosophers are mentioned much more frequently than these Mysteries. The reason for this is that all our thinking is geared to a concept which grants credit for our progress only to *factors popularly revealed and openly discussed*—and not to anything as incomprehensible and secret as the content of these Mysteries. Since we do not admit the contribution of so-called esoteric

factors to our modern life we often fail to realize the influence of these factors on the civilizations from which ours originated.

In reality nothing made a greater contribution to Greek moral thought than these Mysteries, although they often appear obscure to us. Their teachings penetrated to the widest circles of the population, whereas the theories of the philosophers reached only the learned. But in spite of the popular acceptance of the Mysteries, the philosophers did not look down upon them. Rather they considered them extremely respectable institutions, containing, especially in their more elevated degrees, great inspiration even for themselves.

It is true that the belief in "reason" stemmed from the Greek philosophers; but for these men the *initiative domain* and its symbolic teachings always had great force and validity.

Western civilization, with its uncompromising rationalism, has always refused to believe in anything that was beyond pure reason—except when it came to the strictly religious domain. But religion, the purely mystical content of religion, is for us today entirely separate from science and philosophy. For the Greeks, science and philosophy were closely connected with the Mysteries.

We cannot discuss here whether the modern attitude in these matters is good or bad. In any event it is completely different from that of the Greeks who were in the habit of tapping mystical sources and deriving from them teachings which they then used in the field of pure reason.

The Greek Mysteries and the Mysteries of other peoples of ancient times were *esoteric*—*i.e.*, they revealed their teachings only to the initiate through progressive initiations. Most ancient Eastern religions had in addition to the esoteric portion of their teachings, an *exoteric* part as well (*i.e.*, simplified teachings for the non-initiate). The exoteric part derived from the esoteric. The modern religions—including in this term the Christian, Jewish and Mohammedan religions—are exoteric.

Their teachings are open to all who wish to receive them—and all are considered initiate. (The Christian baptism and the Jewish circumcision of the men are actual initiation ceremonies.) These modern religions, at the time of their founding, severed relations with any living esoterism—or rather they incorporated into the symbolic contents of their basic books, which are available to everyone, the esoteric teachings which lay behind them. These were to remain a lasting inspiration to the faithful. They lacked, however, progressive initiations, and consequently progressive profundities of thought, among which even the superior and most demanding individuals might have found a level to satisfy them. This is perhaps the reason why modern science and philosophy evolved—except in a few cases—along lines entirely independent of those of religion.

The secrecy concerning the Mysteries was justified in the following manner by the ancient Greeks:

Truth is of divine origin and is revealed only to the few who make the necessary effort to get close to it. It should, consequently, not be communicated to those who are not desirous of exerting these efforts. The Mysteries, which raise obstacles in the way of the successive initiations, communicate the truth only to people who are willing to work for it. It would be dangerous to reveal the truth to those who are not prepared and not ripe for it: having received the truth with no effort they would not appreciate it and might misuse it.

#### *The Beginning of the "Life Without Thorns"*

In spite of the secrecy which surrounded the Eleusinian Mysteries different fragments have come out through the works of various Greek and Latin writers. Modern writers (Martin N. Nilsson and Victor Magnien, among others) have succeeded in piecing together these fragments and in giving a

fairly accurate idea of the principal phases of the different initiations.

We are interested here only in certain Eleusinian teachings which appear to us to have a direct bearing on moral concepts and which may have influenced Greco-Christian thinking in moral matters.

We have said that Demeter, goddess of agriculture, was the principal figure at Eleusis along with Dionysos. Demeter gave two things to mankind: agriculture and the Eleusinian Mysteries. "We have received from Demeter two gifts," says Isocrates, "the fruits of the earth which have permitted us to live a life superior to that of the animals—and the initiation."

Magnien says, "As soon as men have agriculture they can live a much easier life without fighting and killing each other. Consequently the Mysteries, by teaching agriculture, bring forth civilization." \*

We may add that the Mysteries not only taught agriculture but *inculcated in the initiates the deep spiritual meaning of the possession of agriculture*—the sense to which Magnien refers: *i.e.*, an appreciation of the uselessness in the future for men to fight and kill each other. The Mysteries became an exceptional school for elevating man toward higher goals not only in his rational thought but also in his basic instincts.

It would indeed have been simple to preach on every street corner that now that they possessed the techniques of agriculture, it was much better for men to employ *cooperation* and *exchange* than the wolf-like methods to which humanity had been accustomed. Perhaps such utilitarian moral arguments would have appealed to the reason of some people and might have had a limited effect on them. These arguments, however, would not have reached the *instinctive part* of man—which, at that time, was still completely geared to barbarian modes of living: killing, robbing, and, in general, achieving success in life by methods of force.

\* Victor Magnien, *Les Mystères d'Eleusis*, Paris, 1929.

These deeply rooted instincts could not have been affected by any rational argument—but the methods of the Mysteries, directed toward much deeper levels of the mind, were wonderfully suited to the accomplishment of this work. The profoundly meaningful symbols, progressively revealed to the initiates in the Mysteries; the elaborate ceremonies which appealed to all senses; and the music which accompanied the rites reached the most hidden recesses of the soul, well beyond the realm of pure reason. Thus the Mysteries prepared the way for a change on these mental levels without which any moral reform would have been superficial.

Man's barbarian instincts had been kept alive not only by the daily experience of a life of savagery, but also by very ancient mysteries which were based on the sacrifice of humans. A further important function of the Eleusinian Mysteries—and of other, less important mysteries of the same category—was to replace the older mysteries and to substitute their own higher ideas of divine happiness for the originally barbarian concepts of the latter.

The expression, "Ground life" ("ground" from the verb "to grind") was used in the Mysteries to describe the civilized life which man can have through the use of agriculture. The use of wine was also considered by the Greeks to have a civilizing effect. Wine was believed to be purifying, and the symbolic representation of its invention by Dionysos is also part of the Mysteries. We can assume that symbolically wine replaced the human blood drunk in the earlier sacrificial mysteries, just as the use of the products of agriculture replaced the eating of human flesh.

Another expression used in the Mysteries, "No more thorns," conveys the same idea as "Ground life." The invention of agriculture meant the overnight transformation of the soil—which had formerly been only a hunting ground, full of thorns and prickles—into rich and smiling fields and orchards. Man by this invention and by penetrating its deepest

meaning through the Mysteries had left behind him the "life with thorns"—the sort of savage and painful life which was the only one known to his barbarian ancestors.

Suidas says on this subject:

*"The 'Ground' life is the sort of life in which human beings distribute among themselves the goods of the earth instead of fighting each other. It is expressed by the formula, 'sharing and not strangling.'"* \*

### *The Splitting Point of the Two Concepts of Life*

All these teachings are described in small portions by various authors. In the Mysteries themselves they were clad in numerous symbols, some clear and limpid, like those Himerius mentions in one of his speeches: "The Attic law obliges the mystes [the initiates of the Mysteries] to bring to Eleusis a light and stalks of grain, symbols of civilized life." \* Other symbols, on the other hand, were less transparent but all could be similarly interpreted.

We enter into all these details only because we believe it useful to find out through what processes, through what insight into the nature of things Western civilization really started—this in order to understand better the split between the Prusso-Teutonic and Greco-Christian approaches to life.

We do not expect to outline a full and comprehensive answer to this question, which is immense in scope. We believe, however, that the few items cited from the Mysteries of Eleusis provide at least a simplified answer to our question.

The importance of a Greek contribution to Western civilization is not generally doubted. As a matter of fact, a great number of Greek authors themselves credit the teachings of the Mysteries with having "brought forth civilization." The writer feels that so far as Greek thought has influenced Western thought in general, we must attribute this contribu-

\* Quotations from Victor Magnien, *Les Mystères d'Eleusis*.

tion to the "discovery" of a better, higher way of life—and this discovery definitely came from the symbolic Eleusinian teachings we have briefly discussed.

*If this is so, we can see the point at which "civilized" moral concepts, in the Western sense, originally stemmed away from wolf-like moral concepts. And the latter are the same concepts which down to the present have characterized Prusso-Teutonic thinking.*

It is, of course, impossible to assign a definite period to the processes to which we refer. However, the determination of such a time has much less importance than insight into the processes themselves.

There was a time when humanity could think only in terms of killing, plundering, and imposing the law of the strongest. This was a harsh period, a strenuous period for everyone—for the "wolves" themselves.

Then sometime, somewhere, humanity developed a great new idea: the idea of *cooperation* through friendly exchange of the products of the soil. This discovery opened the door to a happier, easier life. It meant so amazing, so radical a departure from the earlier concepts of mankind that those who had made it did not dare to speak about it to the masses. Thus it became part of the Mysteries—and was imparted, with elaborate precautions, to the initiates only.

In the course of centuries, however, this discovery spread from the Mysteries to a great part of humanity—but another part never grasped its meaning. The latter remained at the level of the previous barbarous concept of life—the "life of thorns"—a sort of concept so deeply ingrained as to be almost instinctive. Only *initiation into the higher way of life* would have had the power of altering concepts so rooted in the mind.

When the initiation into a higher truth of which we have spoken started, somewhere, at some time in the past, its effect was to divide humanity into two sections. Those who were touched either directly or indirectly by the initiation set out

on the Upward Progression; \* those who, for some reason or another,† were not reached by the initiation continued the fight to preserve their accustomed way of living. In the course of this fight—and the more the world changed the more vigorously they fought—they became the protagonists of the Downward Progression.‡

All anachronistic defenders of feudal concepts, in any part of the world, fall into the latter category. Among them, the Prusso-Teutonics are the representatives par excellence, for the reasons examined, of the Downward Progression. The Prusso-Teutonics can therefore be considered non-initiates—nurtured on a long-outdated philosophy of life.

The rest of humanity, with a few exceptions, benefited directly or indirectly by the initiation into higher truth. (In the same sense as our description of Christianity and Judaism as mass initiations.) During this time the Prusso-Teutonics not only did not grasp this higher truth but developed their own outdated concepts to gigantic proportions in their isolation from the rest of the world.

They never tried to modify them toward the appreciation of a “life without thorns.” ‡ Instead they “stabilized” their deeply rooted concepts, which had become almost instinctive, and those of people whom they managed to dominate—at an earlier stage of development than the entire Greco-Christian civilization.

The process described in the Eleusinian Mysteries is a sort of “opening of the eyes.” In the moral domain, it represented the same progress as had been made, probably millions of years before, when living creatures passed from *two-* to *three-*dimensional thinking. Somewhere, sometime in a very distant

\* See page 246.

† In a number of cases the initiation to which we refer did not penetrate below the surface of the souls.

‡ We could include here the “higher deductions of a morality,” as contained in the higher degrees of the Mysteries (described on pages 276–278). The Prusso-Teutonics never understood the meaning of any of these various deductions of a new morality. See page 306 for more on this subject.

past, our primitive ancestors grasped the meaning of “thickness” (or “height”) in addition to their earlier concepts of “length” and “breadth.” They grasped this third dimension not only rationally but eventually with their instincts as well. This also was an “eye-opening” process. The three dimensions had always been present; but man’s reason and—even more important—his instincts were, until some unspecified pre-historic time, not yet developed enough to understand and grasp what three dimensions really meant. (Today—given sufficient mathematical knowledge—we can comprehend Einstein’s four-dimensional world rationally. To our instincts, however, this world is still *terra incognita*.) Similarly, on the moral level, the possibility of a “ground” life was always present—even when all peoples still lived the “life with thorns”—but nobody had yet grasped it.

We know that, in the physical world, animals whose perception is limited to one and two dimensions have survived to our own day. They have not, even yet, passed through the sort of “initiation” which would enable them to understand what three dimensions mean. In the moral sphere the Prusso-Teutonics have not yet passed through the “initiation” which would make it possible for them to understand the higher moral “dimension” on which Western civilization is built. Whether they, and those who had come completely under their influence, will ever be able to experience this initiation is more than doubtful.

### *The Egyptian Sources of the Greek Mysteries*

The discovery of a “higher moral truth”—which is at the basis of Western civilization and which was contained in the Mysteries of Eleusis—did not necessarily originate in these Mysteries. The close similarity between the ceremonies and the symbols of the Greek mysteries on the one hand and the Egyptian mysteries on the other leads to the conjecture that

the new teachings may have been given by Egypt to Greece. Here, of course, we enter a field where precise investigation and definite conclusions become more and more difficult. Herodotus says that Demeter corresponds to Isis, and Dionysos to Osiris in the Egyptian mysteries. This comparison has been generally admitted. Herodotus also declares that the Eleusinian Mysteries derived the belief in the immortality of the human soul from Egypt. We have examined before the connections with Egypt of the possible Orphic and Pythagorean contributions to the Eleusinian Mysteries.

All these spiritual affiliations make it appear quite possible that if we could retrace the road of the Greek mysteries to their original sources we would find ourselves in Egypt. The only other sources of the Greek mysteries which have been mentioned occasionally are the mysteries which existed in Greece in pre-Hellenic times. It is, however, possible that many of the latter mysteries were simply of the blood sacrificial type, containing teachings which, in spite of their sacred or initiative nature, might be called "barbarous." If so, before making their contribution to the Greek mysteries, the whole direction of these ancient mysteries must have been altered toward the "upward progression"—perhaps at the time when they came into contact with the Egyptian mystic ideas. But we know very little about these pre-Hellenic mysteries. It is, of course possible that some of them may have moved into the camp of the "upward progression" long before this time.

If we assume the Egyptian origin of the Greek mysteries,—as do several authors both ancient and modern—we may just as well go farther back and consider the possibility of a filiation from India. There are, indeed, many analogies between the Greek and Egyptian mysteries and certain East Indian teachings. We cannot hope to get anywhere—and we shall not attempt to—on the extremely uncertain ground of this time-honored discussion: which came earlier, and which

influenced the other—the Indian or the Egyptian civilization? But whether we admit the primacy of Egypt or India we can clearly see the same elements in the mystical teachings of Egypt, India and Greece—all directed toward our upward progression. Thus Western civilization and the various Eastern traditions all seem to belong to the same progression.

The rôle of the discovery of agriculture in the Greek mysteries, as the basis of certain moral teachings, was more or less foreshadowed in the Egyptian mysteries. We have mentioned the comparison made by Herodotus between the Greek and Egyptian gods: Demeter and Dionysos on the one hand and Isis and Osiris on the other. This comparison likewise applies to the deduction of a morality from agriculture: Isis has a significance in many respects similar to that of Demeter, and to that of Dionysos—with the difference that in the Egyptian mysteries certain agricultural discoveries seem to be directly related to the fertilizing value of the Nile, a river corresponding symbolically to Osiris.

"The concrete Egyptian imagination also ascribes to Osiris and Isis the introduction of agriculture, the invention of the plow, the hoe, etc.; for Osiris gives not only the useful itself—the fertility of the earth—but moreover the means of making use of it. He also gives men laws, a civil order, and a religious ritual; he thus places in men's hands the means of labor and secures its result. Osiris is also the symbol of the seed which is placed in the earth, and then springs up—as also of the cause of life. Thus we find this heterogeneous duality—the phenomena of nature and the spiritual—woven together into *one* knot." (Hegel—*The Philosophy of History*.\*)

Thus the Egyptian mysteries—before the Greek mysteries—seem to have presented the moral laws as deriving from the discovery of agriculture. Furthermore Osiris, whose analogy with Dionysos is evident, has a rôle of very wide scope in the Egyptian mysteries. It is probable that Dionysos had, in

\* Quoted from translation by J. Sibree, M.A. (The Colonial Press, N. Y.).

the Greek mysteries, a rôle and symbolic value equally extensive. To credit him simply with the introduction of wine is to diminish his real importance considerably.

Beyond the field of *utilitarian* deduction of a morality\* we can discover a higher, more spiritual field of moral inspiration in the same mysteries. This is a domain where the immortality of the human soul and metempsychosis are major factors. Our soul is regarded as being of divine essence. In the higher degrees of the Eleusinian initiation the polytheistic conception of the exoteric religion gradually disappears. The Soul merges with the One and forms, in the highest—or seventh—degree of Initiation but *one divine unity*. Thus in their ultimate, although *secret* expression, *the Mysteries definitely reach a monotheistic state*.

“. . . Herodotus,” says Hegel in *The Philosophy of History*, “tells us that the Egyptians were the first to express the thought that the soul of man is immortal. . . . The idea that Spirit is immortal involves this—that the human individual inherently possesses infinite value. The merely natural appears limited—absolutely dependent upon something other than itself—and has its existence in that other; but immortality involves the inherent infinitude of Spirit. This idea is first found among the Egyptians.” Again Egypt seems to have inspired Greece in the creation of an idea which had an immense bearing on Western civilization. The latter has among its basic concepts “the infinite value of the human individual”—related by Hegel to Egypt although it came to us more directly from Greece, in particular through the Eleusinian Mysteries.

The moral conclusions deriving from this conception are the same as those drawn through the “agricultural” or utilitarian deduction. If we believe in the infinite value of the Soul

\* The deduction of a moral truth from the usefulness of agriculture and exchange of the fruits of the earth can be considered a “utilitarian” deduction.

and in its unity with the One, we have already vanquished and abandoned the “life with thorns.” No person holding such a belief could continue killing and plundering his fellow creatures.

The concepts of sympathy and love of our fellow creatures, which are commonly regarded as Christian concepts, are contained either actually or virtually in the Mysteries. There are but few details available about the initiation to the “mystical” (or “philosophical”) love which was part of the fifth, or sacerdotal, degree in the Eleusinian Mysteries. The exact nature of this “a-physical love” aroused much discussion from time to time and various interpretations circulated. It is probable that the real meaning of the Fifth Initiation of the Eleusinian Mysteries approximated present concepts of Christian love.

Consequently, in the last analysis, the two types of moral deductions in the Mysteries give the same results. We encounter here one of those strange “superpositions”—characteristic of the ancient mysteries—of identical truths derived in different manners and from different symbols which eventually fade into one.

It is commonly believed that the monotheistic concept started with the Jewish and Christian religions. However, it appears probable that *monotheism was already fully developed in the ancient Mysteries*—but it was part of the highest initiations only and carefully hidden from the masses of the followers.

These subtle concepts—that God is *The One* and that the human soul has evolved from the same essence—were extremely novel compared to earlier concepts. It is not surprising that they have been considered “dangerous” for the common people—more dangerous even than the meaning of agriculture which we mentioned before. Only the most sublime minds, the most highly initiated ones, were able to understand and assimilate these ideas. The primitive polytheistic

world vision was considered good enough for the masses. It was more apt to be understood by them. The concepts of sympathy and brotherly—or mystical—love were not communicated to the masses for the same reason.

### *The Egyptian Sources of the Jewish Religion*

As pointed out above, it is probably true that the esoteric concept of a unique god existed both in the highest Egyptian and Greek mysteries. It is also probable—this view is based on the many references by Greek authors to Egyptian sources of the Greek mysteries—that the concept in question was passed on from Egypt to Greece. From these assumptions we may reach a third: that this concept of the Egyptian mysteries may have been at the origin of the Jewish monotheistic doctrines.

The hypothesis that the Jewish religion may be of Egyptian origin was advanced by Freud in his *Moses*. According to Freud, Moses was an Egyptian who became a believer in a short-lived Egyptian religion, called the "Aton-religion."

"Aton" was a monotheistic god proclaimed by a Pharaoh who called himself "Akhnaton." His original name was Amenophis, but he assumed the name "Akhnaton" in honor of his god, Aton. The abstract, non-anthropomorphic Aton was opposed by Akhnaton to the polytheistic doctrines proclaimed by the priests. A. Weigall\* states concerning this: "Akhnaton did not permit any graven image to be made of the Aton. The True God, said the King, had no form; and he held this opinion throughout his life."

There is remarkable similarity between Akhnaton's and the Jewish ban on graven images of God, and also between the respective concepts upon which these interdictions were based. Furthermore, the name "Aton" is very close to "Ado-

\* A. Weigall, *The Life and Times of Akhnaton*, London, 1923.

nai," one of the names given to God by the Old Testament. But it must be added that no historic facts can be found to prove that Moses was really a disciple of Akhnaton's doctrines, as Freud believes, or that he actually taught these doctrines to the Jews.

Whether the teachings Moses brought to the Jews were directly influenced by the doctrines of Akhnaton is of but small importance. He may have known the Aton concept of God from other sources. Akhnaton himself did not create his god, Aton; he simply tried to impose on his people the spiritual reign of this god in place of the earlier primitive doctrines. After Akhnaton's death, Aton again disappeared from the foreground, and the priests reestablished the older and more primitive religious teachings.

What had happened was probably this: Aton was not one of the gods of the common, popular theogony of Egypt. On the contrary he corresponded to the more subtle concept of a monotheistic divinity as it existed in the highest degrees of the Egyptian mysteries. In one word he was an *esoteric* and not an *exoteric* god. Akhnaton was certainly an initiate, because in the ancient mysteries royal dignity was always connected with a certain high degree of initiation. (In Greece, for example, the sixth degree of the Eleusinian Mysteries—among seven—represented the royal initiation.) Akhnaton must have been moved by the impatience and the feeling of revolt of a man who refuses to preach one thing to his people while believing in another. For this reason he decided to break the laws of secrecy of his initiation and to tell the people that "*There is no other god but Aton.*"

The priests who opposed him did not disagree with him on grounds of doctrine—they believed in Aton as much as Akhnaton did, but they would not reveal their belief outside the mysteries. They opposed the King because they were shocked by his indiscretion. When, after Akhnaton's death, they again



managed to have their way in matters of religion, they simply sent Aton back where they thought he belonged: to the hearth of the deepest esoteric mysteries.

All great founders of popular religions appear to have been moved by the same feelings as Akhnaton: they burn with their impatience to reveal to everybody immediately what the contemporary initiates believe ought to be imparted slowly and only by progressive initiation.

Moses acted just as Akhnaton had. He had the same impatience as the King to reveal certain teachings in which he believed. These teachings were, indeed, very close to those which Akhnaton taught—but this does not mean by any means that Moses should be considered a disciple of Akhnaton.

The reason for the coincidence of their two beliefs may have been simply that both Moses and Akhnaton were instructed in the same mysteries; and each derived the elements of the religion he preached from the same sources.

That Moses was an initiate of the esoteric Egyptian rites is extremely probable.

("Moses, before he was sent by God to the Israelites, was not only learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians but was also mighty in words and in deeds." St. Stephen, "Acts.")

Since he was brought up at court by a princess of the royal family, he was probably admitted to some of the highest degrees of the mysteries. It is from there that he must have taken his monotheistic views and his moral principles. In a word, it was probably in the mysteries that he received the initiation which he later transmitted to the Jews. He set up for them the mass initiation characterized by the circumcision.

This theory does not contradict that part of the Freudian thesis which assumes that Moses was not a Jew but an Egyptian. To back up his thesis that Moses was an Egyptian, Freud advanced the hypothesis that he could not even speak the language of the Jews. According to the Bible, Moses had

a speech defect, and Aaron, who is described as his brother, spoke in his stead to the people. Freud assumes that in reality Moses spoke only the Egyptian language and did not know that of the Jews. He used Aaron—a Jew who was not his brother—simply as an interpreter. Let us add that we may accept the Biblical description of "Aaron brother of Moses" as not an absolute untruth. Aaron may have been a Jew who was himself initiated into the Egyptian mysteries and therefore considered by Moses as a "Brother."

Moses, although an Egyptian, possibly a member of the royal family, may have had good reasons for leaving Egypt. He might have considered the Jews good human material to which to apply his teachings, provided he could free them from slavery. He knew that once he succeeded in leading them from Egypt he would no longer be hindered by the Egyptian priests from revealing the secret doctrines.

According to this view the Jewish religion—one of the modern religions which contributed to Western civilization—has carried forward Egyptian initiative teachings. Certain of its characteristics are inherited, of course, from the ancient Jewish religion—but its most important teachings, principally the monotheistic views, and the moral teachings, are probably of Egyptian inspiration.

#### *Greek Influence on the Jewish Sects*

Thus far we have seen that Greece and Judæa, two great spiritually creative forces (which, according to common belief, have had an immense influence on Western civilization), seem to have been inspired to a great extent by common or at least very closely related sources. We have traced these sources to Egypt and more particularly to the Egyptian mysteries.

Let us now see how the Christian religion fits into this picture—a religion which has had an even greater influence on

our civilization than the Greek mysteries and the Jewish religion.

At the time of the birth of Christ the Jews were scattered in many places besides Palestine, among Romans and Greeks and other peoples—in Babylon, Alexandria, Syria, Macedonia, Asia Minor, etc. They had preserved their own traditions, but had necessarily felt also the influences of the various civilizations with which they had come into contact. The clear and limpid, legalistically brilliant but not very deep, Roman civilization does not seem to have had a great effect on them. On the contrary, the more profound, more mystical Greek civilization had a definite influence on the Jewish thinking of the epoch. The different philosophical schools—the Stoics, the Pythagoreans, and the Platonists, for example—had by that time spread widely certain teachings which had formerly been confined to the secret rites of the mysteries.

In addition to the masses of the people three “mystical” (or “philosophical”) sects existed among the Jews: the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Essenes. Flavius Josephus (Jewish historian, A.D. 37–95) who mentioned these three sects, says of the Pharisees that they were “kin of the sect of Stoics, as the Greeks called them.”\* About the Essenes, he says: “These men live the same kind of life as do those whom the Greeks call Pythagoreans.”†

This seems to indicate that at least two of the three Jewish sects arose under Greek influence. We are primarily interested in the rôle of the Essenes because we can trace, through them, the thread leading to Christianity.

There had been, in general, a great fermentation of Greek ideas in Jewish circles. The Sadducees themselves displayed a penchant for Greek culture—but more for the philosophical than for the mystical teachings. We may consider the Sad-

\* *Life of Flavius Josephus*, written by himself. Published by Thomas Kinnersey, New York, 1821. William Whiston, translator.

† *Antiquities of the Jews*. Published by Thomas Kinnersey, New York, 1821. William Whiston, translator.

ducees simply the positivists of the period. They refused to accept anything of the Jewish religious traditions which went beyond the written word of the Old Testament. Some authors even think that they did not believe in the religious doctrines at all, and recognized the Old Testament simply to keep up appearances. In any case they refused to believe in the immortality of the soul, a concept which was by then—probably due to the influence of the Greek mysteries—part of the oral traditions of the two other Jewish sects. The information available about the Sadducees is too fragmentary to allow us to make any deductions concerning their influence on Western civilization.

We know a little more about the Pharisees. They are generally recalled as men full of avarice, pride and hypocrisy—a description attributed to Christ. It is probable that Christ's anger was directed only at the black sheep among the Pharisees rather than at this sect in its entirety. It is, furthermore, possible that there may have been many such black sheep. The Pharisees, as a group, exercised considerable influence on the common people. Possibly their great power corrupted many of them. But whatever may have been the failings of the Pharisees as individuals—failings which have been castigated by Christ—we can recognize among their teachings several doctrines, probably of Greek origin, which seem to have been taken over by Christianity.

The Pharisees taught that man's soul is *immortal* and that there is resurrection for the souls of the good. They also believed in the existence of angels. These doctrines, which, as we know, appeared later in Christianity, did not exist in the original teachings of Moses. The most obvious explanation of their origin is that they were taken by the Pharisees from the ancient mysteries: the “secret” in the highest degrees of the Eleusinian Mysteries included immortality of the soul and everlasting life; further, the concept of resurrection taught by the Pharisees, while it closely resembles the later Christian

idea of resurrection, also in a certain sense corresponds to the Greek metempsychosis. (The theory of the "angels" may have been taken by the Jews from the mysteries of Zoroaster during their sojourn in Babylon.)

Everything is ruled by God's will—and the individual, nevertheless, preserves his free will concerning all things that depend upon him. There was no contradiction between these two concepts for the Pharisees and neither is there for the Christians. Like St. Augustine after them, the Pharisees also spoke of the "Kingdom of God on earth." God's power is above that of the earthly rulers, they said, and they refused to render oath to the Roman Emperors.

Thus the sect of the Pharisees in a certain sense constituted a transition between Greek mystical teachings and Christianity. A much more striking transitional rôle between the two civilizations was played, however, by the third sect, the Essenes. We can assume that quite a number of the basic doctrines of the Jewish Essenes came from Greece—and these doctrines were also very close to those later taught in the Christian religion. Consequently the Essenes must have been ideal disciples of Christ when he came—fully prepared to accept his teachings and to be absorbed within his new religion. We can also say that if the Christian religion had not been born, the Essenes would probably have continued to exist as a Jewish sect of distinctive character or would have become the founders of a separate religion, proclaiming a truth very close, in many respects, to what we know today as Christianity.

We shall give special attention to the Essenes because we are inclined to think that this Jewish sect represents the most important "missing link" between the secret Greek teachings and the beginnings of Christianity. They are a sort of junction between the Greek and the Western civilizations. The Essenes may appear to be, at first glance, far from our present-day problems. It is useful, however, to have a clear understanding

of their rôle in the moral and philosophical evolution of mankind in order to appreciate fully where we stand in our fight for civilization.

*The "Missing Link" Between Greek Teachings  
and Christianity*

According to the description of Josephus, the Essenes showed great affection for one another. They lived in a sort of community which may have been the inspiration for the religious orders of Christianity. They despised riches and none of them had more than another. "For, it is a law among them that those who come to them must let what they have be common to the whole Order: inasmuch that among them all there is no appearance of poverty, or excess of riches; but everyone's possessions are intermingled with every other's possessions; and so there is, as it were, one patrimony among all the brethren . . . nor do they allow of the change of garments or of shoes till they be first entirely torn to pieces or worn out by time. As for their piety towards God it is very extraordinary. For before sunrising they speak not a word about profane matters; but put up certain prayers which they have received from their forefathers as if they made supplication for its rising."\*

Then they are sent away by their "curators" to exercise some of the arts in which they are skilled. They work five hours, assemble again, take baths of purification in cold water and clothe themselves with white veils. Then only do they sit down to eat one kind of food, but it is unlawful to taste the food before the priest has said grace. After their meal grace is said again. Then they lay aside their white garments and return to their labors. For supper they proceed in the same manner. Clamor and loud discussions are prohibited, but

\* Flavius Josephus, *Wars of the Jews*. Published by Thomas Kinnersley, New York, 1821. William Whiston, translator.

everyone in his turn has leave to speak. "Which silence thus kept in their house appears to foreigners like some tremendous mystery," says Josephus. They do nothing without the instructions of their "curators" except assisting those in want; they can, of their own free will, give help or food to those who are in distress. Whatever they say has more weight than oath but they have no right to swear. Swearing is considered by them worse than perjury\*—but in spite of this prohibition, the neophyte who is admitted into their sect † must swear at the moment of initiation "that he will neither conceal anything from those of his own sect, or discover any of their doctrines to others." This is the same sort of vow of secrecy as can be found not only in the ancient Greek and Egyptian mysteries, but also in the latter-day religious orders and in the various secret societies of the Middle Ages.

The Essenes' attitude toward pain and torture, as described by Josephus, is very reminiscent of what we know about the early martyrs of Christianity:

"They condemn the miseries of life, and are above pain by the generosity of their mind. And as for death, if it will be for their glory, they esteem it better than living always. And indeed our war with the Romans gave abundant evidence what great souls they had in their trials. Wherein, although they were tortured and distorted, burned and torn to pieces, and went through all kinds of instruments of torment that they may be forced either to blaspheme their legislator, or to eat what was forbidden them; yet could they not be made to do either of them: nor once to flatter their tormentors or to

\* Christianity contains similar injunctions against swearing; those of Christ, Matt. V, 34, XXIII, 16 and St. James V, 12. But exceptions are permitted for "solemn" reasons and on great and necessary occasions. Thus the apostolic constitutions forbid swearing in general but state elsewhere that one should not "swear falsely, swear often and in vain." The parallelism with the Essenes is evident.

† Those who wanted to be admitted had to wait several years, living with the Essenes in the meantime. They were accepted only after having proved their worth in several trials.

shed a tear. But they smiled in their very pains; and laughed those to scorn who inflicted the torments upon them; and resigned up their souls with great cheerfulness: as expecting to receive them again."

It is clear that this is the very same human material as that of which the early Christians were made. So long as they were Jews of the sect of Essenes they refused to blaspheme their "legislator"—*i.e.*, Moses. When they were called Christians, they showed the same fidelity toward their Saviour.

As for the doctrines of the Essenes, Josephus gives a picture which would suggest that these doctrines were born out of the contact of the original Jewish beliefs with certain Greek teachings—which all seem to originate from the Eleusinian Mysteries: \* "Their doctrine is that bodies are corrupted and that the matter they are made of is not permanent; but that the souls are immortal and continue forever; and that they are come out of the most subtile air, and are united to their bodies as to prisons, into which they are drawn by a certain natural enticement. But that, when they are set free from the bonds of the flesh, they then, as released from a long bondage, rejoice and mount upward. And this is like the opinion of the Greeks, that good souls have their habitations beyond the ocean; and in the region that is neither oppressed with the storms of rain, or snow or intense heat: but that this place is such as refreshed by the gentle breathing of a West Wind that is perpetually blowing from the ocean. While they allot to bad souls a dark and tempestuous den, full of never-ceasing punishments. And indeed the Greeks seem to have followed the same notion when they allot the islands of their blessed to their brave men whom they call 'heroes' and 'demigods'; and to the souls of the wicked, the region of the ungodly in Hades: where their fables relate that certain persons such as

\* We have seen that elsewhere Josephus compared the doctrines of the Essenes to the Pythagorean teachings—which themselves were closely connected with the Mysteries.

Sisyphus, Tantalus, Ixion and Tityus are punished: which is built on this first supposition that souls are immortal. And thence are those exhortations to virtue, and dehortations from wickedness collected; whereby good men are bettered in the conduct of their lives by the hope they have of reward after their death; and whereby the vehement inclinations of bad men to vice are restrained, by the fear and expectation they are in, that although they should lie concealed in this life, they should suffer immortal punishment after their death. These are the divine doctrines of the Essenes about the soul: which lay an unavoidable bait for such as have once had taste of their philosophy.”

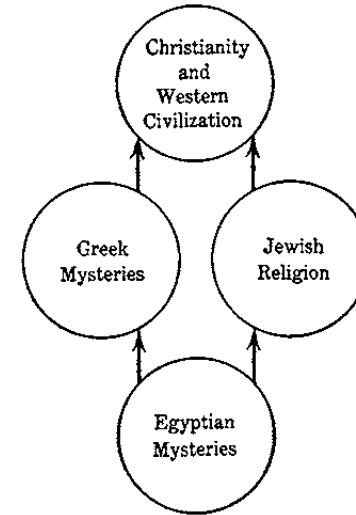
According to Josephus, there were approximately four thousand Essenes in his time. Although they called themselves Jews they could just as well be considered the disciples of a new religion—probably evolved, as we have surmised, from the contact of the Jewish faith with Greek mystic teachings. They were excluded from the common court of the Temple. This is not surprising in view of the extremely unorthodox character of their Jewish beliefs.

#### *The Converging Trends of the Upward Progression*

We have given much attention to the Essenes because this multi-faced sect, which professed to be Jewish and which was Greek in many of its doctrines, closely approached the early forms of Christianity. Consequently the Essenes, whatever may have been their actual historical influence, played a rôle which typified the spiritual process which was taking place at the same time in various fields during the period of gestation of Western civilization: \* certain Greek and Jewish elements merged in various proportions, and resulted in ideas and

\* We could mention for example the *Therapeutes*, another Jewish sect which, under the influence of Greek teachings, came to resemble a Christian sect very closely.

institutions of a purely Christian character. Assuming the Egyptian influence both on the Greek and Jewish civilizations, we can give the following schematic pattern of the spiritual and cultural evolution which took place:



This is the form the Upward Progression (see page 246) probably took during the last two or three thousand years (omitting numerous by-paths which have no place in this schematic representation).

In addition to the more profound effect of the mystical teachings—about which we have spoken—we pointed out the possibility that the teachings of the philosophers had a limited influence at the same time, particularly among the learned.

On the other hand, there moved along with the main current of Christianity various so-called heretical currents. The latter were condemned by the Church—which was acting in natural self-protection against a confusing over-diversification

and splitting up of its basic doctrines. These currents (Manicheism, Gnosticism, Catharism, etc.) were nevertheless excellent vehicles of the Upward Progression and carried it into extremely diversified circles. There were teachings for the most dissimilar tastes and for the various degrees of mental evolution of mankind. They replaced, in a certain sense, the multiple degrees of initiation of the original mysteries, which, as pointed out earlier, corresponded to these various degrees of mental development.

Historically more important than all sub-teachings, the Church of Rome became a most extraordinary mass initiation of the barbarous people of Europe and later of several other continents as well. If it had not firmly established its own traditions during the long centuries preceding the Reformation the various Protestant religions would never have been able to display such remarkable unity in their basic Christian substance.

#### *Christianity: Vehicle of Initiation and Civilization*

This is not the moment to examine the arguments of the two camps in the age-old discussion between the defenders and the critics of Rome. From our point of view only one thing counts: that all Christian religions carried around the world the seeds of the same initiation and the same civilization.

As we have said before, we are concerned here only with the moral content and influence of the Christian religions. The spiritual teachings and the Christian cosmogony are beyond our scope except insofar as they are vehicles for certain moral truths. In this moral domain Christianity certainly has acted as an "eye-opener" on a very large scale: it has revealed to people nurtured on barbarous concepts what we commonly consider a higher or a better moral truth. It has shown them this moral truth as deriving from certain spiritual teachings—immortality of the soul, God a spirit, man coming from God

and returning to God. These are the same kinds of teachings as those which were imparted to the initiates of the highest mysteries, and the same types of moral principles were deduced in both cases.

We have seen that in addition to these spiritual deductions of a morality there was also in the Greek and Egyptian mysteries a "utilitarian" or "pragmatic" type of deduction. This was based on the agricultural discoveries of Demeter and to a certain extent on the invention of wine by Dionysos. The latter was the sort of "utilitarian" revelation which brought the Greeks from the "life with thorns" to the concept of a "ground" life. These elements of the Greek mysteries—which already existed in Egypt—are present within Christianity in an even more veiled form symbolically. Their nearest equivalent is the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist with its "transubstantiation" of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ. According to Saint Thomas Aquinas (*Summa Theologica*, LXXIII, 6), this sacrament was prefigured in the Jewish religion by the bread and wine offered up by Melchizedek, and also by the *manna* which contained—as a spiritual nourishment—every flavor and every sweetness. The different sacraments, the baptism, the confirmation, etc., probably correspond to the different degrees of the ancient initiation. There were seven degrees in the Eleusinian Mysteries and there are seven sacraments in the Catholic religion. A detailed comparison cannot be undertaken here.

Of the two types of deduction of the same moral truth—the "utilitarian" and the spiritual, which had coexisted in the Greek mysteries (in two different degrees of initiation)—the accent in this case was placed on the spiritual. A religion which bestowed on all its members the full advantage of the initiation had to choose between different types of deduction of the same truth. Christianity chose the higher, more spiritual deduction of the two.

In the Greek mysteries the initiates of the lower degrees

were taught to cease to look for the sort of happiness which consists in plundering and killing each other. They were made to understand, by the use of transparent symbols, that the exchange of the fruits of the earth could procure them much greater happiness than the sort of happiness they used to find in the "life with thorns." This practical deduction was deemed understandable by the common initiates.

The happiness to be found in "mystical love" and, on a higher level, the happiness in the post-mortem unity of the human soul with the One, were truths reserved for the selected few. Teachings which are very close to these latter truths were given the principal rôle for the determination of human happiness by Christianity, although this religion opened wide to everyone the doors of initiation.

In Christianity the perfect happiness of man consists in the "vision of God." Man cannot possess this perfect happiness on earth—he can only prepare himself for it. The "vision of God" means for man the possession of all good and the exclusion of all evil.\* Christianity considered all men capable of understanding this mystical origin of happiness from the moment Christ came into the world. The coming of Christ to earth thus represents, in a certain sense, the descent of the esoteric mysteries from their former Olympian heights.

#### *The Rôle of the "Marginal" Movements of Christianity*

In addition to official Christianity and the "heretical" Christian doctrines, several secret societies served as vehicles of moral education in the Middle Ages. The moral teachings of the Rosicrucians and of the esoteric guild of the cathedral builders (the "operative Masons") were close to the moral laws of the Church, but were expressed in the form of secret symbols. The Order of the Templars, one of the Knights' Orders of the Church, also had its "secret." In a certain sense

\* St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, III, 8, IV, 1-8 and V, 7.

these secret societies represented the persistence of the ancient esoteric methods. In many respects they seem to have descended from the Essenes, the Greek mysteries, and perhaps even from Egypt. All these societies were active participants in the Upward Progression of mankind. Their primary concern was the perfecting of the individual and humanity.

At first glance this purpose appears to be one which might just as well have been publicly disclosed. But considerations similar to those which weighed with the heads of the ancient mysteries\* made these societies also proceed in secret. Victor Magnien (in *Les Mystères d'Eleusis*) states, "The existence of secret or closed societies in which certain teachings or certain practices are transmitted to selected and proven people corresponds to a very general tendency of human nature."

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the so-called "speculative" (i.e., purely philosophical) Masonry reached an outstanding position among the secret societies. A heated argument has been carried on among French historians during recent years to decide whether Masonry did or did not contribute to the coming of the French Revolution. It seems to us that by thoroughly discussing in its lodges ideas which were certainly "Christian" ideas in the moral sense, and which were in contradiction to the tyrannical, feudal practices of the epoch, French Masonry undoubtedly prepared the way for the liberating *élan* of the Revolution. But so did Christianity itself, which by reason of its teachings exercised a continual influence in the direction of the Upward Progression, even though occasionally leading members of the Church were allies of the very powers their teachings opposed.

The ways of civilization are often paradoxical. Ideas and trends spread through contradictory channels (which makes it possible for them to penetrate much more deeply into varied strata of society). The different Christian religions have fre-

\* See page 267.

quently been in conflict among themselves. Rome, which was anxious to keep Christianity united, combated the Reformation as strenuously as it had fought against the heretical teachings. Furthermore there has long been a ban against Masonry by Rome, although originally many outstanding members of the Church belonged to this secret organization.

We have to consider all these as "internal struggles," because fundamentally Rome, the different other Christian religions \* and the secret societies of the Masonic type all pursue the same goals—at least in the moral field. They all further the same sort of moral education of mankind, although they may differ as to how this education can be effected.

Even certain schools of thought which scorn "mystical" methods in the pursuit of their aims have performed the same task in the process of civilization as the religions and secret societies. Modern social doctrines and movements, for example, have carried forward Greco-Christian moral ideas in their own way. They have spread these ideas in circles whose mentality is geared to a "positive" approach and which would have refused to accept them from any "mystical" source. These movements—although they generally do not boast of this ancestry—nevertheless stem from the same Greco-Christian roots as the modern religions and the other mystical teachings. Their entire content, both the "critical" and the "constructive," is based on a moral outlook which is essentially Greco-Christian, or which, at least historically speaking, has evolved from Greco-Christian mystical thought.

We cannot examine here the pros and cons which are generally advanced concerning the modern economic and social theories currently called "Marxism." We distinguish between modern Marxism and basic Marxism, because the latter, the Marxism of Marx, was principally "critical"—not "construc-

\* We could call them "Judeo-Christian religions"—and we could add to them, probably, most other contemporary religions, Mohammedanism, Buddhism, etc.

tive" like the doctrines of his modern disciples. It is irrelevant to our present purposes whether we consider Marx's criticism of capitalist society justified or unjustified; and whether we favor or violently oppose the collectivist solutions which are advocated by the disciples of Marx. Whichever be the case, we must admit that Marx's critical attitude is based on Greco-Christian moral premises. It is the critical attitude of a man who, inspired by his Greco-Christian outlook on life, considers—rightly or wrongly—certain prevailing conditions unjust.

The earlier socialist theories, mostly French—those of Fourier, Saint-Simon, Proudhon, Blanc, etc.—were all more or less based on the premise that "man is good," with a definitely Greco-Christian meaning of the word "good."

The same can be said about the various trends and ideas which are comprised in the very general expression "free thought." Free-thinkers also refuse to recognize the rôle of mystical sources of inspiration in their interpretation of morality. As a matter of fact, however, their ethical ideal has evolved either from the Christian type of thinking or from the Greek philosophers—and the latter were influenced either directly or indirectly by the mysteries.

Even those types of "free-thought tendencies" which consider themselves in absolute opposition to Greek and Christian ideas derive indirectly from the same sources of inspiration as the latter. Here we have in mind the various trends of popular thought which are more or less related to the different "utilitarian" and "pragmatist" philosophies. "Usefulness" is considered the basic gauge of morality—and no divine, mystic, or intuitive moral standard is recognized by these schools.

In practice the moral conclusions and judgments of such free-thinkers generally coincide with the Greco-Christian moral ideas. The reason for this is that, while they make their moral conclusions dependent upon the concept of "usefulness," they must at that point decide what should be consid-



ered "useful." The question then becomes one of choice—of preference—and not of scientific determination, since the "utility" desired depends entirely on the sort of future visualization for the individual or mankind.

In determining our preferences, there are apparently no weightier reasons for turning in one direction than in another. We therefore turn where "our heart belongs." Because even "utilitarian" free-thinkers are unconsciously influenced by their Greco-Christian background, in practice their moral conclusions and judgments coincide with Greco-Christian moral ideas.

#### *The Prusso-Teutonics Fight the Whole Upward Progression*

It was not our purpose in the preceding pages to review systematically the different moral doctrines which have contributed to the formation of Western civilization. Our object was simply to examine briefly the roots which are common to all groups and elements composing the Upward Progression.

We have distinguished in this Upward Progression such elements as Greek civilization, the Roman legal school of thought, Judeo-Christian religions, humanitarian movements, modern social doctrines, democratic traditions (see page 246).

In the opposite camp is Prusso-Teutonism, part of the Downward Progression—a part which has developed to gigantic proportions.

It is not due to the caprice of a single man that Prusso-Teutonism (represented at the moment by Hitler) is so violently opposed to all constituent parts of the Upward Progression. This opposition is something basic and organic; and it was inevitable—Hitler does no more than give it current expression in his brutal and mediumistic way.

Both Hitler and the Prusso-Teutonics fight the battle *piecemeal*. They reveal only fragments of their spiritual intentions (just as they have revealed only in fragments their inten-

tions of conquest of the different surrounding countries), in an effort to keep all the spiritual and material forces they wish to destroy from forming an alliance among themselves. Our task therefore is to join together, to synthesize, these elements of the Upward Progression which the Prusso-Teutonics strive to split apart and destroy. It is for this reason that the possible outline of such a synthesis was suggested in the present chapter.

it is simply a vision of life long ago abandoned by those people whom the Upward Progression has joined together—no matter in what part of the world they may live.

## CHAPTER X

### COMMON FOE AND COMMON NOBILITY

THE VARIOUS CURRENTS, schools of thought, movements, religions, etc., which have contributed to our Upward Progression are usually split among themselves by their doctrinal differences and disputes. In normal times, this is as it should be because these conflicts result in further progress. From time to time, however, these internal disagreements become so sharp, so passionate, that irreparable cleavages divide one group from another within the same camp. In times like the present—when outside danger of quite a different character threatens the members of the camp of the Upward Progression—such internal division may have disastrous effects. Mutual hatred and passion often so warp the vision of those participating in the Upward Progression that they may not always distinguish the difference in character between, on the one hand, their normal disagreements with other members of their own camp, and, on the other, the much more profound difference with the outside foe.

Some time ago the remark was jokingly made that the people of the earth would never forget their differences until the inhabitants of Mars threatened an invasion. The actions of the Prusso-Teutonics bear the same relation to the world as those of the Martians might have: the ideas and practices which the former try to enforce on our world are not mere variations within the same cultural stream. They attempt to subject us to the rules and habits of a life based on quite a different concept from ours—a concept which is as alien as though it came from a different planet. In the final analysis,

#### *The Common Ground*

When certain words become “attached” to certain groups, it may be resented if they are used in connection with other groups. We have spoken in preceding pages about the “initiation” through which the various component parts of the Upward Progression have passed. We are well aware that use of the word “initiation” may arouse resentment on the part of those groups which do not recognize their relationship to mystical trends. However, the expression “initiation” can be used in a very general sense in the history of human thought to refer to the “eye-opening” process mentioned in preceding pages.

It is both in this sense and, in the case of the religions and mystical groups, in a “mystical” sense as well that we have employed the word “initiation.” We tried to point out that the different groups within the Upward Progression all originated in the same “initiation,” in the same “eye-opening” process. It is important that all those individuals and groups which can trace back their spiritual ancestry to this initiation should fully realize this; and that they should see clearly that it is this which separates them definitely and irrevocably from the groups within the Downward Progression.\* This common spiritual ancestry represents for all members of the Upward Progression a sort of *nobility* of which all should be proud, no matter what ideological differences may have separated them in the past.

These ideological differences will separate them again in

\* We have mentioned among the component parts of this Downward Progression: barbarian mentality, feudal society, Prusso-Teutonic conspiracy and contemporary Nazi ambitions.

the future—and it is good that this should be so. In the meantime, however, let us explore fully the meaning of our common “nobility,” so fully that we will be able to take a much more effective stand against the threat which comes from the outside and dates from the Dark Ages.

We do not claim to chart out in this book the definite “common ground” on which all members of this spiritual nobility, all participants of the Upward Progression, can firmly establish their lines of defense. We hope, however, that the theme we have suggested will be elaborated upon. Most individuals, nations, groups, etc., have instinctively understood what the danger of Nazism means. But there exist numerous doubts and uncertainties concerning the roots of this danger and its extent. On the other hand, not all appreciate fully that it is of a nature quite different from the usual struggles and differences of opinion which arise between parties, religions, movements, etc.

Whatever may be the daily ups and downs of the war, it is important that we strengthen our internal “spiritual front.” This is what will enable us to win both the war and the peace.

### *The “Common Initiation”*

*We should not be ashamed of our origins.* By this is meant that we should not be afraid to recognize, at least historically, the “mystical,” initiative background which lies behind our mental evolution. Initiation came to our ancestors and to ourselves through varied channels which, in the ancient mysteries, all converged. Whether our initiation came through one of these channels or through all of them, it is still the same initiation and it represents a common bond for all of us. The Prusso-Teutonics and their nearby satellites never received this initiation or, if they were approached by it, it passed over them without leaving any trace.

### *Other Anachronistic Survivals*

We do not intend to paint a picture completely black on one side and white on the other. Not all individuals who belong to the different groups which participated in the Upward Progression can be considered fully initiate in our sense. The process of civilization is a slow one. It may approach its goal. It never reaches it, and its achievements are full of imperfections. The various religions, moral doctrines, etc., which have contributed to Western civilization have on the whole, however, effected a wonderful change in the world during the last thousand years or so.

The civilizing process will perhaps never penetrate into *all* recesses of our human society. But these recesses become ever fewer and fewer. We and our ancestors thought that nothing within these recesses could endanger the balance of the whole. We looked upon the remnants of the primitive “non-initiated” concept of life\*—the numerous reactionary, feudal-minded groups—simply as picturesque anachronisms. We attached little importance to them because the varied driving forces of the Upward Progression were at work against them, simultaneously in joy, bloodshed and tears, on all levels of society, and thus a continual housecleaning was effected.

The isolated survival of elements of the Downward Progression would indeed have had no great consequence while the dynamic influence of the Upward Progression was setting the tone for the Western world and, more or less, for the world as a whole. But all estimates were upset by the fact that the driving forces of the Downward Progression had accumulated considerable power in their seclusion in East Prussia and recently have pushed their way to the foreground of world events. Those who represented the Upward Progression were taken by surprise—and the present struggle is the result.

\* These survived everywhere, including the democratic countries.

*The Prusso-Teutonic "Pseudo-Esoterism"*

We face a paradoxical situation.

The basic concepts of the Upward Progression originated in *esoteric mysteries*. These concepts later came out into the sunlight, expressed at first by *exoteric*, openly taught religions and then by even more openly revealed doctrines of various movements and schools of thought.

On the other hand, the primitive barbaric forces which flourished in Europe and existed openly everywhere (during the period which preceded the civilizing effect of the mysteries, religions, and different currents of Western thought) realized that they could survive and acquire new power only if they in their turn used methods of secrecy. Now they face us with all the advantages which these methods give to those who employ them.

So while the initiation into a higher moral truth came more and more into the open, the forces which tried to preserve the way of life which was once the common way have retreated into the isolation of their secret societies whence they manipulate power they have accumulated.

We must watch this paradoxical situation. Under normal circumstances the forces of the Upward Progression would have every advantage in the struggle now taking place (both in the spiritual and material fields) because of the mass appeal of the "initiation into the higher moral truth." This advantage is, however, somewhat diminished by the fact that most of these upward forces have been acting in the open for centuries now and have lost the benefits of their earlier secrecy. Furthermore their activities have been conducted in a non-concentrated, more or less haphazard manner, each force isolated from the other.

During this time the Prusso-Teutonics have gradually formed their own secret organizations in which they have cleverly aped certain traditions of form created by the other

camp.\* Within these secret organizations they have been concentrating their forces, and have planned their action for many years ahead.

*The "Common Language"*

The Prusso-Teutonics have succeeded during the last seven decades in inculcating their own ideas in the minds of a great number of people whom we would expect to be proud of their allegiance to the principles of the Upward Progression. These people—German-speaking people in Germany and in other parts of the world—had already passed through the civilizing initiative process of Christianity. Nevertheless, because they were made to believe that a common language implies more fundamental common bonds, they let themselves be dragged by the Prusso-Teutonics along the slope of the Downward Progression. This reasoning of the Prusso-Teutonics convinced many Germans, in spite of its fallacy, because from the Upward Progression there came no organized effort to point out the truth to the German-speaking people: that only the superficial symbolism of a common language united them to the Downward Progression of the Prusso-Teutonics; and that they were spiritually more attached to the Upward Progression.

The world itself has been confused by vaguely mystic ideas concerning the significance and unifying effect of a common language. It was because of this confusion that the Prusso-Teutonics were able to gain acceptance for their fallacious reasoning. *The German-speaking people were more or less abandoned by the rest of the world*, and thus became an easy prey for the Prusso-Teutonics.

\* Hitler himself fits well into this picture with his penchant for a certain kind of mystical teachings. But Hitler's "esoterism," like that of the Prusso-Teutonics, has nothing to do with the real initiation. Rather it is a blend of charlatanism and black magic.

*The Formation of the Abscess*

The Egyptian and Greek mysteries, the Jewish religion and sects, finally Christianity and its "marginal" movements, spread everywhere the concepts of cooperation, exchange of goods, brotherly love, sympathy, etc. The Prusso-Teutonic forces we have described set up their center of resistance in East Prussia. They acted under the initial impetus given by a visionary Emperor, and a feudal society which—in the face of the rapidly spreading ideas of the Upward Progression—sought to survive in the guise of a secret organized Order.

Thus they formed a sort of abscess in an otherwise predominantly healthy body. By wrapping themselves in the cloak of secrecy, by adopting secret methods, by isolating themselves for centuries from the rest of mankind, they developed into a real danger for the world. During this time other feudal remnants in all countries, not isolated from the organic life of the globe, were caught up in the healthy stream circulating through the body as a whole and became less and less important in world affairs. (An exception may perhaps be made in the case of the survival of feudalism in Japan which in several respects is analogous to the Prusso-Teutonic situation.)

Using the same figure as before: no compromise is possible between the healthy cells of the world-body and the abscess full of decaying matter. Once the centuries-old wall which the abscess has built around itself has burst there are but two possibilities: either the abscess spreads over the whole body and transforms it into a decaying organism, or the healthier elements of the body get the upper hand and succeed in resorbing the abscess entirely.

*The Three Types of Moral Initiation*

We did not enter here and we cannot enter here into a detailed analysis of the eye-opening process which humanity

has experienced—of the moral initiation we have mentioned. We know this much: that it was a complex and intricate process, because its different phases which originated in the ancient mysteries developed through varied forms in the modern religions. Although not everyone fully absorbed the different phases of this initiation, human society in general is more or less "permeated" by their meaning—either directly or through the example given by others—and it was through this alone that the general advance of morality occurred.

Schematically the different phases of the "moral initiation" seem to emerge as follows from the ancient mysteries and from varied, more recent sources:

1. The discovery of agriculture is represented in the ancient mysteries by the initiation into the "Life Without Thorns." Corresponding symbols are the stalks of grain, the manna, the "bread" of the Holy Eucharist and bread in general. The daily benediction of bread by the Essenes and by the Christians enters into this category. "Bread" represents, according to a very ancient terminology, much more than its nutritive value—it represents human nourishment in general; (compare expressions like "Our daily bread," "Panem et circenses," etc.). The symbolic representation of the discovery of agriculture corresponds at the same time to a higher stage of moral understanding: with the possibility of exchanging the products of the earth it is no longer worth while to base our daily existence on plunder and killing—it is becoming more satisfactory to leave behind the "Life with Thorns." This process could be called a "utilitarian" or "material" deduction of a morality.

2. At a higher degree of the ancient mysteries we find the initiation into "mystical love." The latter, in the time of Christendom, becomes "human sympathy" and "Christian love." This process is, in a certain sense, a "humanitarian" deduction of a morality.

3. The highest understanding of the moral truth derives from concepts like "immortality of the soul," "everlasting

life," "unity of the human soul with God." (These concepts, which existed in the ancient mysteries, can be found among the pre-Christian sects of the Jews and have considerable importance in Christianity.) We may call this process a "meta-physical" deduction of a morality.

The understanding of *any* of these three initiations may be sufficient to motivate an abandonment of the "Life with Thorns" and an elevation to a higher moral level. Although they are different in form, they all coincide in meaning—*i.e.*, they project the same idea of goodness—and in a certain sense all three are superimposed one on the other in the minds of those who receive them all.

The Prusso-Teutonics, in spite of the Christian guise under which they carried on their first activities, never grasped fully the meaning of any of these initiations. They did not grasp it: *they refused to grasp it, or, rather, they were enabled to resist it because their basic charter and their "secret" \*—which for them counted more than anything else—were inspired by opposed principles.* These principles were those of feudal society, which society in its turn was only a disguise of barbaric society.

#### *Spiritual and Material Interests Behind the Growth of the Abscess*

The Prusso-Teutonics based their future destinies on motives of both spiritual and material character. Furthermore, as we have seen, the two sorts of motives were protected by a strictly guarded secret from the curiosity and troublesome interference of the outside world. This was the situation at the time of the Order and it continued when the Junker organizations took over, for their own sake, the ambitions and the policies of the Order. These are the reasons why the Prusso-Teutonics succeeded in establishing such a lasting

\* "Secret"—in the sense usual for secret orders—consisting at the same time of a secret mission and secret methods.

"abscess" of their own ideas and intentions within a more and more Christianized world.

We have already examined these aims in greater detail. They included: perpetual conquest (in the full Hohenstaufen sense of the imperial drive toward world domination), furthering of the selfish, personal interests of those who were participating in these undertakings (the Knights and later the Junkers), and, in general, preservation of feudal principles in opposition to a world moving in the direction of the Upward Progression.

What we consider "spiritual" and what "material" in these aims is irrelevant. They all contained elements of the two kinds. These aims consisted mainly in the protection of the immediate egotistic interests of the participants and in the pursuit of unlimited ambitions which were nurtured to further the cause of some vaguely defined entity. Great weight was added to the "material" interests of the Prusso-Teutonic drive by the inclusion of "big business"—heavy industry—among the participants. This is but a detail, however, and the interests of big business alone cannot explain what is going on in Germany today.

All these elements were strangely intermingled. The egotistical instincts were satisfied and flattered and gave way to all sorts of abuses—while the shield of devotion to a higher entity was flaunted above the heads so as to set the consciences at ease.

Such a combination of aims was bound to have lasting effects, resulting in the creation of an inner body, or rather an "abscess" as we called it—an abscess completely foreign to the body which sheltered it. Of course the abscess could never have developed and survived to our day had the intervention of the outside world, the scalpel of the surgeon, removed it in time. The "secret" was there (and is still there to a great extent) and acts as protection from any such danger.

The Fehme spirit represented another survival of the Downward Progression in Germany, also protected by a secret. Left

to itself the Fehme tradition might definitely have died out, because it did not have so firm a foundation and was not so evenly balanced between spiritual and material aims as the Prusso-Teutonic tradition. But in combination with the latter tradition the Fehme spirit contributed to bringing the Downward Progression to the fore in all its brutality.

What we have discussed here is, of course, not Nazism. And long after Nazism has disappeared it may still be there in Germany.

Nevertheless it is on this soil that Nazism grew. It is a much more profound and insidious threat to our Western civilization and to the whole Upward Progression than mere Nazism.

#### *At the Level of Plunder*

The mentality of man before he experienced any of the three types of initiation to which we refer above was entirely different from ours. It was, however, very similar to the sort of mentality which—in the actions of the Prusso-Teutonics and their satellites—arouses our moral indignation every day.

Before man's mind was able to grasp any of the teachings which for us represent the moral truth, his happiness consisted in obtaining all he could from life by murder and robbery. It is quite natural that this should have been so: he had not yet discovered agriculture—on which was to be based the simplest of all "eye-opening" initiations. He was, therefore, living in a world in which economic values were extremely limited in quality, diversity and number. The uncultivated earth had no value for man except as a hunting ground. In hunting it was not to his advantage to remain attached to the soil. The tribes which moved around most quickly were the most successful: it was these which succeeded in stealing the greatest number of cattle from the neighboring tribes after, in most cases, breaking their resistance by murder and pillage.

In our evaluation of this behavior, there is no place for moral indignation: instead we must admit realistically that man at this stage of his mental and economic evolution knew no better and that from his point of view he was completely justified in plundering and killing.

It is fortunate that the action of Prusso-Teutonic Germany should constantly arouse our moral indignation. This indignation has contributed to awakening us to the danger represented by this Germany.

But it is also useful to set the motivating impulses of the Prusso-Teutonics side by side for comparison with those of their not-so-distant ancestors in pre-initiative times. We can thus objectively appreciate all the propelling forces behind the disquieting present-day phenomena. The question at this stage, then, is no longer one of indignation, hate and passion, but a matter of making a diagnosis, of finding the roots of the evil—and perhaps of finding a remedy.

#### *Pacifist Thought Is Powerless Before Conspiracy*

The usual "pacifist" type of thought which was in vogue after World War I completely failed to develop such a remedy. Even pacifists of the Norman Angell type realize today that statements like "War doesn't pay" are utterly meaningless in the face of Nazi and Prusso-Teutonic phenomena. They are just as meaningless as such statements as "Crime doesn't pay" or "Be good because it is profitable" when addressed to an inveterate criminal.

"War doesn't pay" is a useful rationalization for the benefit of those whose moral background has been firmly established by the Upward Progression. It is an utterly empty statement when addressed to those who not only never did receive our type of moral initiation, but who, furthermore, are well protected *from even the accidental influence of this initiation by a firmly knit secret conspiracy directed along the path of the Downward Progression.*

### *The Elementary Understanding of a Morality*

Considering again the first type of moral initiation of the mysteries, to which we referred above—the one based on the agricultural discovery—we find in it a basic idea very close to the modern concept that “war does not pay.” However, the moral truth in the mysteries reached the participants not as the result of cold rationalization but through the profound effect of an intricate initiation which penetrated to the innermost chambers of the heart.

The texts we have quoted concerning the basic moral initiation of the mysteries are, of course, themselves mere rationalizations; the initiation itself went much deeper. Nevertheless these texts are adequate presentations of the elementary process which first opened the eyes of our spiritual forefathers to what we consider morality. Isocrates says that a life superior to that of the animals has come from agriculture and that the initiation derived from the same source. (See page 268.) For Suidas the “ground” life which came from the initiation consists in the sharing of the goods of the earth by the inhabitants of the earth instead of their fighting and strangling one another. (See page 270.)

It is this elementary understanding of a morality spread by the various mysteries, in addition to a more subtle deduction of a morality contained in the higher degrees of the mysteries, which contributed most of all to bringing civilization (in our sense) first from Egypt and India to the East in general, and later to the Greek and Roman world.

### *The Moral Groundwork*

Even those inhabitants of Greece and the Roman Empire who understood only the most elementary moral ideas originating from the Greek mysteries were fully prepared to appreciate the moral teachings of Christianity and consequently

to become excellent Christian converts. The monotheistic idea of God, Christian love, immortality of the soul, resurrection, man made in the image of God, were concepts which were readily accepted by those who had already received a first experience of the same type of doctrines, either directly or indirectly, either from the lower or from the higher degrees of the mysteries.

A wonderful Christian synthesis was in the course of emerging from the Egyptian, Greek and Jewish civilizations to become the general inspiration of the Western world. It was the period when the “Kingdom of God on Earth” seemed to be approaching.

The original inhabitants of the Western Roman Empire were fully engaged in this process when they were overrun, during the first centuries of our era, by various barbaric tribes. These tribes, for the most part of Teutonic origin, were soon, at least on the surface, converted to Christianity.

Although the first acceptance of the Christian doctrines by the barbarians was still somewhat superficial the moral transformation of these people was already well along the way toward gradual accomplishment in the subsequent generations. But while the common people were passing slowly through a moral initiation which gave them title in the real “nobility” of the Upward Progression, the so-called *nobles* among the former barbarians were organizing everywhere to preserve their privileges from the reforming influence of the Greco-Christian moral conceptions.

We have, consequently, the following picture:

Among the Greeks, and to a certain extent also among the original inhabitants of the Roman Empire, the highest classes of society had received in the mysteries, and had assimilated, the subtle moral doctrines which were later to become those of Christianity. The common people had, directly and indirectly, benefited by the same doctrines. The Greeks and the Latin world under their influence through a long mystical



training had acquired enough subtlety to appreciate—if not with their reason at least through mystical perception (Bergson would have said “intuitively”)—that a “Life without Thorns,” or later simply a “Christian life,” was happier than the wolf-like existence of their forefathers.

### *No Groundwork Among Barbarians*

The barbarians reacted differently to such teachings. The common people among them were impressed by the “imperative” presentation of the divine law and by the sanctions imposed by the Church. It was mostly because of such down-to-earth reasons that they were drawn into the Christian orbit. From then on it was inevitable that they would receive slowly but surely the full Christian moral initiation.

The barbarian *nobles*, just like their commoners, did not at first sight grasp the full meaning of the Christian moral teachings. But less impressed than the people by the “imperative” contents of religion and by the sanctions, they determined to give their best efforts to safeguarding their traditional, barbarously interpreted economic privileges against the modernizing tendencies of the Church. The whole feudal system was born out of this kind of endeavor: to maintain under a cloak of Christian chivalry the barbarian methods of privilege, abuse, plunder, continual conquest and, if necessary, killing and deceit.

The Carolingian Empire and later the so-called Holy Roman Empire of the German people were the most prominent organizations constituted by the feudal suzerains. The Emperor's role being that of a super-suzerain, his rights, methods and aims were simply superlative of those of his vassals. The “continual conquest of neighboring properties” became in the case of the Emperors continual conquest of all lands not yet belonging to the Empire. Some of the Emperors were quite sincere in their spiritual acceptance of the Christian faith.

But in the political and economic field their efforts were in flagrant opposition to the principles of Christianity. Consequently the Emperors necessarily found themselves in constant conflict with the Church after they failed to absorb the whole clerical organization in the intricacies of the feudal system (for instance, by appointing as its princes men whom they could control). They professed to be sincere Christians and did not fully realize to what extent, politically, their conduct as well as that of their vassals, was still determined by the Downward Progression and by “Life with Thorns.” They were thus often sincerely surprised and shocked when the Church did not appreciate their political behavior.

### *The Conspiracy Against Initiation*

The formation of the Teutonic Order was an organized attempt to secure survival of all the non-Christian privileges of the feudal empire and of feudal nobility during the centuries to come. The Order was thus both an organism carrying out an “imperial mission,” conceived in a feudal sense, and a refuge for feudal nobility (which evolved from barbarian nobility). The latter needed the refuge because it saw its abusive privileges dwindling away in a society which was moving gradually in the direction of the Upward Progression.

The Order became a German institution simply because the Teutonic nobles (more so, for example, than those of Latin origin who were prepared for Christianity by the effect of the initiations) were Christianized only on the surface. They still clung to the economic principles deriving from the original barbarian customs. It is for the same reasons that the Fehme enterprise, having an origin and growth parallel to the Order, also arose on German soil.

We have seen how the Teutonic Order and the secret societies which were to become its successors systematically carried forward the plans laid down at the time of their

formation. They represented, in the midst of a more and more thoroughly Christianized German world, an obtuse survival of economic and spiritual principles stemming from a different world.

This living anachronism, which gradually took on the character of actual conspiracy, engrained its principles so deeply on the minds of its participants that a sort of impenetrable crust was created. Through this crust elements of the Upward Progression could no longer reach the minds. The Hohenstaufen Emperor, Frederick II, transmitted his resentment against the Church—which characterized the second part of his life—to the Order; but the Order itself, and the secret societies which emerged from it, developed into organisms even more violently opposed to Christianity and to the whole Upward Progression than Frederick ever was. The Order not only kept alive but carried to new heights the original spirit of privilege, abuse, plunder, perpetual conquest, and, if necessary, killing\* and deceit usual among the barbarians and among the feudal lords.

#### *Still the Same Conspiracy*

We know how the Prusso-Teutonics brought the other German-speaking people under their rule. We saw also how Hitler's rise to power became possible only when he agreed to be their faithful servant, advancing their purposes on a world scale.

Hitler takes all the credit and all the blame for everything that has been happening. He likes the limelight, he likes the rôle he is permitted to play. As a matter of fact, Hitler is not the real problem in Germany today. His days are probably numbered but whatever may be the manner of his disappearance from the world scene, the Prusso-Teutonic problem will still be there, essentially unchanged.

\* See the Fehme murders after 1918 (Chapter IV).

In the meantime Hitler, as the faithful agent of the Prusso-Teutonic aims, is doing his best to destroy all basic concepts and institutions of the Upward Progression. In this endeavor the Nazi movement in its present form is acting like any exoteric movement, carrying out the basic aims of its own esoterism. Here the "esoterism" is the (pseudo-) esoterism of the Prusso-Teutonics—an esoterism based on "downward" principles. This is the same barbaric conspiracy against the constantly modernizing influence of the Greco-Christian civilization which has existed for centuries. It is not by accident that Hitler considers Christianity (both Catholic and Protestant), Judaism, and Masonry as enemies. His object (and his "bosses" approve of it) is to stop the whole flow of the Upward Progression and to annihilate its institutions.

Hitler knows that the political and economic world rulership he wants to secure for Prusso-Teutonia (a world rulership established, of course, on feudal economic principles) can be achieved only on one condition: the spiritual ideas behind the political and economic reality of the world must be completely broken off from Christianity, Greco-Christianity, Judeo-Christianity—and from the Upward Progression in general.

The first purpose is to destroy the "initiation," to push it into complete oblivion. The second purpose is to build after that the sort of world which would have long ago emerged had not initiation "opened the eyes" to the moral truth in our sense and in that way completely changed the destinies of mankind.

If it were not for the initiation (which came to humanity through the various mysteries, religions and movements, and their deriving philosophies) the brutal reign of the strongest would have continued in the world. Of course this world would have been different from the world we now know—because in the absence of the animating ideas of civilization (all produced by the influence of the initiations) our entire

material existence would have been different. None of today's scientific discoveries would have been possible. (Prusso-Teutonism and consequently Nazism, though aimed at the destruction of our civilization, intends to preserve—for its sole benefit—the scientific discoveries which were possible only under this civilization.) Instead of our customary exchange of goods between individuals living in the most distant parts of the world—an exchange based on gold, which can circulate everywhere—we would be laboring under a cumbersome method of transfer of goods: a barter system completely regulated by the strongest group to its exclusive advantage. Of course the barter system would have resulted in an economic standard much less satisfactory than our diversified exchange of goods based on a universal gauge of values. General poverty would have been the rule. Only the most powerful group would have profited: with the aid of this system the rest of the world could quite easily have been kept in subjection.

Such a world without the benefits of civilization is purely hypothetical. The initiation which produced civilization was not accidental but organic. Civilization—lack of space prevents detailed proof here—evolved out of an organic necessity of mankind. Even if the Prusso-Teutonics should succeed in destroying our civilization and the initiation with it, the latter—and, consequently, civilization itself—would eventually be re-created by the human race to meet a vital necessity. But generations might elapse before this re-creation. In the meantime indescribable harm would have been done.

(The followers of Gandhi in India and conscientious objectors in Western countries count on this automatic re-growth of the initiation and consequently of civilization. Their expectation is reasonably founded but they completely neglect the time element. It makes a tremendous difference whether we can save our civilization—imperfect as it may be—or whether we face hundreds of years, possibly, of bar-

barian life until, in the long run, a new civilization is developed.)

### *Welfare of the People Immaterial*

It is entirely understandable and in the nature of things that the economic Fuehrer of the Third Reich, Dr. Walter Funk, has laid out plans for a re-establishment of the barter system, governed by Berlin. To Dr. Funk and his Prusso-Teutonic masters it does not matter if this should result in general poverty—because the world, thus impoverished, could be ruled by the Prusso-Teutonics much more easily.

(Let us recall that the Prusso-Teutonics, in the period between 1918 and 1933, deliberately and systematically effected the impoverishment of Germany in order to facilitate imposition of their rule over the country.)

There is no point in proving to the present masters of Germany that such a system would result in economic disaster and in a loss by mankind of all prosperity. The fact that they are not concerned about the welfare of the people around them, and refuse to admit that their own welfare is dependent on that of others, is altogether to be expected from their super-feudal mentality. Their eyes are as closed to such higher moral and economic truths as were those of their forefathers in barbarous times. The only aim in which they are interested is to reign over the largest possible territory even if it means reigning simply over deserts and cemeteries.

It cannot be sufficiently emphasized how largely our basic economic conceptions derive from our moral and philosophical outlook. We do not speak here about the prevailing capitalist system. Rather we are concerned with something much more basic: the universal exchange of goods based on gold. "Gold" deserves a thorough rehabilitation and vindication from the slander to which it has been subjected. The introduction of gold as a universal symbol of values had a

tremendous and extremely beneficial effect on the evolution of mankind. Without such an adoption of a universal symbol no universal exchange of goods and no world travel of any great proportions would have been possible. Gold—along with silver—would never have become the basis of exchange of goods had it not been for the moral and philosophical teachings contained in the various initiations. The concept of “sharing and not strangling” taught by the Mysteries would have had no practical meaning without a universal symbol of values which each individual could possess: only the use of some such symbol makes possible an *actual* sharing—*i.e.*, exchange of distant goods including all goods other than exclusively personal belongings. Gold proved to be a satisfactory symbol of values.

We cannot enter here into a detailed analysis of this question. We may add, however, that in ancient times gold, because of its color and its other qualities, was considered a symbol of the sun and of divinity in general. (Silver symbolized the moon and the feminine element in divinity, of the Isis, Demeter, Juno type.) This suggests the sort of mental process which probably led to the acceptance of gold everywhere as a satisfactory symbol of values. (Silver, of course, has also been used as a monetary symbol: but it has been increasingly neglected as, in a parallel development, mankind has become increasingly attached to the monotheistic concept of life.) The ability to possess gold, whether actually, or in the form of banknotes—a later development—is symbolically equivalent to the individual’s “participation in God.”

#### *Simply an Abscess*

Nazism stunned the world by brutally unloosing on it all the barbarous practices and concepts of the “non-initiated” Prusso-Teutonics—the spirit of abuse, plunder, deceit, perpetual conquest, etc. The world was stunned because it had not even suspected the existence of this danger which for

centuries had awaited the propitious moment to burst into the open.

The first surprise had a paralyzing effect on many victims and possible victims of Nazism. They were hypnotized by the monster which seemed almost supernatural, simply because of the unexpectedness of its arrival in all its shocking brutality.

Since then the Nazis have suffered several reversals which to some extent have broken the spell. Nevertheless many still attribute almost supernatural powers to Hitler or at least consider Nazism the expression of some marvelous dynamic force having, whether we like it or not, a great chance of success.

This is one of the reasons why it is important to expose what Nazism really is and what lies behind it. It serves a useful purpose to bring to light the “social abscess” of Prusso-Teutonism with the pus of Nazism flowing out of it.

The grave danger which this abscess represents is by no means negligible. We should not forget, however, that it is simply an abscess and nothing more. It is not some vital force, and it has no marvelous potentiality. There is nothing supernatural about its sudden appearance.

What we face is an accumulation of decaying matter which has existed deeply hidden for many centuries. The surgeon’s scalpel will have to do a thorough and speedy job now that the abscess has revealed its existence and threatens to send out its poison into the bloodstream of the world. And the surgeon’s hand will not tremble if he forgets his moral indignation and realizes objectively that the evil stems from perfectly natural, although carefully concealed, sources.

#### *Noblesse Oblige*

In the first chapters of this book we tried to throw some light on these sources and to trace the evolution of the evil.

In the later chapters our endeavor was to show the common

roots of the various branches that compose the Upward Progression—branches which are all imperiled by the same evil.

It is essential in the present circumstances that we see these common roots clearly. And it is essential that we re-examine with fresh appreciation the values for which we fight together with the other descendants of our common spiritual ancestry.

The same *nobility* which unites all of us—all participants of the Upward Progression, whatever may be our social standing—can serve as a profound inspiration in our present crusade. We are all knights of this crusade, united by the same initiation, regardless of our particular faith or philosophical belief. We may be called Catholics, Protestants, Jews, Mohammedans or Free-Thinkers—we must realize that our united stand against the same foe is not the result of an accident but arises from our common nobility. And we must appreciate that it is solely because of this common spiritual ancestry that our forefathers and ourselves have been able to produce all that we cherish in our common civilization: moral concepts, ideas of freedom in every sphere, free exchange of goods, and even scientific discoveries, literature and art. All these have common roots in the same initiation, in the same “eye-opening” process.

We tend to forget that this process ever occurred, because we take for granted the self-engendered development of all our spiritual and economic values. We do not sufficiently realize that the origins of all these values are closely inter-related, that they all stem from the same “moral initiation” against which the Prusso-Teutonics have carefully insulated themselves during the centuries. And we often forget that if, for any reason whatsoever, this “moral initiation” had not occurred, we would still be living in exactly the same dark ages as our ancestors of several thousand years ago. If they succeed in destroying our “moral initiation” the Prusso-Teutonics may lead us back into those dark ages, although,

blinded by their spiritual blinkers, they may not themselves realize all the possible disastrous consequences of their efforts. Because they have never experienced the moral initiation, they cannot appreciate the tremendous disadvantages of absence of cooperation, and the disastrous consequences of policies of might.

The nobility to which we refer—and to which the masses of the people belong—arose from the historic superposition of all the good elements which mankind ever produced. This is the only real nobility. In opposition, the “nobility” of those German “noblemen” who contributed to forming Prusso-Teutonia, and who are at the head of it, has consisted of nothing but the systematic superposition of elements of egotism and deceit, and all the backward concepts of the “Life with Thorns.”

We are all participants in one great crusade against actual barbarians who threaten to destroy our entire way of living. The war itself is indeed an essential part of this great crusade but a part only. The fight has a wider scope. It includes the complete destruction of the moral and social abscess which caused the present conflict.

Even while the war continues, practical means can be found to prepare for the destruction of this abscess. After the war it will have to be accomplished with the highest skill and ruthlessness of which the operating surgeon is capable.

Where else but in our common *nobility* can we find the necessary moral strength and inspiration to accomplish the work for which all of us are responsible?

## APPENDIX

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## PRUSSO-TEUTONIA AND THE PROBLEM OF POST-WAR GERMANY

*Since this war began there has been a great deal of discussion in different countries about "good" and "bad" Germany. Some support the thesis that there are actually two Germanies—one good and one bad; and that if we want to settle world affairs all we have to do is eliminate bad Germany. The opposing camp is of the opinion that all Germany is equally dangerous and that it is preposterous to speak about "Two Germanies."*

Those who believe that a "good Germany" is to be found behind the wall facing us mean, when they speak of "bad Germany," *the Nazi party* and everything that gravitates around Hitler. For them all evil started with Hitler. They claim that all that must be done is to wipe out every trace of the Nazi party organization and its assault troops, and thus to liberate German society from the Hitlerian stamp. From then on, they say, order might be restored and Germany could again take her place among the civilized nations of the world. Many speeches by members of the English Cabinet about war aims have been based on these premises.

Those who hold the contrary point of view say that Germany has represented a danger to the world since long before Hitler's time; that consequently the whole German nation as such is in fundamental opposition to the way of thinking and living of the rest of the world. In their understanding Nazism is the very essence of the German soul and the entire German nation to a man is behind Hitler.

The protagonists of this latter opinion seem, however, unable to propose a practical solution for the settlement of the German problem. The suggestions which are put forward

include the administration of all internal affairs of post-war Germany by a group of foreign officials, isolation of the German youth from parental influences in order to facilitate their reeducation, and even the sterilization of all Germans. For the most part those who advance such suggestions do not mean them literally. They think in these terms in order better to characterize the pessimistic conclusions to which they have been forced by their understanding of the German people as a race of belligerents filled with the spirit of conquest: a people directly opposed to all the teachings of Occidental civilization and of Christianity.

"A grave mistake," say the others. "Good Germany exists alongside the bad, and is in striking contrast to what is taking place today in Hitler's Germany. No one can doubt the sincerity of thought of a Goethe, Lessing or a Thomas Mann, nor the purity of the inspiring ideas behind Beethoven's symphonies. In all sections of old Germany, there was cultural activity which could well take an outstanding place in the great flow of European civilization."

Many of those subscribing to this theory have fond memories of their earlier days in Germany, of German friends they have had. They also reason that a country which has turned out millions of German-Americans (who for the most part have made excellent and loyal citizens of the United States) cannot be considered in entirety as a danger; that this country does not deserve blanket condemnation for the war of aggression which we witness.

With a sort of wishful thinking, forgetting all the German aggressions of pre-Hitlerian days, all the extraordinary utterances of the pan-Germanists of the last hundred and fifty years, they go on repeating that, with Hitler gone, the roots of the evil would be eliminated and everything would return to normal.

The conclusions which we reach in this book do not agree with either of the two schools of thought described. Rather

we are led to believe that each of them contains part of the truth. Germany is neither a single, indivisible whole, dangerous in its entirety, nor is it "Two Germanies," of which but one, the Nazi Germany, represents the true danger. There are, in reality, "Three Germanies."

There is the *first* Germany—the Germany which can be considered "good": the Germany of ancient and honorable traditions, the Germany of Goethe, the Germany which has given us the great majority of German-Americans and the political refugees of 1848 and of 1933–1941. The spirit of this Germany, despite all outward appearances, may still be alive in the hearts of millions of Germans under the yoke of Hitlerism today.

Then there is a *second* Germany, almost as old as the first, but vile and dangerous. Her traditions are no less deep rooted, no less ancient than those of the first Germany, but her true face is revealed only to the initiate.

This is the Germany of "pan-Germanism" and "Prussianism." We have called it the "Prusso-Teutonic Germany," tracing it back to the founding of the Teutonic Order in the thirteenth century. This is the Germany which actually carried on those ideas of the Holy Roman Emperors which pointed toward world domination. This Germany has been very much alive during the last seven hundred years in Eastern Prussia and, during recent decades, its doctrines have penetrated wide categories of the population. It escaped world attention until the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries, because its activities seemed limited to the Eastern part of Europe.

Of the three, "First" Germany was the only one visible. It was there in the form of small German states loosely tied together within the Empire and inspired by the general principles of Christian morality. Prusso-Teutonic Germany waited in the background like a vulture for the most propitious moment to sink its claws into its victim. The readers of this book know that we are not concerned here with a vague, indefinable tendency—the sort of concept common to the



“subtle historian” who deals in hazy imponderables; on the contrary, Prusso-Teutonic Germany followed a very precise line of development which one can trace clearly through the centuries. This development is absolutely distinct; it suffices simply to assemble some facts scattered in the pages of history in order for one to note with what inexorable logic events follow one another.

This “Second” Germany, this Prusso-Teutonic Germany does not like to show her true face. She had adopted various disguises throughout history. Before 1918 she was disguised as Wilhelm II and the monarchy. The allies thought it was sufficient to overthrow the latter in order for everything to change, so that order might be restored in Germany. That is how Prusso-Teutonic Germany was able to avoid destruction, and in the years between the two wars was able to reconstruct her forces—forces which the rest of the world thought had been wiped out.

Besides “First” and “Second” Germany, there remain Hitler and Nazism, which are what we may call “Third” Germany. This is a most formidable Germany indeed, but is in fact only the present front behind which are hidden all those profoundly dangerous elements inherent in Germania, the “Second” Germany.

A practical solution of the German problem will become apparent if we distinguish correctly between the good and bad elements in Germany.

It is only the Nazism of Hitler which seems to represent Germany today. It alone shows its repulsive face. But the tragic era of 1918-1939 will be experienced again and the great struggle will have been in vain, if we allow history to repeat itself and are content with destroying Hitler and Hitlerism without accomplishing the rest of the task.

We must avoid repetition of the serious mistake which was made by the Allied Powers after the last war. Only the figure-

heads were called to account, while those really responsible remained undisturbed—able to reorganize their positions behind the scenes.

The same sort of mistake would be repeated (as pointed out earlier) if Hitler and the Nazi party were to assume the blame alone and the rest of the Prusso-Teutonic group was thus enabled to continue its operations without interference.

It is not likely that the Allies will be taken in by any offers of appeasement on Hitler’s part. Even the Cliveden Set and the survivors among former Munichmen understand today that an agreement with the “man of a hundred broken promises” would be purely illusory. But they might walk right into a trap in the event that the “forces *behind Hitler*” proposed the liquidation of the Fuehrer and his entire set-up and asked for an agreement based on these terms.

As early as the end of 1939 and during the first months of 1940, several “peace-feelers” were sent out to Paris, London and Washington, calling for an understanding of this nature. The “escape” of Thyssen to Paris, the negotiations by Stinnes’ son in London and the activities of that odd oil magnate, William Rhodes Davis, in Washington were all undertaken with this end in mind. All these men spoke in terms of replacing Hitler by Goering—the Goering who, though the lieutenant of Hitler, enjoys the complete support of the forces behind Hitler. The purpose of rumors spread periodically that Goering and Hitler do not get along well with one another is only to pave the way for some such intrigue. Yet if, for one reason or another, Goering should fail to win international support, he would be sacrificed, much as Hitler may be sacrificed, and another figurehead would be set up. As long as “Second Germany” can find a front behind which it is possible for her to hide and save her cause, she does not care who is in the foreground.

I do not know what the world situation will be at the time this book appears, but I am certain that intrigue and negotia-

tions along the lines I have just discussed will be attempted by those individuals who, behind the scenes, are actually in control of Germany today. I am certain of this because I am convinced that the mad race in which Germany is engaged can only lead to her ruin and end in catastrophe either in the strictly military sense or otherwise. Today it is a race of desperation which can never reach its goal since, because of its very nature, it cannot limit its goal. It is the mad dance of the "Sorcerer's Apprentice," of the "Golem," which can no longer be halted except through drastic and extreme measures.

It is this solution which the men behind the scenes in Germany will attempt to find at the moment when they sense impending catastrophe. The facts assembled here are presented as a warning against any effort toward negotiations which would allow Prusso-Teutonic Germany to regroup her forces and to start afresh in the future.

But even if such a scheme has already been partially successful, perhaps it is still not too late to shed light on those dangers which exist or have succeeded in surviving in Germany.

Let us prepare ourselves for the surgical operation which it is indispensable to perform in Germany. Only after that will it be possible to speak of a revival of the Germany of Goethe; only after that will one be able to meet former German friends with a smile and without any underlying mistrust; and the millions of men and women in the world of known German origin will be forever free from that pernicious influence which has so often hindered them from integrating themselves, without mental reservations, into the communities in which they live.

Another mistake would consist in condemning the German people *en masse* and definitely excluding them from the human community of the future. Germany's masters confi-

dently expect the United Nations to commit this error in addition to the one mentioned above. Nothing would suit their plans better. Continued misunderstanding on these two points would not only assure their own survival—concealed as they are—but also the survival of all their unlimited ambitions and "downward" moral concepts. Further it would enable them to hold and tighten their grip on the millions of German-speaking people.

When in preceding chapters we spoke about the revolt of the German cities united against the Teutonic Order in the Marienwerder Bund in 1438, we said that this was a rebellion of the spirit of decency and cooperation against the principles of exploitation and narrow egotism. To obtain a permanent solution of the German problem this spirit—the spirit of the *first* Germany—must be reawakened. It is no easy task, since the people all over Germany have been systematically—and successfully—indoctrinated with Prusso-Teutonic ideas.

But the job *can* be done. The spirit of decency and cooperation has been kept alive in Germany, among other things, by the different Churches. It continues to exist below the surface—even more deeply imbedded in the German spirit than the Prusso-Teutonic infection.

The Prusso-Teutonics annexed a people—the people of German tongue. They will do everything in their power to hold this people within their circle of damnation: to be damned when they are. Goebbels in his articles and speeches points out regularly that it is vitally important for the *entire* German nation—not only for the Nazis—to win this war: because if they are defeated, the world will revenge itself cruelly on all of them.

Responsible circles in the Western nations carefully avoid discussing this problem in detail. People feel instinctively that Nazism does not compose the entire danger in Germany. But instead of going to the root of the matter—determining exactly *what* elements in Germany are the dangerous ones—

they prefer not to commit themselves concerning the exact scope of the sanctions to be taken after the war.

Occasionally the "Prussian spirit," "Pan-Germanistic tendencies" or something equally vague, is held responsible, with Nazism, for the recent events. But because such vaguely defined concepts are not usually localized they are mistakenly considered a basic German tendency.

We have endeavored to present Prusso-Teutonism in its concrete outlines—so delimited that it can be traced and eradicated, not only spiritually but also materially.

As for the good elements in Germany, they should by all means be encouraged. We should not abandon them to the Prusso-Teutonics. Instead we should spare no effort to bring them over to the side of the Upward Progression, where they belong.

Too much time has already been wasted. No really constructive plan has been presented by the Allies to the German-speaking populations which might encourage them to work against their present masters for a better future.

The propaganda directed to the Germans has struck a single note: "Get rid of Nazism and everything will be fine again." Most Germans understand this for what it is—propaganda. They know that Germany's failure to get along with the world did not start with Nazism. Such Leitmotivs therefore have only a slight effect. They are, in any case, useless as a means of separating the wheat from the chaff in Germany. Germans who are definitely anti-Nazi in feeling continue to make sacrifices for what their masters tell them is "national honor."

An entirely different approach to the question is needed. Efforts to change German mentality have to be directed to deeper layers of the mind than that of Nazism. It is not enough to remove Nazism. Prusso-Teutonism—the profound infection of the German spirit of which Nazism is only a consequence—must be entirely cut out. To replace the Prusso-

Teutonic interpretation of "national honor," the minds of the people have to be directed toward trends of thought going back to the anti-Junker Revolution of 1848, to the Marienwerder Bund, and to the Hansa, whose principles were always in opposition to the Prusso-Teutonics.

Many spiritual sources can be tapped in the effort to bring back the majority of the German-speaking people to the common nobility of the Upward Progression. The underlying concepts should be crystallized into a theme presented continually and in every possible variation even while the war continues. They should be the basis of a constructive plan for after the war, if the German people are to recognize the appeals made to them as something entirely apart from propaganda. These will attract them as their only hope to be accepted and integrated among the people of the Upward Progression, the *decent* people living all over the world.

Such plans, sincerely developed, would hasten the necessary revolt in Germany, and the moral dilemma which at present troubles the thinking of many people of German origin in different parts of the world would be resolved; they would be aware that the picture presented to them as the "German ideal" is in reality merely a Prusso-Teutonic ideal; they would understand that an appreciation of the *real* German ideal in no sense contradicts their first loyalty—to their present country and to the Upward Progression.

But—let us repeat—matters cannot be settled on the spiritual plane alone. The mistaken notion of "non-interference with the internal affairs of other nations" \* has had its day. The Prusso-Teutonics themselves have vigorously pursued a policy of interference in the internal affairs of other nations. Our resentment against them should not be based on this fact, but on something more serious: that the object of their interference has been the propagation of their "downward" prin-

\* "Interference" is used here to mean *practical* interference—not the mere spreading of ideas.

ciples and the subjection of the conquered countries to barbarous enslavement for their own benefit.

We cannot set the world in order without interfering in the internal affairs of people everywhere. No objections can be made to such interference if it is exerted not for the selfish, imperialistic purposes of one nation \* but simply in the interests of the Upward Progression.

The world has become so small, the interdependence of its different parts has become so great, that no continued isolation of a part from the whole should be permitted. If we do not manage to spread our way of life to other parts of the world † we should not be surprised if we find ourselves suddenly submerged by a way of life which we hate.

For the head to permit an abscess to continue to exist on the arm is not tolerance but stupidity. By making every effort to eradicate the Prusso-Teutonic abscess, with all its economic strongholds, we render service not only to ourselves but also to the whole German people, who, once the infection is removed, will again begin to feel themselves a useful part of the world.

It is in this direction that we may seek a practical solution for the German problem.

\* As has been done before by nations belonging in all other respects to the camp of the Upward Progression.

† Meaning by this: *any* of the different ways of life, deriving from the Upward Progression, and not *one* of these variations in preference to the others.

## PRUSSO-TEUTONIA AND THE SOCIAL PROBLEM

*The various schools of sociology which have influenced the thought of mankind in recent times take it for granted that the world has reached a certain stage of political and industrial development in which are contained all factors for determining what the future will be. It has currently been admitted that we are living in what is called a capitalistic society. This is the assumption from which speculations have started. Though different predictions have been advanced as regards the exact shape of the future—according to the leanings of each school of thought—none of these schools seems to have taken into account factors deriving from the Middle Ages. Is it possible that such factors—which so far have been generally overlooked—actually exist?*

To turn back to the Middle Ages in explaining world problems, or even specific German problems, might seem fantastic to those who believe that civilization as a whole has experienced considerable progress since the Middle Ages, and that this progress, which is evident in so many different realms, should be a sufficient basis for a peaceful organization of human society. Nevertheless it can be shown through the most objective methods that certain characteristic German social forms (today of the greatest importance for the whole world) have survived with almost no change since the Middle Ages.

It is very tempting to reason as though we were all really children of the century in which we live and all disciples of this Western civilization. We would like to believe that this civilization is universally accepted among all white races. This

thought is tempting, but false. We must yield to the evidence that it is not possible to explain a series of contemporary phenomena of the utmost importance without going back to their distant sources, some six or seven centuries back. So much the worse for those who do not consider this a serious method of investigation.

Pseudo-scientific thought tends to ignore deductions based on the too remote past. It relegates to the realm of fantasy any reasoning which takes account of factors too far removed. The word "scientific" is often reserved for things which are visible or palpable. Materialism, which is in vogue in the study of the social sciences, accepts very little beyond contemporary or closely related factors. To speak of the *actual* Middle Ages as influencing contemporary events brings a smile to the lips. Thus it is difficult for most people to admit that the rôle which Germany is playing at this very moment—while possibly not determined by one man all by himself—cannot be explained by the impact of certain great world-wide economic currents either; that it can only be understood by the disclosure of an entanglement of interests extending back to the Middle Ages. This entanglement has developed a monster-like existence through the course of centuries but it has always carefully hidden its true face.

We do not intend to deny here the practical and experimental benefits which may be derived from a materialist approach to history. We wish only to say that most "materialists" content themselves, in conducting their investigations, with taking into account immediate causes only, neglecting such things as "latent causes" which stem from faraway sources. They are afraid of touching here upon immaterial ground. This would not occur, since more than spiritual factors are involved. We have tried to show how the actual survival in Germany of a certain pre-Christian way of living, which cannot be apparent to any superficial observer, results not only from a "spiritual tradition" but also from the

very real material (or economic) interests which have remained almost the same for several centuries.

Furthermore, the school known as that of "historical materialism" has specialized in revealing certain shortcomings of the capitalistic system and the social injustices due to these shortcomings. We have seen the effort toward the actual survival and revival of a much more outdated economic system: the feudal system (and in a certain sense even a pre-feudal system) used to the advantage of a small, very restricted group. The injustices and sufferings which would spread around the world if their plan succeeded would be a thousand times greater than any injustices of which the capitalistic system has been accused. It is our opinion simply that the understanding of these phenomena is at the present moment the most urgent task. It is more urgent in any case than the solution of certain problems which used to be the primary object of interest of the "social sciences."

We don't believe in the actual survival of the Middle Ages any more than we believe in Santa Claus? But wait! It is useful to reread here what Heinrich Heine, writing about his own country which he knew well, said to the French of the nineteenth century. These Frenchmen were unwilling to believe that the Middle Ages, which they thought of as forever past, could still exist beyond their frontiers in the country of Barbarossa, and that some day this living vestige of the past could penetrate even into France itself. Speaking thus, criticizing one part of what he saw and praising another, Heine did not realize that he was making himself the spokesman for this German Middle Age which he wanted to condemn. This is what Heine has to say in his book *On Germany*:

"The French, having emerged from the Middle Ages for some time, can now contemplate them with calm, and can appreciate their beauties with philosophic or aesthetic detachment. We Germans, however, are still sunk deeply in these

Middle Ages: we are still combating their anachronistic representatives and we cannot, therefore, admire their qualities with such reverence. On the contrary, we must nurture ourselves with a partial hate of them in order that our destructive force should not become completely paralyzed.

"You French, you can admire chivalry. Nothing of it is left for you but the pretty chronicles and the suits of armor. You risk nothing by amusing your imagination or by satisfying your curiosity in this manner. But we here in Germany, for us the chronicles of the Middle Ages are not yet completed; their most recent pages are damp with the blood of our parents and our friends, and these shiny suits of armor protect our living bodies from the blows of our tormenters. Nothing hinders you French from prizing the old Gothic forms. . . . For you, Satan and his infernal companions are only poetry; for us in Germany, there are scoundrels and fools who seek to revive philosophically the belief in the devil, and give credence to infernal crimes of sorcerers.

"You dark scoundrels—and you imbeciles of all shades; do your work; inflame the minds of the people with old superstitions; drive them wildly along the road of fanaticism; one day, you yourself will become their victims; you shall not escape the destiny which awaits the awkward conjurer who finally cannot master the spirits which he has evoked, and who is torn to pieces by them in the end.

"Perhaps the spirit of revolution cannot stir, by appeal to reason, the minds of the German people; it may possibly be the *task of folly* to accomplish this great work. But once the blood again begins coursing in the veins of the German people, once they again feel their heart beating, no longer will they listen to the pious chatter of the Bavarian hypocrites, or to the mystic murmurs of the Swabian imbeciles; their ear will only hear the great voice of one man.

"Who is this man?"

"He is the man whom the German people awaits, the man who will return to them their lives and their happiness—the

happiness and the life they have so longed for in their dreams. How much longer will you wait—you whom our old people have prophesied with burning desire—you for whom youth waits with so much impatience—you who carry the divine sceptre of liberty, and the imperial crown without the cross?

"After all this is not the place to make appeals and I would not want to remove myself too far from my theme. I should speak here only of innocent traditions; of what is said and what is sung in the German kitchen. I notice that I have said very little of the spirits who dwell in the mountains—for example I have not said much about Kyffhäuser where Emperor Frederick lives. . . .

"It is certainly more than popular legend that Emperor Frederick—the old Barbarossa—is not dead; it being said that because of all the trouble stirred up against him by the holy clique, he has taken refuge in the Kyffhäuser mountains. They say that he will remain there in hiding with his entire court, until some time in the future when he shall again appear and bring great happiness to the German people. These mountains are in Thuringia, not far from Nordhausen. I have gone up there very often, and one clear winter night I stayed up there for over an hour, crying out a few times: 'Come, Barbarossa, come,' and my heart, ablaze, was as fire in my breast, and tears flowed down my cheeks. But our beloved Emperor Frederick did not come, and all that was left for me to do was to kiss the rocks in which he lives.

"Many claim that the Emperor, in his mountain home, sits sleeping in front of a stone table, and dreams of a way in which he can again conquer the Empire. His head nods constantly from side to side, and his eyes wink. By this time, his beard reaches almost to the ground. From time to time, as in a dream, he extends his hand as though he were about to take up his sword and shield. They say that when the Emperor returns to the world, he will hang his shield on a withered tree, and this tree will then begin to bud and become green,

signifying a return to better times for Germany. They say that a peasant, who shall be wearing a blouse, will carry his sword before him, and this will serve to frighten all those who are foolish enough to believe themselves of superior blood to the peasant. But these old story-tellers add that no one knows exactly when all this is to take place.

"They also tell of a shepherd who was once brought into Kyffhæuser by a dwarf. On seeing him, the Emperor arose and asked him whether the crows were still flying around the mountains. And when the shepherd answered in the affirmative, the King sighed deeply and said: 'Then it will be necessary for me to sleep another hundred years.'"

Thus Heine found charming the very superstitions he inveighed against. For him, violently anti-clerical, the Church was largely responsible for maintaining these superstitions of the Middle Ages in Germany. He felt that one day the encouragement of such beliefs would turn against the Church: "One day, you yourself will become their victim. . . ." Yet he failed to understand thoroughly the dangers inherent in the survival of those *purely Germanic superstitions* and the legends surrounding the Kyffhæuser mountain which, to him, were dear. He did not see that some day all this would turn into a terrific diabolical avalanche running away with itself and would end in a nightmarish conflagration spread to all parts of the world. Nor could he imagine that against this orgy of the "elementary spirits" the traditions of the Church, based on Christian morality, offered a certain resistance and protection.

"The man" expected by Heine as the future savior of Germany, Barbarossa sleeping in the Kyffhæuser mountain until the revival of his old empire, were subjects of common tales in Germany for hundreds of years. They corresponded to a specifically Germanic conception of the Messianic idea. We have seen how the popularity of Hitler in his country can be explained by his endeavor to achieve what the legends

forecast for the man who was to be, for the Germans, Barbarossa himself, returned.

None of the various theories of sociology which have inspired Western thought in the last eighty years or so makes possible a complete explanation of what is happening in the world today. On the basis of these theories alone, no one could have predicted the present events.

This is due to the fact that most of these doctrines have regarded the evolution of mankind as an organic whole. They have neglected to take into consideration an anachronistic survival of the Middle Ages which for generations has remained in the background.

Students of important social and economic movements on a world scale seem to have overlooked a series of purely German phenomena. Each of these phenomena has received attention by itself—but the relationship of one to another has not in general been brought out. Thus they have been considered as phenomena or *curiosa* of local importance only.

Heine was conscious of these phenomena although he did not realize what they meant for the future. The world missed the significance of this anachronism almost entirely. Today the same Middle Ages of which Heine spoke have placed themselves very much in the foreground. When the average observer speaks about "Middle Age practices" in Hitler's Germany he does not realize that the expression he uses is much more than a simple allegorical figure—that it describes the actual come-back of a period long gone.

Those Middle Ages seemed so beautiful to us when we were observing the towers of Notre Dame; and yet, seen at close range, they threaten to envelop us in their somber cloak. They assume for us a reality both terrible and menacing. In the face of this menace which threatens all of us, those problems which have stirred us in recent decades, such as the struggle between capitalism and the proletariat, "private enterprise" and socialism, become less urgent. They recede

to the background, giving way to a danger which is arising out of the distant past and is becoming more acute. And, possibly, the common fight against the same danger may open common avenues of understanding between the two camps. Later we may all perhaps see in a new light the factors behind the struggle in the social field.

There are certainly plenty of black spots in the picture of the Upward Progression also. These, however, result from the imperfections of the different "Upward" institutions—whereas, in the case of the Prusso-Teutonics, the characteristics we consider dangerous and execrable are virtues according to the standards of the Downward Progression. The Prusso-Teutonic system endeavors to develop barbarous and feudal elements on a world scale. In this endeavor Prusso-Teutonia is perfectly logical from its own point of view. The responsibility rests on us to act in such a way that they may not succeed.

Certain barbarous and feudal elements have survived within the democracies also. But these—which are considered "perfections" in the other camp—here are "imperfections" opposed to the basic tendencies on which the democracies, and the institutions of the Upward Progression in general, have been built.

Hitler regularly takes advantage in his propaganda of these imperfections from which we suffer. In his speeches we have often heard him criticizing flaws within the democratic countries, although he does not mention the fact that the same flaws exist in Nazi Germany to an extent that dwarfs their presence here. We have laughed at such hypocrisy—which is indeed contemptible, according to our moral standards; but Hitler, by acting in this fashion, renders us a real service. He focuses attention on all the elements of the Downward Progression which have penetrated into the Upward Progression or have succeeded in surviving there during the centuries.

One result of the present conflict will be our ability to see our own weak points much more clearly—all those areas of the Upward Progression tainted by elements of the Downward Progression. Let us hope that we will take every necessary step to eliminate these elements when the war is over. A determination to do this will give real purpose to the present war.

The civilizing influence of the Greco-Christian doctrines has carried on a perpetual housecleaning throughout the centuries and has gradually been hunting out the surviving "downward" elements. Man thought that this process was all that was needed; others believed that it was much too slow. The Prusso-Teutonic danger may speed the process. By turning the spotlight on our imperfections it helps us to eliminate them.

The democracies are certainly not completely above reproach. But it is not for them that we are fighting the present war. We are fighting it for a cause much nobler, much wider in scope—the Upward Progression—against these representatives *par excellence* of the Downward Progression, the Prusso-Teutonics.

In this war, by uniting in the same camp all those who, in spite of their imperfections, are basically for the principles of the Upward Progression, we are preparing the way for a much more profound application of these principles in the world which will emerge from the war.

We should at least do everything in our power to bring this about.

*But if feudal privileges have actually survived in many parts of the world, can the Prusso-Teutonic phenomenon be regarded as essentially different from these feudal survivals?*

Prusso-Teutonism is much more than a simple feudal survival. It has purposes of its own and a life peculiar to itself—born out of the combination of a number of elements includ-



ing the feudal. The feudal element itself, so far as it has become one of the component parts of Prusso-Teutonism, is much nearer the primitive, non-initiated "barbaric" character of its origins than to later-day feudalism. The latter, through the course of centuries, has been very much edulcorated by the civilizing influence of Christianity.

It is not the real purpose of Prusso-Teutonism to strive for the introduction in different parts of the world of what is called "feudal principles," although this is what today's feudal-minded circles all over the world had at first expected from it. Prusso-Teutonism is interested only in one thing: to establish its own absolute rule over all other countries, completely self-centered, without the slightest consideration for the rights and needs of others. This neglect of the rights of others also applies to those of feudal circles in other countries.

English feudal concepts have played some part in shaping the conduct of British internal and external affairs. In spite of this influence on their political life the English have successfully carried to the different parts of the world extremely valuable ideas of political and economic freedom, deriving from their essentially Christian concept of life.

The survival in France of isolated feudal-minded groups was responsible for the undermining of the French Republic and for the tragic subjection of a now feudally governed France to the sad rule of Berlin. But the feudal ambitions of these French circles are concerned with internal rather than external economic and political matters. They have not the ruthlessness of the Prusso-Teutonics, nor are their ambitions directed toward world conquest. In this case feudalism has produced much more modest results, because it did not rest on the conspirational aims of a strictly organized Order. French feudalism became, during the ages, increasingly tempered by Christian education.

Even in countries like Hungary, where the ruling class has always been feudal-minded, nothing resembling the Prusso-Teutonic phenomenon has been produced. Christianization of

the Hungarian feudal circles has always had a moderating effect, at least in the domain of international politics.

Nothing similar to the *conspirational character* of the Teutonic Order—and later of Prusso-Teutonism—ever arose in any other Western country. It is this character of conspiracy, aiming at world conquest and subordinating all moral considerations to this aim, which gives its unique character to Prusso-Teutonism, even when compared to feudal survivals in other countries.

Of course these feudal survivals in many places, including America, constitute a certain danger. We have seen such feudal circles becoming the temporary allies of the Prusso-Teutonics when they imagined, in their short-sightedness, that Germany's masters had no other purpose but to produce a world satisfactory to their desires. Unfortunately there is still much thinking along these lines.

As said before, when the war is over it will be useful to give some thought to these isolated feudal survivals. The problem of Prusso-Teutonism is, however, of a basically quite different character. It is a problem represented by a well-concealed, well-organized conspiracy with all its ramifications—all of them subordinated to its own egotistic, super-imperialistic purposes. It is only their own cause which matters to the leaders of this conspiracy—not the cause of feudalism, collectivism, or any other cause.

To root out this conspiracy will be quite a problem. At present its leaders have no doubt that the conspiracy will survive and emerge from this conflict with definite gains—even in the case of a German defeat.

Since we are examining the implications of the Prusso-Teutonic phenomenon from the social point of view, we may try to clear up a misunderstanding very common among socially advanced thinkers.

*Men and women whose whole pasts would lead us to expect just the opposite seem to accept German aggression*

*and expansion with fatalism as an "inevitable historic process" which it would be useless to try to halt. These determinists reason as follows: "The transformation which we are witnessing in Europe today is of such tremendous magnitude that it could not possibly be caused by one man. Hitler could never have accomplished what he already has, if he were not simply the instrument of an inexorable historical development. To condemn him does not advance us any."*

We have observed such reasoning both in certain progressive circles in America—and within a minority group of European socialists, who, today, are resigned "collaborationists." There is profound confusion behind such a deduction. Hitler may appear as the instrument of certain inevitable world-wide processes, but actually these have nothing to do with his basic ideas or with his real purposes. It is indeed probable that a unified Europe, the breaking down of customs-barriers between the European countries, a common currency, the abandonment of England's old-fashioned "balance of power" politics and other changes of this sort are a historic necessity. There is, however, no reason to believe that such transformations could not take place on a much sounder basis than that of the fake-revolution staged by Hitler. Naturally gifted, as we have seen, to "steal the show," Hitler has managed so far to receive all the credit. It is up to the democracies to become conscious of their own historical task and to effect the necessary changes in the world—by methods reflecting their own incomparably higher conception of life.

Those who reason in the manner outlined in our question notice first that the world is inevitably changing. Then—with the sort of resigned fatalism which has caused the downfall of several Eastern civilizations—they also view as "inevitable" the abusive attempt of a regressive group to impress its ghastly mark on the changing world. It is hard to imagine a more shameful attitude for sons of the Greco-Christian civilization—which is built upon the concept of free will.

## PRUSSO-TEUTONIA AND THE PROBLEMS OF THE POST-WAR WORLD

*The very first job is to win the war. The destruction of Nazism is commonly considered the next. In addition to these there is the complex task of rooting out Prusso-Teutonism with all its economic strongholds—a task which our readers may regard as at least as important as the destruction of Nazism.*

*So much can be said concerning the immediate job.*

*But is there not a wider meaning for us, a more profound lesson to be drawn from the events examined in this book—a meaning and a lesson with such significance for the future that, if we apply them properly, we may some day be able to say with sincere conviction that "the war was not fought in vain?"*

The only answer we can venture to this question is a better and fuller application of the principles of the Upward Progression to our lives and in the organization of mankind in general.

The evil we are fighting now arose out of a centuries-old conspiracy systematically organized by barbarous elements against the entire Upward Progression. But this evil could not have expanded as it has if we had not in numerous instances failed to apply the principles of the Upward Progression with the necessary vigor.

Depending on the various spiritual allegiances within the Upward Progression to which we subscribe, we would state these principles differently. But regardless to which of these spiritual groups we belong, there is a common substance

behind our principles. It is this common substance that must be brought more and more into the light so that these principles may be more and more thoroughly applied in our own lives and in the organization of mankind. The more faithful we are to our own principles, the less vulnerable we shall be to outside attack.

It is commonly assumed that this war will result in various social and economic adjustments. Social and economic adjustments for centuries consisted of nothing else but the gradually fuller application to our lives of moral principles of the Upward Progression, as they were derived from the various religions and spiritual movements.

What the future social and economic adjustments evolving from our common inspiration will be, it is too early to say. It is by no means certain that these developments will move in a "collectivist" direction as many expect. It is just as possible that their course will take the way leading toward a greater possibility of economic initiative accompanied by safeguards against excesses. Definite solutions can await future discussion—if there is common acknowledgment of the problems for which some solutions must be found. Face to face with an identical foe, all members of the Upward Progression will have to look to their common inspiration for common solutions; and these will have to be put into practice with a vigor common to all.

But beyond the internal social and economic organization we must consider the whole problem of relations between the different parts of the world. The outdated character of the prevailing rules and customs in international and diplomatic matters is generally recognized. It is also admitted that these rules were a great handicap in the settlement of world affairs in pre-war days—and that this situation favored Hitler, who, because of the anachronistic character of these rules, was able to brush them aside with greater ease. Let us for the time being simply recognize the necessity for a change and let

the actual solution grow out of detailed discussions in the future.

There is, however, one lesson which can be immediately derived from the chain of events described in this book: it concerns the *necessity for effecting a change in the direction of a greater and freer interaction between the different parts of the world*. No outside condition helped more to bring the Prusso-Teutonic abscess to the point where it endangered the whole world than the different "isolations" within the political and economic body of Europe.

A great number of these "isolations" were deliberately engineered by the Prusso-Teutonic. Others, stimulated by the example given, followed—to the great pleasure of the Prusso-Teutonic. The latter, artfully making good use in their tactics of internationally accepted diplomatic concepts, shut off now this, now that part of the European blood stream, thus helping along the growth of an abscess which they themselves had created. Without the successful application of these ligatures to the political and economic arteries of Europe, the Prusso-Teutonic abscess would have been washed away by the blood stream.

Bismarck and his friends stood in the way of the creation of a German empire and the fusion of their own country, Prussia, with this empire so long as the healthy elements in the other German countries were in a position to exert stronger influence within the empire than themselves. Bismarck also succeeded in bringing about the isolation of Denmark, Austria and France, one after another, from the different German countries with which they had formerly entertained friendly relations. Between the two world wars the Prusso-Teutonic managed to upset Briand's plans for a European federation within which they would have been submerged in the healthy blood stream of Europe.

Similar methods were applied on the economic plane. As we have seen, List designed the master plans in this sphere

about one hundred years ago. They called for deliberate economic isolation from the rest of the world until some day this world might be conquered and subjugated. This was the economic plan which was conscientiously furthered by the Prusso-Teutonics. When, in the period after Bismarck's regime, Chancellor von Caprivi tried to integrate Germany into the normal European commercial system he encountered the violent opposition of the entire Prusso-Teutonic clique. Then later, between the two world wars, Dr. Schacht methodically carried forward List's plan: by isolating Germany economically from the rest of the world until the economic suffering deliberately created might result in a political explosion and a march of conquest.

All this can be a lesson to us. The actual settlement of the German—or rather the Prusso-Teutonic—problem no doubt will have to take the form of an extremely energetic police operation with provisions of a lasting character against the recurrence of the ominous phenomena. But no police operation can be a real solution of the problem in the long run unless the general conditions which made possible the abuses are also modified.

After the ghastly experience through which Europe has passed, no reform should be considered too drastic if it is otherwise desirable. An absolutely free exchange of goods with no customs-barriers should be the first measure in freeing the European blood stream and perhaps that of the world as well. The alternative—a return to the involved system of "commercial treaties"—would be extremely dangerous. This would again result in an era of economic isolation separating the different countries from one another; and it would provide—in defiance of all the police measures in the world—a welcome screen for the reconstitution of the Prusso-Teutonic forces. A unified monetary system and other economic measures of a similar nature should complete the healing process.

Simultaneously with a more or less completely free ex-

change of goods, freedom of migration will have to be re-established. This today appears to be a revolutionary measure, although before World War I there were but few limitations to the migration of people. If all obstacles to the free circulation of goods and people are eliminated, the general conditions which might render possible a reconstitution of the Prusso-Teutonic danger zone (or of any similar danger zone of the future) will no longer be present—but, of course, specific "police measures" will still be necessary.

It would be Utopian to imagine that such changes can be effected by the European people alone. Leadership is necessary and for various reasons such leadership can come only from America.\*

American public opinion for the most part has repudiated its own pre-war isolationism, and today vigorously criticizes those who in the U. S. A. continue to maintain an isolationist attitude, thus hampering the war effort. Those opposed to isolationism today, to be consistent with themselves, should realize that their present stand against isolationism is not fortuitous but logical and organic. It simply corresponds to the fact that with the shortening of distances, America has really become part of this world and must shoulder the consequences—not only during the war but afterwards as well.

"Isolationism is the enemy" in two respects: first, because it tries to persuade American public opinion that a settlement of world problems is of no concern to America; second, because it encourages sympathy, even during peace, for various measures in the U. S. A. and elsewhere which have the effect of ligatures obstructing the healthy circulation of the world: high tariffs, bans on export and import, measures against migration, etc.

\* "Isolationism" before the war meant simply the desire to keep America out of war. Today it means striving for a negotiated peace. We ourselves use the term in the following discussion to mean disapproval of all participation in world affairs.

"Isolationism is the enemy" in all countries because it is the necessary condition for the preservation and the regrowth of sickening "abscesses" of the Prusso-Teutonic type. The expressions "isolation" and "isolationism," are employed to designate phenomena of many different types; but the widespread use of the same term is not simply due to coincidence. And to the extent that these "isolations" act as ligatures on the normal circulation of the world body we are concerned here with all of them.

We can use the same expression, "isolation" in, among others, the *political*, *economic* and *demographic* spheres. In every case the development it describes is dangerous for the same reasons. And in all these spheres "isolation" may assume what might be called an "introverted" or an "extroverted" form. Let us pass these spheres and forms rapidly in review.

#### *Political Isolation*

1. Introverted form: the "isolationism" familiar in America—the tendency or effort to keep one's own country separated from the rest of the world.

2. Extroverted form: the attempt to "isolate" a foreign country—or several—from others through the artificial creation of irreconcilable misunderstandings between them by the skillful use of propaganda. For instance, Bismarck's "isolation" of Denmark, Austria and France; Hitler's diplomatic tactics, etc.

#### *Economic Isolation*

1. Introverted form: the effort to isolate one's own country economically from the rest of the world in order deliberately to create economic misery within the country and thus to keep the pressure up in the political boiler. For example: Prusso-Teutonic and Nazi schemes between the two world

wars, List's and Dr. Schacht's policies of economic isolation from the rest of the world.

2. Extroverted form: the attempt to isolate other countries from the rest of the world economically by making it difficult for them to export and import. Methods employed: high tariffs, dumping, commercial treaties intended to injure particular nations, etc. Almost all countries, including America, have done this in the past. There have also been classic examples of extreme and pernicious protectionism in the small independent nations, created in Eastern Europe after World War I. England deserves great praise for having maintained its economic liberalism until recent years, in opposition to the economic isolationism of almost all the other parts of the world.

#### *Demographic Isolation*

1. Introverted form: tendency to impede or block off the immigration into one's country of people obliged, for various reasons, to quit other countries. This sort of isolation increases the pressure for expansion—the growth of the abscess—in overpopulated countries. After World War I, the United States itself fell into this error, although its own greatness and prosperity are due primarily to its earlier system of free immigration.

2. Extroverted form: tendency for a country to keep its expatriates permanently under its own influence and to isolate them in mentality from their present surroundings. Such isolation makes possible the use of expatriates as tools of the country's own plans of conquest. For example, the artful maintenance of allegiance to the "Fatherland" of German and Japanese immigrants and their descendants within all countries including America.

We realize, of course, that all these "isolations" and "isolationisms" are of extremely varied character. They stem, how-

ever, from roughly the same sort of mentality; and in any event their supporters usually resemble each other like peas in a pod. Further, they all contribute to the creation of conditions which favor the growth of abscesses like the Prusso-Teutonic.

We do not mean that the Nazi danger is due primarily to such isolationisms. The primary cause of the Nazi danger is the centuries-old Prusso-Teutonic conspiracy, a phenomenon which, in itself, has extremely deep roots. Furthermore the various types of isolation have often been deliberately stimulated by the Prusso-Teutonic clique to create the proper soil for their own aims. But even when, in other cases, the error of isolation was committed by the various peoples of the world of their own free will, this error was frequently seized upon by the Prusso-Teutonics to further their own design. The important factor was the design itself: an organized conspiracy which has evolved through the years from the thirteenth century until the twentieth.

Nevertheless the pernicious effect of the various isolations should not be forgotten. And American leadership—which is essential for a settlement of world affairs in the spirit of Upward Progression—should be inspired by a sincere desire to end these isolations. To achieve this it will be necessary to make enduring provisions for the greatest possible freedom of circulation in all spheres and on a world-wide scale. People must understand that such measures have significance beyond their immediate practical advantages—significance in the fact that they provide one essential guarantee against recurrence of the evil which has caused our present troubles.

“Liberalism” will have to reach new heights—as a natural enemy of all material and mental isolations. The word Liberalism is not used here in a sectarian sense. We speak rather about the true liberalism—*i.e.*, that which frees the world-body of all sickening and paralyzing ligatures. A wide play

of this liberalism was nothing but a beautiful dream fifty or one hundred years ago. But in an age in which airplanes will make it possible to commute between Europe and America several times a week and in which goods will be shipped in large quantities from continent to continent by ultra-rapid aerial transports, it will be a necessity.

Economic liberalism, political liberalism, intellectual liberalism—all are of the same essence. Their importance increases to world proportions with the immense technical advances by which distances are shortened.

Facilities of transportation and of communication have always tended to break down existing isolations. Such facilities have always been the natural vehicles of “liberalism.” The recent tremendous stimulus to transportation and communication—in part a result of the war—should bring forth a new era of liberalism, more far-reaching in consequence than anything we have known before.

We would not take seriously today a suggestion to separate the East from the Middle West or the individual States of the union by customs-barriers, monetary differences, bans against change of residence and similar “isolationist” measures. Untold misery, immeasurable complications, strife and injustice would result from such regulations. Any American child realizes this. If the advantages of economic and political liberalism within the United States are evident today to everybody they will become equally evident to the world as a whole as a result of this war. The United States with its long experience of economic and political freedom within its boundaries and with its unique racial composition seems predestined to assume world leadership in freeing the blood stream of the world.

People who speak about American leadership are accused of imperialistic leanings. When Henry Luce introduced the idea

of an "American Century" he was called an imperialist in various liberal circles. But "leadership" and "imperialism" are not the same: the latter represents a particular use of the former. It is up to the liberal circles of America to be on the alert against all imperialistic aberrations from the course to be taken. Their vigilance is necessary as a guarantee that America's leadership will be used not only for her own benefit but also for the benefit of other countries—not for the oppression but for the liberation of other peoples.

Leadership understood in this sense is not an unwarranted prerogative for America but an obligation. She must assume it not only in her own interest but primarily for the sake of the Upward Progression. It should lead to a post-war crusade against all tendencies toward "isolation"—all attempts to reimpose the ligatures on the world body. It should be appropriate to the basic purpose which inspires it: it should be a leadership profoundly liberal-minded, steeped in the best American and Greco-Christian traditions, adherent—on every plane—to principles evolving from the "dignity of the human person."

The liberal circles of America instead of fearing American leadership because of its possible results should welcome it: they should contribute to it their best energy and the fruits of their experience.

The contribution of liberalism to American leadership will be of the highest importance for many reasons: if, for example, liberal sources fail to contribute fresh blood to American diplomacy the latter is bound to make the same sort of mistakes as those for which many of us have often criticized England—in spite of our love for English traditions of civic freedom and democracy.

No other country but the United States today has the facilities and the world-wide prestige to assume the leadership which must be found somewhere. England itself today looks

to America, to a certain extent, for the leadership which she has exercised during the last hundred years or so. England, despite her great democratic traditions, has committed many blunders in international politics because of her reliance on out-dated diplomatic principles. She has, consequently, lost much of the prestige which the true leader in international matters must possess—but she can still back up American initiative with her invaluable support.

France, because of her very old cultural traditions, is today, regardless of her present political misfortunes, the center *par excellence* of Western civilization. The "initiation" of the French people dates back to extremely ancient and deep sources. It is probably the result of a superposition of Greek and Roman initiative teachings on the Celtic groundwork of initiation which itself belonged to the Upward Progression. (The mysteries of the Celtic or Gallic Druids taught the doctrine of transmigration of the soul and others which are characteristic of Upward initiations.) Later the intense Christianization of France kept alive the force and vigor of the original initiation.

The collaboration of the highly civilized French people will be essential in the rebuilding of Europe; but France, without American help, will not be able to accomplish this task—because the closeness of the Prusso-Teutonic danger acts in many respects to upset the balance of its public life.

Many believe that Russia, if she proves victorious in this war, will have more to say about the reconstruction of Europe than the United States. This question is not a simple one. Let us remark only that United States influence on European affairs and on world affairs in general will depend to a large extent on the sincerity and mental courage of the American people in approaching the world problems of the post-war period.

Most European people feel strongly that the world to be

built out of the present nightmare must not be simply a re-creation of the old world—the world which permitted the nightmare to take shape. If the American people and the American leaders have the mental courage to approach these problems in a completely fresh and profoundly liberal spirit, they will have a great deal to say about the reconstruction of Europe and the world. They will have more to say than Russia, at least so far as Europe is concerned, because of the closeness of American and European cultural ties.

But should American politics in international matters be guided simply by a dusty conservatism, we would witness a dwindling away of America's present very real prestige in different European countries. In this latter case, but only in this case, it would not be surprising for Europeans to turn to Russia for support in the reconstruction of the continent.

In the meantime, let us consider Russian Communism with serenity. We are, for our part, not in agreement, on theoretical grounds, with the economic teachings of Communism and with the doctrine of the preponderant rights of the State over those of the individual. We believe, however (to prove this would lead us far afield), that Communism derives from the Upward Progression, as does our own Western philosophy of life—although their end-concepts profoundly differ. The differences separating the two, in any case, are not so great, not so fundamental as the difference between them, on the one hand, and Prusso-Teutonism, the barbarous product of the Downward Progression, on the other.

We are not advocating any truce with Communism. We believe it is useful to fight out our differences in the future as vigorously as in the past. We can do this, however, with a measure of good faith on both sides, as behooves opponents who have certain common bonds among themselves. Nothing did more to add to the success of Nazi propaganda in the democratic countries than the nervousness caused in some

circles by the mention of Communism or anything connected with it.

There is no reason for this nervousness. Our own concept of life has a much better chance than Communism of shaping the future—at least of Europe and the Western Hemisphere—granted two conditions: first, that we think through our own concepts courageously to their practical applications; and, second, that we learn, all of us, to work and fight for our principles with the same spirit of selfless devotion to the common good which we envy in the Russians. We base this belief on (1) our confidence in the soundness of free initiative as a fundamental economic concept—provided the practices resting on it are brought up to date; and (2) the fact that respect for the rights of the individual answers an inherent and universal human need.

Many believe that leadership by any one nation is unnecessary and that the nations of the world will (or should) be able to settle their affairs simply in some improved League of Nations where the powers of the various States are properly balanced. Another feeling is that the various small nations which, by their courageous stand in the present conflict, have gained the right to be heard in the future will not be willing to accept any outside leadership.

We believe, however, that the small European nations themselves will recognize that responsible leadership is necessary in the reorganization of Europe. The experiment after the last war—of granting the newly born small nations great influence in the affairs of the continent—did not work out well. The ambitions which were unleashed within each small nation led to excesses in economic and political matters. On the other hand, when confronted by the Prusso-Teutonic threat, the same small nations lacked adequate common leadership and—except in a very few instances—took an extremely



hesitant stand. The result was that they were either consumed by the monster or became its reluctant allies.

This past unhappy experience is no inducement for a repetition.

Opposition to leadership by a single country or nation is chiefly due to the fact that countries and nations are usually considered, in external matters, to be mere associations of their citizens for the common protection of private interests.

If nations were nothing more, it would be foolish and unjust to grant leadership to any one of them. It would be used exclusively to further the interests of the citizens of a particular State.

But nations are not simply associations for the protection of private interests. They often are—and those of comparatively recent creation usually are—also practical *experiments* in the direction of a future society: living crystallizations of certain basic ideas and tendencies.

This is particularly true in the case of the United States, which has been built entirely through immigration. This country was created out of the common urge for freedom of masses of people, for the most part Europeans. America to them meant liberation from “ligatures” of all sorts in their homelands—political, economic, religious, etc.; and immigration to this country offered them undreamed of freedom in every field. Whether these immigrants were adventurers, idealists, revolutionaries, starving farmers or laborers, they were all attracted by the same sort of material and spiritual opportunities, and spurred on by the same urge for liberation.

If a nation born out of these basic concepts many times reaffirms them in the course of its history, it becomes a powerful pole of attraction for people in all the different parts of the world to whom the ligatures of their own countries, the isolations inherited from the past, have grown unbearable.

This nation is, therefore, much more than a mere associa-

tion of interests: it may be regarded as the dynamic center from which to apply—on a much wider scale than ever before—the concept of liberation which has been its principal motive force throughout the generations.

Other nations have drawn to themselves people who felt the attraction of those nations' ideas in one field or another. Thus the French nation has acted as a magnet for immigrants who wanted to take advantage of its cultural opportunities and also, since the French Revolution, for others who have been attracted by her traditions of political liberty. The Teutonic Order, even before it had created a nation, was a pole of attraction for nobles from all parts of Germany who felt a mental kinship with the Teutonic Knights. After the formation of Prussia, the latter country continued to absorb people of the same type from all the other German countries. They became Prussian who felt Prussian, wherever they may have been born. As a last example, Soviet Russia exercises a comparable attraction on people of various countries who share her ideological aims.

We would like to consider the United States, in spite of its imperfections, as the nucleus of a future society organized according to ideas of freedom in all domains. If this should be her rôle, it would be absurd to assign this nation membership in some international organization of the egalitarian type, unless some structural opportunity for her leadership were assured. Because this opportunity was lacking—for this reason alone and not because of the fancied advantages of isolation—the United States did well to decline membership in the League of Nations. In the latter its leadership would have been submerged in the confusion of numerous small and large nations with equal rights—many of which adhered to distinctly different basic principles.

America will deserve leadership in the post-war world if she sincerely wishes to act in international matters in the spirit of her deepest traditions—and not as an organization to

defend particular interests. People all over the world, whatever their national origin, in this case will be willing to overlook America's past delays in assuming her natural responsibilities. They will look to her not as to a powerful nation simply pursuing its own egotistic aims, but as to the true nucleus of the society of the future—a society which those who travel the road of the Upward Progression ardently desire.

## APPENDIX

### Translation (from the mediaeval Latin) of the BULL OF RIMINI (1226)

In the name of the Holy and indivisible Trinity, AMEN. Frederick the Second, by the merciful tenderness of God always the august Emperor of the Romans, King of Jerusalem and Sicily. Therefore has God erected our Empire before the Kings of the august Earth and broadened the limits of our power throughout the various zones of the world, that the care of our effort be directed toward the glorification of His name within the centuries and the propagation of the faith within the people, inasmuch as He has prepared the Holy Roman Empire for the preaching of the Gospel, so that we may give ourselves not less to the subjugation than to the conversion of the people, while we enjoy the mercy of that Providence by which Catholic men take upon themselves the burden of protracted labors for the purpose of subjecting barbaric peoples and to reform them to accept the divine cult, and by which they discover incessantly matters and men.

In reference hereto it is, which we wish to have made seriously known to the present and future subjects of the Empire from the present Our document, namely how Brother Hermann, venerable master of the Holy Hospitable House of the Holy Mary of the Teutons in Jerusalem, our faithful subject, so as to show the humble readiness of his heart, has proposed before us that which our devout Duke of Masovia and Cuiania has promised and offered, namely to procure for him and his brothers part of the land which is known as Culm, and also of another country between his boundaries and the borders of the Prussians, in such a manner that they started the work and well insisted to invade the land of Prussia and to capture it for the honor and the glory of the true God.

After he had received this promise, he went forth and humbly implored Our Highness that We condescend to favor his vows so that he, aided by Our authority, may begin to set about and continue such a great task, and so that Our favor may leave and certify to him and his house that land which the aforementioned

duke was obliged to present, as well as the whole land which, in parts of Prussia, would be acquired by their work; and that We would further, by force of the privilege of Our liberality, present his house by immunities, releases and other concessions which he hoped for as a result from the gift of the aforementioned duke and the conquest of Prussia, and that he himself would receive the proffered gift of the above mentioned duke and that he may use, for the purpose of the conquest and the capture of the country—by constant and unceasing efforts—the properties of the house and the people.

According to the constant and tested devotion of this master in regard to the land for whose acquisition in the Lord he so zealously fought and with regard to the land which under the Monarchy of the Empire may always exist, trusting, further, in the prudence of this master that he is an efficient man and powerful rhetorician who by his own and his brethren energy will begin forcefully and prosecute manfully the conquest of the country and will not uselessly desist from what he began, as many have failed who have vainly been tried in the same beginning by various enterprises; we have given to this master the authority to attack the land of Prussia with the forces of his house and all efforts, by conceding and certifying to this master, his successors and his house forever the said country which he will obtain from the aforementioned duke as promised, and any which he will give him besides, and also all that land which by the will of God he will conquer in the territory of Prussia, and also the old and due imperial right over mountains, plains, rivers, forests and seas so that he may keep the country free and immune of all services and threats, and no one shall be obliged to subject himself [to any such services and threats].

They are further authorized, for the whole country of their conquest, whether it is acquired by them or will be acquired by them, to order, for the comfort of the house, highway tolls and taxes, appoint market days and meetings, coin money, tax tributary and other rights, undertake land projects in rivers and in the sea as they may be considered useful, also to take and keep in eternal possession mines, gold, silver, iron mines, and mines of other metals and salt as they may be found in the country itself.

We further permit them to appoint judges and rectors who may govern and direct justly the people conquered there, as well

those who have been converted, as those who persist in their superstitions, and who may prevent the excesses of the evil-doers and punish them in accordance with the necessities of a just order.

They may further hold court in civil and criminal matters and judge according to the law of reason. We also decree in Our mercy that the master and his successors may have the right and the power to exercise in their countries as every other prince should have in the country which belongs to him, that they may care for good morals and customs, that they may decree regulations and laws by which the faithfulness of the believers will be strengthened and all their subjects may enjoy and use a peaceful existence.

We further forbid by the power of the authority of the present privilege that any prince, duke, count, priest, judge or advocate, or anybody, be he of a high or low estate, do anything contrary to the contents of the present concession and confirmation. Whosoever violates this, will find himself subjected to a fine of one hundred gold pounds\* of which one half is to be paid into Our Treasury, the other half to those having suffered the damage.

We will bring about that for the remembrance and eternal adhesion of this, our concession and confirmation, the present privilege will be made, and made public by a Golden Bull provided with Our Seal.

The witnesses of this act are: The Archbishops of Magdeburg, Ravenna, Tyrene, Panormina, and Reggio; the Bishops of Bonn, Mantua, Turin, Ariminum, and Cesena; the Dukes of Saxonia and Spoleto; the Counts Heinrich von Schwarzburg, Gunther von Kuernberg, Werner von Kueburg, Albert von Hapsburg, Ludwig and Herman von Froburg, and Thomas von Accerris; Marshal Richard and the Chamberlain of the Imperial Court, Richard, Albert von Arnstein, Gottfried von Hohenlohe and many others.

Signature of the name of the Lord Frederick, by the mercy of God invincible and always august Emperor of the Romans and King of Jerusalem and Sicily.

Given in the year of the incarnation of the Lord in 1226, in the month of March, under the rule of the Lord Frederick, by the mercy of God always august Emperor of the Romans and

\* A Roman pound weighs twelve ounces.

King of Jerusalem and Sicily, in the sixth year of His Roman rule, in the first year of his rule over Jerusalem, in the twenty-sixth year of His Sicilian rule. AMEN.

Given in Ariminum [Rimini] in the aforementioned years, months, and titles.

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