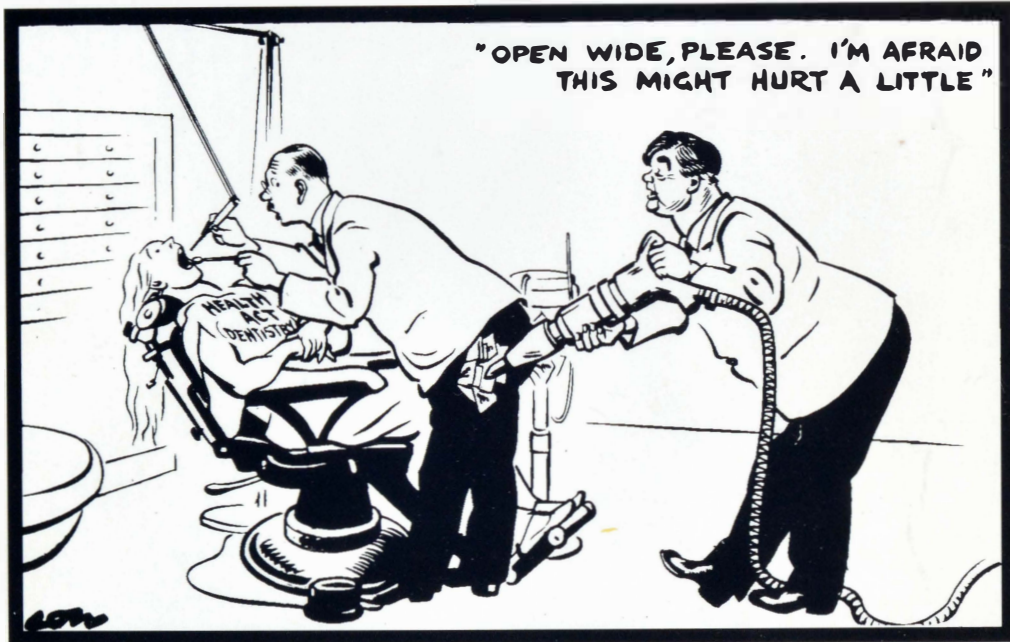




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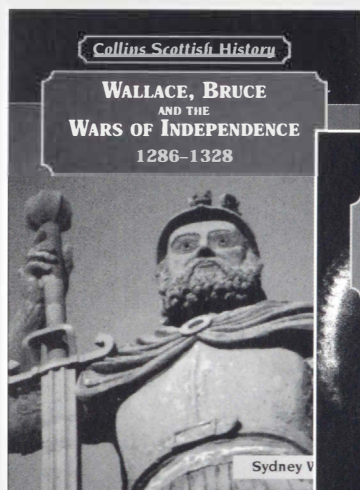
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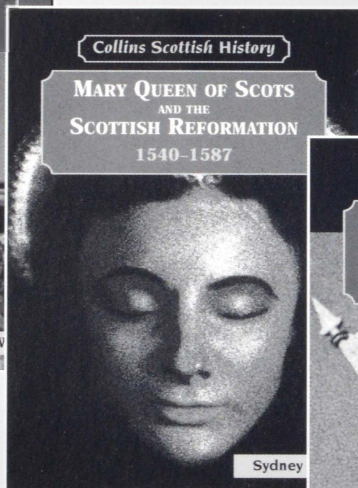
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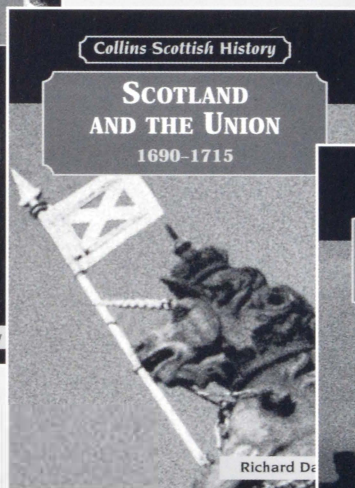
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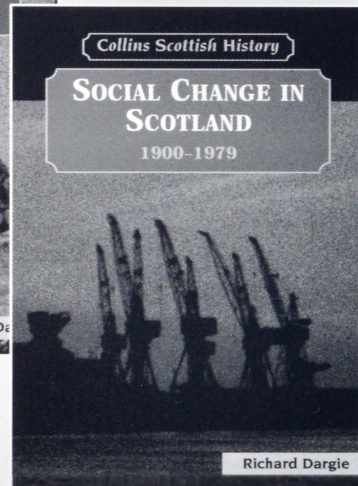
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HISTORY TEACHING REVIEW

YEAR BOOK

EDITOR: ANDREW HUNT

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES ON THE CONTRIBUTORS

Professor Rodney Lowe is Professor of Contemporary History at the University of Bristol, having previously been a lecturer at Heriot-Watt University. His most recent works include *The Welfare State in Britain since 1945* (2nd Ed., Macmillan, 1998); 'The state and the development of social welfare' in M. Pugh, *A Companion to Modern European History, 1871-1945* (Blackwell, 1997); and 'Postwar welfare' in P. Johnson, *Twentieth Century Britain: economic, social and cultural change* (Longman, 1994). His documentary history of the postwar British welfare state is soon to be published by Manchester University Press. He is also the co-author of two guides to government records at the Public Record Office, which provide a comprehensive summary of policy developments: *The Development of the Welfare State, 1939-1951* and *Welfare Policy under the Conservatives, 1951-1964* (PRO Publications, 1992 and 1998).

Dr Anthony W. Parker lectures in the Department of History at the University of Dundee. He specialises in 18th Century Scottish Highland social and cultural history and in American Colonial history, primarily migration history with its cultural impact. He is a member of the Eighteenth Century Scottish Studies Society, the Organization of American Historians, the Southern Historical Society, and serves on the S.C.U.R.L. North American Studies Group. He has recently published a book entitled *Scottish Highlanders in Colonial Georgia: the Recruitment, Emigration, and Settlement in Darien, 1735-1748* (1997, The University of Georgia Press), and is currently researching on the topic "Scots among the Indians" for his next monograph. Additionally he is working on a biography of Sir John Percival, First Earl of Egmont. Other articles include "Mischief Makers and Risk-Takers: Lowland and Highland Scots in Colonial Georgia", *Georgia Historical Quarterly*, and "Peter Williamson (1730-1799)", *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, both forthcoming.

Dr Mike Rapport has been lecturing in European History at the University of Stirling since 1995, having taught previously at the University of Sunderland. He has published articles on various aspects of the French Revolution and his book "*Nationality and Citizenship in Revolutionary France: The Treatment of Foreigners 1789-1799*" is shortly to be published by Oxford University Press.

Sabine Wichert is a senior lecturer in the Department of Modern History at the Queen's University of Belfast. She has published *Northern Ireland since 1945* (3rd ed. Harrow 1999) and a number of articles on the history of Northern Ireland and British Labour's foreign policy in the inter-war period. Together with Mary O'Dowd she has edited and introduced *Chattel, servant or citizen: Women's status in church, state and society* (Belfast 1995). She is currently working on further projects on Northern Ireland, but also plans to revive work on German foreign policy, 1871-1945, which is shelved for the moment.

Frank McDonough is Senior Lecturer in Modern Political History at Liverpool John Moores University. He has written a number of books and articles on British foreign policy and European and International History. His most recent books are *Hitler and Nazi Germany* (CUP, 1999), *Neville Chamberlain, Appeasement and the British Road to War* (MUP, 1998), and *The Origins of the First World War* (CUP, 1997). He is currently working on a major new study of the Conservative Party and Anglo-German Relations 1905-1914.

Dr R.A.C. Parker was an undergraduate student at Christ Church, Oxford and began teaching history at the University of Manchester. There he completed his thesis on the Cokes of Norfolk in the 18th and early 19th centuries. Since 1957 he has been a Fellow of Queen's College, Oxford. His mother was Scottish so he can claim to be a half-Scottish teacher of history! His recent books have been *Struggle for Survival* (Oxford University Press, 1989), re-issued as *The Second World War. A Short History* (OUP, 1997). *Chamberlain and Appeasement* was published by Macmillan in 1993. He is now working on *Churchill and Appeasement* which Macmillan will bring out next year, 2000. A short study of International Aspects of the Vietnam War was published in 1999 in a collection edited by Peter Lowe, entitled *The Vietnam War*.

Dr Patricia Collins is an Honorary Research Fellow in the Department of History in the University of Strathclyde. Her research is an eclectic mixture of social history of Russia and South Asia, particularly labour and health issues. She has also taught Scottish economic history which has resulted in contributions to the *Dictionary of Scottish Business History* (Aberdeen University Press, 1990) and *Hanoverian Britain* (Garland, 1997). She is currently working on a comparative study of malaria prevention schemes in Russia and India in the twentieth centuries.

Editorial

ANDREW HUNT

All *HTR Year Books* are special to their editor in a lot of different ways. They are the visible fruit of a little bit of labour and effort in persuading distinguished academics to write, so it is obviously satisfying from an editorial point of view when the whole thing comes together as a 'product'. Then there are the articles themselves when they arrive; often models and examples of the historian's craft; packed with coherent, confident and organised argument, written with clarity, style and persuasiveness. So many of them are such a treat to read; I wish I was back at university hearing these people speak, so much pleasure it gives to see their thoughts in print. Then there is the social side of being editor; the friendly contacts made with all the people that have contributed articles, the letters and phone calls from them that have always been so obliging and helpful. I have rarely been let down by either courtesy or commitment to deliver the promised articles.

The *Year Book* is a little 'idea' that starts round about July of each year, and, with the help of all the contributors, comes to birth the following June. It's with a small bit of satisfaction that I admit that this is something of a jubilee edition of SATH's *HTR Year Book*. I'm amazed to admit that this is, in fact, the tenth one that I have edited. I don't think I had that target in mind when I took over from John Gilbert (and Eric Summers before him) in a different decade! I don't know where the years have gone to, but the support that I have received over those years has stopped it ever being an onerous task. I have always believed that the *Year Book* was part of the public face of SATH and that it did its bit to spread the word about what history should be about, and I never have found it hard work. Personally I'm glad it was never my duty on the SATH committee to organise SATH conferences or compile the submissions to the old Exam Board or whatever, on yet new initiatives. Now that struck me as being the hard side of SATH's work.

Those that are interested in statistics (like those who investigate the social class backgrounds of letter writers to the Times etc) may like to know that you can probably work out something of my editorial prejudices from a glance at the 70 articles that I have commissioned for the *Year Book* over the past decade. Not all articles easily classify themselves under one heading but it is still clear that articles on British topics figure most prominently, then Scottish, then European (often Russian!). I have not been able to get many articles on wider world topics (maybe 5) nor many medieval or early modern (maybe 10). Certainly late modern has been the chief area of my editorial work.

On the question of the background of contributors... No 'older' Scottish universities have escaped my attention; every one of them has made some contribution(s), providing 29 articles in total (one contributor doing the honours twice). The universities of Edinburgh and Stirling have provided the most. I obtained exactly half of all contributions (35) from universities in England and Wales, but only one from abroad (Chris Harvie's). Only 6 articles were contributed by non-university writers. This was an area that I originally had hoped to make more of, but I failed with it due to lack of contacts. On the gender side of things I appear to stand damned.. only 11 out of the 70 articles were of female authorship, although that proportion is probably not too far out when looking at university staff ratios. There is no positive or negative discrimination here.... it is just what my 'sources' throw up as possible contributors on the topic areas I have in mind.

Besides the academic articles, I have also greatly appreciated the reviews that have gone into the section at the back of many *Year Books*. Over the years, some of my regular 'long reviewers' like Danny Murphy, John Gilbert and Duncan Toms have handed me 'feature length' reviews that have both dignified the *Year Book* and pleased the publishers. Publishers like the wee bit of kudos that is attached to going into the *Year Book*, and I acknowledge their support over the years. They have sent some good books to review and they occasionally pay to have a page of advertising. This is a welcome contribution to helping defray the costs of publication.

Overall then, the *Year Book* has become something of a hobby for me.... I get out of it far more than I put in. I'm glad to take this opportunity to thank all those who have encouraged me over the years.. there are many of them.

The Attlee Government and the creation of the welfare state in Britain, 1945-1951

PROFESSOR RODNEY LOWE

In the twentieth century there have been three major turning points in British welfare policy: the Liberal welfare reforms of 1906-1914; the creation of the welfare state by Attlee's Labour Government between 1945 and 1951; and the fiscal crisis of the mid 1970s. The first is seen to represent a major break with the Victorian tradition of laissez-faire, with central government accepting direct responsibility for a somewhat disjointed range of social services, targeted exclusively on the poor. These services were then extended and made both universal and comprehensive by the postwar Labour Government. Everyone (not just the poor) was to be protected from all (not just selected) risks to their income 'from the cradle to the grave'. This so transformed the relationship between government and the individual citizen that a new term had to be coined to describe it: the 'welfare state'.

Finally there was the fiscal crisis of the 1970s which cast the previous 'advances' in welfare policy in a somewhat different light. Following a fourfold increase in oil prices, the rate of economic growth (and thus the buoyancy of government revenue) declined whilst unemployment (and thus the cost of welfare benefits) rose. The government appeared to be unable to balance its books. Welfare policy duly became identified as one of the major causes of Britain's ills. It was seen to impede growth by diverting resources away from wealth creation; to spend those resources inefficiently because it was a monopoly; to discourage entrepreneurial risk-taking through the imposition of high taxes; and to erode individual self-reliance and political independence through overgenerous benefits ('the dependency culture'). In the words of one famous polemic, Labour's postwar dream of a New Jerusalem had been transformed into the 'dank reality of a segregated, subliterate, unskilled, unhealthy and institutionalised proletariat hanging on the nipple of state maternalism'.¹

It is the object of this article to concentrate on the second of these turning points. First it will provide a working definition of the welfare state because, despite its common usage, it is a term which can have very different meanings. Then it will look at the very many benefits that Labour's legislation brought to ordinary people. On the 'appointed day' of 5 July 1948 the principal reforms, such as the National Health Service and National Insurance, were implemented; and, as Peter Hennessy has written, this was 'one of the great days in British history ... it was a day which transformed like no other before or since the lives and life chances of the British people'.² Finally it will look rather more critically at the record of the Labour Government, particularly in the light of the new theoretical perspectives of welfare policy developed since the mid 1970s, to provide some explanation of why – in relation to other countries – the British welfare state fell so quickly into disrepute.

Definitions

Analysis of the welfare state is often confused because there is no general agreement of what the term actually means. In historical terms this is unsurprising because, however defined, it was not the creation of one single individual, blueprint or sequence of events. Sir William Beveridge or Aneurin Bevan are often portrayed as its founder. Beveridge, however, hated the term because of its 'Santa Claus' image. It suggested that everyone had social 'rights' without any reciprocal responsibilities. Bevan for his part fought vigorously in 1948 against any association of his *free* National Health Service with *contributory* National Insurance.³ Similarly it is inaccurate to describe, as is so often done, Beveridge's famous 1942 report as the blueprint of the welfare state. It did briefly provide a vision of how a 'comprehensive policy of social progress' could defeat the five 'giants' of want, disease, ignorance, squalor and idleness; but it only provided detailed proposals for the elimination of want. Moreover, it was only an advisory report and many of its recommendations were ignored. Beveridge himself was also a Liberal and the philosophy underlying his report (and especially its resistance to any redistribution of resources between classes) was alien to the Labour Party.⁴

Finally, despite 5 July 1948 being commonly regarded as the 'birthday' of the welfare state, the legislation then implemented was merely the tip of an iceberg. Attlee himself recognized this in his official broadcast, when he admitted:

Though we have differed in detail, these plans in their broad outline had the support of all elements in the nation's life... I see in them the culmination of efforts made by all the people of this country over 40 years or more to build together a social structure of mutual provision for contingencies which if we were all left to face them alone would overwhelm some and leave the confidence of others a prey to anxiety and fear'.⁵

Labour had only been in power independently for five of those forty years. Welfare policy as developed in the 1940s, therefore, was not a coherent body of reform; and although the term 'welfare state' gradually came into common usage, there was no agreed definition of what it actually meant. This means that when historians use the term they are imposing their own definition on the past, with all the distortions that that can entail.

The definition used in this article includes the five 'core' social services: the NHS, social security, education, housing and the personal social services. It includes also employment and taxation policy. The former Beveridge himself regarded as vital to any policy of 'social progress'. If government genuinely wanted to maximize individual welfare, he argued, it had to do all in its power to ensure the availability of well-paid, rewarding jobs. Cash benefits were very much a second-best option. In practical terms, full employment was also vital – as the 1970s were to show – to the financing of welfare. By maximizing wealth creation (and thus tax revenue) whilst minimizing claimants, it ensured that there were sufficient resources to fund adequate services.⁶ Taxation is equally important because the way in which government policy is financed is as significant for the distribution of resources, and thus for individual welfare, as the way in which it is targeted.

Other policy areas could undoubtedly be included. Glennerster, for example, has recently argued for the inclusion of legislation concerning private morality, such as divorce and homosexuality, on the grounds that 'it directly affected very large numbers of people probably more deeply and personally than changes to the structure of pension schemes or the National Health Service'.⁷ This is true, but it seems advisable to regard such legislation as the context for the analysis of core welfare services, rather as part of the core itself. This is particularly important given the attempts since the 1970s to reduce the term 'welfare state' to its American and typically pejorative sense: a synonym for cash benefits alone. On the fiftieth anniversary of the welfare state in 1998, New Labour did admit that 'at its birth, the vision was broad and encompassed all welfare services, such as education and health as well as social security benefits. We need to capture that original vision'. The Prime Minister identified himself as one of 'those who believe the welfare state is not just about cash benefits, but is about services too – like education and health'.⁸ Since then, however, both his and popular usage has reverted to the narrower Thatcherite definition.

The benefits

There were major advances in the 1940s for individual welfare in each of the policy areas outlined above. The most dramatic were in those areas where popular concern was greatest: health care and social security. As late as 1939 only 42% of the population (mainly male workers) had been entitled to free treatment for a restricted range of ailments, whilst the most vulnerable members of society – women, children and the retired – had to pay the full unsubsidized cost of either treatment or private insurance. After the creation of the NHS, however, everyone enjoyed equal access to a full range of treatment at an optimum standard, free at the time of need. Likewise, in 1939 workers below a given income – as a consequence of the Liberal reforms – were required to insure themselves against certain risks in a variety of different schemes. At a time when the average industrial wage was £3.54, the payments provided for a man with a wife and two children varied from 75p a week (sick pay) to £1.65 (unemployment pay). To meet the additional cost of children, there was no special cash payment and only a very restricted range of services. Subsidized school meals, for example, were provided to just over 100,000 children. After the introduction of national insurance in 1948, all workers had to pay one single insurance contribution (costing an equivalent percentage of the average wage) and in return

were guaranteed a standard subsistence payment to cover lost income, whatever the cause. Family income was further adjusted to need by a family allowance for each child after the first and a wider range of welfare services. The number of school meals served each week in 1948 had soared to 1.8 million.

There were parallel developments in other areas. In education, for example, the school leaving age before the war had been 14 and only 25% of children (in England and Wales) received specialist secondary education – for which just over half paid fees. The majority remained in the same ‘all age’ schools throughout their education. In 1947, the leaving age was raised to 15, with all children guaranteed at least three years of free specialist secondary education. In housing, the total number of new buildings actually dropped under Labour due to a shortage of materials and labour. The annual number of council houses built, however, peaked at 200,000 whereas the interwar peak had been only 122,000. Moreover at a standard size of 1000 square feet they were on average 25% larger than their prewar counterparts. In the personal social services the record was similarly mixed. Most social workers were still employed, and the care of those in need met, by voluntary organizations. However the 1948 Children Act did require all local authorities to establish specialist departments to ensure the care was always governed by a child’s ‘best interest’. This no longer automatically meant, as in the interwar period, a premium on economic self-sufficiency at the earliest possible moment.

The transformation was completed by employment and taxation policy. Between the wars, the average annual rate of unemployment had been 11% and it had peaked at 17%. Following the all-party commitment during the war to maintain a ‘high and stable level’ of employment it was to rise above 3% only three times between 1945 and 1975. Taxation was also kept highly progressive by Labour. The basic rate of income tax rose from 27.5% to 45% between 1939 and 1945, and surtax could raise the rate to 97.5% on the highest incomes – although, because of the high tax threshold, a man on an average wage with a wife and two children still paid no income tax at all. A graduated purchase tax, discriminating against luxury goods, had also been introduced and death duties remained extremely high. A buoyant source of government revenue and a measure of redistribution were thereby ensured.

The material benefits which ordinary men, and above all women, initially gained from these measures were immense. The two greatest fears overhanging all working families before the war had been ill-health and poverty. Would mothers and children die because proper medical treatment could not be afforded? Would proper treatment destroy all the family’s savings? At a stroke, the NHS removed this fear. The level of poverty, as established for the ‘typical’ provincial town of York by Rowntree in 1936, was 31% of the working class with over 50% of children under the age of one living below subsistence. In 1950, a comparable survey recorded a figure of 2.8%. Women, despite their later justifiable grievances against state welfare (as will be seen), were amongst the major beneficiaries of these changes. As both the medically uninsured and the housewives who frequently chose to go without when income – especially in a large family – was insufficient, the NHS, family allowances and social security were immeasurable boons. Full employment, moreover, did not just guarantee the regularity of family income but also offered a greater opportunity for work and hence some economic autonomy.

This material success derived from two of Beveridge’s key principles which Labour accepted. The first was comprehensiveness. Just as the NHS covered all medical needs, so national insurance covered all possible causes of lost income. As a result, everyone for the first time could enjoy social *security*, freedom from the fear of poverty. This was seen even by the Conservative Party in those pre-Thatcherite days as a source of empowerment and not of dependency. As its *One Nation* pamphlet stated in 1950:

We have stressed the principle of the guaranteed standard of life and security below which none shall be allowed to fall. It is only when this degree of security is assured that people will react to the opportunities, and accept the responsibilities of liberty.

The second principle was universalism. State welfare was no longer to divide society between first-class citizens (the self-reliant) and second-class citizens (the dependent, whom the state compelled to take out insurance). All were to be included in services such as national insurance and the NHS. This was designed to create a sense of social solidarity. Just as everyone had united to win the war, they would now unite both in a common insurance ‘risk pool’ and as consumers of the same services in the battle to create a more efficient and equitable society.

Labour's creation of the welfare state put Britain in the forefront of welfare reform. Indeed one American historian has gone as far as to call it 'an historic event equivalent in importance and stature to the French or Russian revolutions'.⁹ This was not just because of the material advances, but because the implementation of policies designed by Keynes and Beveridge appeared to solve the problems of mass unemployment and poverty. Confronted by these two evils, interwar democracies had looked hopelessly inefficient in relation to totalitarian regimes. Now the advantages of collective solidarity (the popular attraction of totalitarianism) could be enjoyed with the simultaneous strengthening, not the suppression, of individual liberty

The criticisms

This record of achievement has been attacked from both the left and the right. On the one hand, it has been argued that a golden opportunity was lost to effect a more fundamental change in the balance of power and wealth. Only 20% of industry, for example, was nationalized and so economic power remained unequally dispersed; and the failure to close public schools, to make state schools comprehensive and to build local health centres denied everyone genuinely equal access to education and health care.¹⁰ On the other hand, as has been seen, Labour's New Jerusalem was seen to be at the root of Britain's postwar relative decline with high taxes and benefits discouraging entrepreneurship and fostering dependency. Both these ideologically driven critiques rely heavily on hindsight and require sensitive (and sensible) judgements about what was practical at the time. What it is equally important to ask is what Labour uniquely contributed to the nascent welfare state and whether, as Kenneth Morgan has argued, it provided the 'essential basis for future advance'.¹¹

Labour's direct contribution was limited because much of the legislation which initially underpinned the welfare state had been enacted or planned before 1945. Despite its obvious shortcomings, Beveridge was right to conclude that welfare provision in Britain by 1939 was 'on a scale not surpassed and hardly rivalled by any other country in the world'.¹² The scope of unemployment insurance, for example, was unrivalled; and the percentage of the workforce covered by state pensions and health insurance was surpassed only in Denmark and Sweden. Other advances were based on wartime measures, such as the nationalization of hospitals; on wartime acts, such as the 1944 Education Act (masterminded by the Conservative, R.A. Butler) and the 1945 Family Allowance Act (passed by the Conservative Caretaker Government); and on all-party reconstruction plans, such as the 1944 *Employment Policy* white paper. In addition, much of its inspiration was derived from two Liberals, Keynes and Beveridge, and much of its success from fortuitous circumstances. Full employment, for example, was as dependent on the buoyant world economy and the destruction of the manufacturing capacity of trading rivals as on Labour's economic planning and Keynesian demand management.

Such reservations may appear churlish because it was, after all the Labour Government which completed the previous patchwork of provision. It thereby realized Beveridge's principles of comprehensiveness and universality and by so doing made the whole greater than the sum of the constituent parts. It also defended welfare provision in the economic crises of 1947 and 1949, when there was considerable pressure – not least from its officials – for economies. Had the Conservatives been in power, would there have been a repeat of the 1922 Geddes Axe? Such a question, however, is itself fundamentally ahistorical. The Conservatives were not in power because of the views expressed at the 1945 election; and as a result of that vote the Conservatives were adapting their own attitudes to state welfare. How did Labour's views fundamentally differ from these? Only by looking at the detail of individual policy can this question be answered, and two policies have been duly singled out: social security and health care.

In both its financing and broad objectives, national insurance ultimately differed little from Conservative policy. Before the war Labour had intended to finance cash benefits from direct taxation, thereby redistributing considerable resources from rich to poor. In the event national insurance was financed by a flat rate contribution which, by taking a similar cash sum from rich and poor alike, was in essence a regressive poll tax. In money terms, therefore, Labour was not creating a more egalitarian society but rather – like the earlier Liberal reforms – compelling the poor to practice the middle-class virtue of thrift. There was nothing in this to which Conservatives could object. The purpose of the

scheme, moreover, was not – as in other countries – to pay earnings-related benefits so that claimants could maintain their accustomed standards of living. Rather it provided only a subsistence payment because, in the words of Beveridge, ‘to give by compulsory insurance more than is needed for subsistence is an unnecessary interference with individual responsibility’.¹³ If individuals wished to safeguard their accustomed living standards they should take the initiative to insure themselves privately. This again accorded fully with Conservative principles.

Labour’s social security scheme was thus an essentially conservative measure and as a result embodied a very limited concept of citizenship. The general perception was that all British citizens had attained the ‘right’ to social security. In fact this ‘right’ was conditional on the payment of an insurance contribution; and this excluded many who, because they did not work, could not make such a contribution. They included the disabled and the majority of married women – and thereby gave substance to the later charge of feminists that most women remained second-class citizens. Their ‘right’ to social security was dependent on their husbands’ contribution and on divorce, for example, would be forfeited. Why then did Labour persist with the insurance principle? Ironically it was due to the force of public opinion. An insurance contribution represented an explicit contract between the insurer and government, on which the latter could not renege. If benefit was purely tax-financed there was no guarantee that benefits might not be later modified or even withdrawn. Such reasoning betrayed a fundamental flaw that was to bedevil the later history of the welfare state. If government was so distrusted, how could it be a vehicle for collective action? It was this fundamental suspicion that Labour singularly failed to confront or dispel.

The NHS avoided the problems associated with national insurance. It promised an optimum and not just a minimum service. Being largely tax-financed, it was also automatically available to all and thus genuinely represented a ‘badge of citizenship’. This accounts for much of its instant popularity. Did it, however, provide a structure for an efficient service? Previously health care had been provided by insurance funds and a mixture of voluntary and local authority hospitals. They respectively symbolized the virtues of competition, local pride and democratic control. Bevan, however nationalized the whole system. This had three immediate drawbacks. First it made the NHS the largest employer in Western Europe with all associated problems of alienation with regard to relationships both within the organization and between the NHS and the local community. Secondly, effective power was handed over to appointed rather than elected bodies; and the consequence of this immense increase in government patronage was that the NHS became dominated by doctors, who had their own vested interest in how the service should develop. In the hospital sector, for example, there was to be no direct consumer representation until 1974 and the influence of other professionals, such as nurses, was severely restricted. Finally Bevan failed to capitalize on the potential advantages of the NHS as a monopoly to drive, for instance, a hard bargain with the drug companies or to create an expert body at the centre to ensure – through the use of comparative costing – that best practice was always followed and full value for money thereby achieved.

There were adverse consequences for both the direction of the health care and for specific groups of patients. The NHS became a national *hospital* service rather than a national *health* service because emphasis was placed on the curing rather than the prevention of disease. Women were also in many ways disadvantaged. The NHS certainly provided free health care and increased opportunities for employment. As patients, however, women were treated predominantly by male doctors and according to male standards of emotional and physical health. Infertility was sympathetically treated for instance (because this would enable women to fulfil their *natural* role) but not abortion (although control over their own bodies had for long been a principal feminist demand). As workers, women also lost power – most noticeably with the decline in the authority of matrons – and were constantly reminded of the ‘sexual division of labour’, whereby men typically held senior and women the junior positions.

Conclusion

There can be no question that the welfare state, as inaugurated by the Attlee government, materially transformed the lives of the majority of British people. To this extent it was an undeniable turning point. However, the extent to which it was a Labour achievement can be questioned. So too can the

fundamental nature of the system. Its shortcomings were not necessarily those identified after the mid 1970s by marxist or new right critics, although the feminist critique is undoubtedly powerful. Rather they relate to the more mundane issue of efficiency.

In the 1930s, the market had been shown to be inefficient both in the provision of jobs and in the delivery of services such as health care. Collective provision was potentially far more efficient. However, to realize this potential and thereby establish fully the legitimacy of collective action as either an alternative to or an indispensable support of the market required a change in popular culture and the establishment of appropriate administrative structures. This, as the examples of national insurance and the NHS have shown, Labour failed to achieve. Indeed there emerged from the 1940s one of the most centralized welfare states in Europe; and even in Scotland, which was allowed an exceptional degree of administrative autonomy (not just in relation to education but also to health care and the personal social services), centralization became so intense that it eventually helped to fuel demands for devolution. The assumption underlying some historical analysis is that the structure of the welfare state as developed by Labour approached perfection. 'Like some Greek temple', as Glennerster has written, 'it had logical intellectually satisfying proportions'.¹⁴ This was very far from being the actual case.

NOTES

- 1 C.Barnett, *The Audit of War* (Macmillan, 1986), p. 304
- 2 P.Hennessy, *Never Again* (Jonathan Cape, 1992), p.144
- 3 J.Harris, *William Beveridge* (Oxford University Press, 1997), p.452; Public Record Office, CAB 124/ 1016
- 4 *Social Insurance and Allied Services* (Cmd. 6404, London, 1942), para. 449
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- 6 *Social Insurance and Allied Services*, para. 440
- 7 H.Glennerster, *British Social Policy since 1945* (Blackwell, 1995), p. 153
- 8 *A New Contract for Welfare* (London, 1998, Cm 3805), pp. iii, 1
- 9 P. Baldwin, 'Beveridge in the *Longue Duree*' in J. Hills *et al*, *Beveridge and Social Security* (Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 40
- 10 For education, see in particular B.Simon, *Education and the Social Order, 1940-1990* (Lawrence and Wishart, 1991), ch. 2
- 11 K.O.Morgan, *Labour in Power, 1945-1951* (Clarendon Press, 1984), p. 186
- 12 *Social Insurance and Allied Services*, para. 3
- 13 *Ibid*, para. 294
- 14 H. Glennerster, *British Social Policy*, p. 8. For a brief summary of welfare policy in Scotland and a select bibliography, see R. Lowe, *The Welfare State in Britain since 1945* (Macmillan, 1998), especially pp. 92-6

The Decade of the 1730s: A Turning Point in Scottish Highland Emigration to America¹

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The subject of emigration from the Scottish Highlands during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is an emotive one and one that is undergoing lively debate to determine the causes and the beginnings of what has come to be termed 'The Clearances.' This brief study of the economic and social changes in the Highlands during the first half of the eighteenth century challenges the generally accepted view that the first phase of clearance began after the failed Jacobite Rebellion of 1745 or in 1763 at the conclusion of the Seven Years War in America and with the introduction of sheep into the Highland landscape. By understanding the social upheaval in the Highland glens during the decades preceding 1745, we are able to see that the motives for migration to British North America were already well established and, by the mid-1730s, were beginning to be put into action. Although emigration from Scotland before 1760 has been acknowledged by leading Scottish historians such as Tom Devine and Allan MacInnes, the importance of these early migrations has been understated. For many Highland emigrants, migration was a reaction to an active change in the relationship between clansmen and chiefs and represented a determined effort to maintain traditional social structures and values. These challenges to Highland culture provided the 'push' element for the initial migrations in the 1730s, while into this socially turbulent time opportunities and recruiters from America provided the 'pull' components.

After the Union of 1707 between England and Scotland the fabric of traditional Highland culture and society was being stretched from all sides by new economic, social, and political influences. These influences combined to spur migration from the Highlands to the British colonies of North America. Many historians, such as I. C. C. Graham, claim that the major changes in the Highlands did not occur until after the collapse of the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745 when the British government enacted repressive measures against the clans and the Highland lairds saw the value of modernising the agricultural system by English technology.² Others, such as J. M. Bumsted and, more recently, Marianne McLean, claim that emigration was the result of changes in agriculture along with the introduction of sheep farming and clearances in the Highlands beginning as late as the 1760s.³

However, the evidence suggests that by the end of the second decade of the 1700s "improving" land management and commercialisation were already making a larger impact in the Highlands than ever before and that the bonds which tied the people to the land and clan were loosening, both from the perspective of the clan chiefs and from the clansmen. By the 1730s, Highland improvers such as the Duke of Argyll and Duncan Forbes of Culloden advocated and instituted changes in their land policy by diminishing the powers of the tacksmen, the traditional cadets or gentlemen of the clans who acted both as military officers and administrators of the chiefs' lands. These changes would create a more favorable commercial opportunity while at the same time they undermined the traditional relationship between chief and clan.⁴

Staunch Jacobites, who tended to be more traditional in their outlooks, were not immune from the improving ideas towards their lands. Ewan Cameron of Lochiel and Brigadier-General William Mackintosh of Borlum were strong advocates of improved land usage. In 1729, Mackintosh, while imprisoned in Edinburgh, wrote *An Essay on Ways and Means for Inclosing, Fallowing, Planting, &c. Scotland; and that in Sixteen Years at Farthest*.⁵ Although the lairds were adopting progressive attitudes, the clansmen were not. T. M. Devine correctly states that "while the gentry were undergoing a profound metamorphosis, the clansmen still maintained traditionalist expectations."⁶ It was this ideal of traditional life changing for the Highlanders that would prompt them to leave the Highlands in search of a place where their familiar lifestyle could continue.

In addition to the restructuring of land usage, the cattle trade between the Highlands of Scotland and English and Scottish Lowland buyers increased considerably after the Union.⁷ This growing

dependence and integration into a trading economy, along with other changing conditions, would cause many chiefs to explore new avenues of land management and to re-evaluate their relationship with their clansmen. The influence of commercialisation was not lost on the clansmen either as town markets and fairs spread throughout the Highlands.⁸ This influx of products and foreign influences opened the eyes of the Highlanders to a world outside their own, as no longer were they isolated.

By 1729 Mackintosh of Borlum, enjoying the commercial benefits but complaining of the changing culture, writes, “when I came to a friend’s house of a morning, I used to be asked if I had my morning draught yet? I am now asked if I have had my tea? And in lieu of the big Quaigh with strong ale and toast, and after a dram of good wholesome Scots spirits there is now a tea-kettle put to the fire, the tea-table and silver and china equipage brought in, and marmalade and cream.”⁹ These changes signaled higher expectations and a rising cost of living that were not to the liking of everyone. Captain [Edmund] Burt writes in 1727 of four or five fairs a year when the Highlanders brought their commodities to market.¹⁰ Although the offerings were meagre, it was another sign of increasing commerce.

As trade increased the Highlanders imported meal as a food, and by selling animals and dairy products for grain they could obtain far more calories for the same price, and thus either support larger families or pay a higher rent to their landlord. As a result, it has been suggested, the population grew and the small Highland farms soon became overcrowded.¹¹ A significant by-product of the emergence of trade and commerce in the Highlands was the increasing change from an agricultural barter society to a cash society, thereby lessening the importance of the ties to the land itself. By the 1740s, over three-quarters of the rents on the MacLeod estates in Harris and Skye were money rents, not rents paid in kind.¹² People would begin to look elsewhere for their survival. In 1727, Burt noted that it had recently become possible to get Highlanders to work as hired labour even when the landowners did not wish them to do so simply by offering higher wages.¹³

As in most modernising societies, industry arrived along with trade and commerce. Cattle, cod, herring, salmon, and oysters brought money into the Highlands; so also did the exploitation of Highland woods.¹⁴ Many of the Highland chiefs found they could make money from their woodlands. In 1732, Mackintosh of Mackintosh floated timber from Glenfeshie down the Feshie for export.¹⁵ Around 1725 the Earl of Cromarty got £1600 for his fir woods in Achinall; in 1728 York Buildings Company purchased 60,000 fir trees at Abernethy on the estate of Grant for £7000.¹⁶ The business was expanding at such a rate that on December 31, 1728 William Stephens, a former M.P. for Newport and destined to become a prominent figure in the affairs of the colony of Georgia, was sent by the York Buildings Company as superintendent and comptroller for their timber interest in the Highlands.¹⁷

By April 1730 Roderick Chisolm of Comer and Alexander Chisolm of Muckerach sold “all and every his wood and woods of whatever kind lying standing and growing within and on all and singular his lands and estate in the parishes of Kilmorack and Kiltarlity” to the York Buildings Company for £2000 Sterling.¹⁸ The company was enthusiastic as it poured money into the Highlands. Numerous workmen were employed and houses were erected; saw mills and machinery were set up. The Highlands of Scotland were experiencing new economic growth and pressures to which they were not accustomed. These new pressures would severely test the Highlanders’ loyalty to the land and to the clan chiefs.

Highland timber was utilised to build houses and ships, but it was also used to smelt iron ore with charcoal. According to Captain Burt, the York Buildings Company set up iron works for the sake of using the timber they had purchased in the Highlands and because “iron cannot be made from the ore with sea or pit coal to be malleable and fit for ordinary use.”¹⁹ The ore could be brought from Lancashire, England by sea to Loch Maree, and, between 1727 and 1736, to the York Buildings Company’s furnaces at Invergarry; or it might be mined locally, as between 1736 and 1739, at the Lecht outcrop workings near Tomintoul.²⁰ Those enterprises failed because the expense of transport made their products more costly than those in England; however, the Highlands benefited, at least temporarily, from their outlay in wages, animals, and materials.²¹

Industry in the Highlands was not limited to timber and iron works. Mining, although known for some time in Scotland, took on a new initiative due to the York Buildings Company’s endeavors in the Highlands. News in the August 27, 1728 *Caledonian Mercury* reported that “his Excellency General

[George] Wade has been viewing the lead Mine belonging to Alexander Murray, Esq. Of Stanhope, in which he is an Adventurer and whereof they give the following Account: That among the several Edge Veins already discovered, there is one lately found, that in appearance exceeds any Thing that hitherto has been seen in Great Britain. . .²² A year later, the consortium which included Alexander Murray, General Wade, Sir Archibald Grant of Monymusk, and two Glasgow merchants received a royal charter for working the mines²³ and subsequently leased the mines to the York Buildings Company.

By 1730 others were looking for opportunities in the mining industry. On July 3, 1730 Lachlan Mackintosh of Mackintosh received a letter from a John Smith advising him of the likely existence of lead veins in Glenroy; however, it is doubtful that The Mackintosh was able to pursue the matter much further.²⁴ However, it was becoming obvious that the structure of Highland society came under continuing pressure from the expansion of this new commercialisation.

Additional stress came to bear on the clans through the work of the Scottish Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge (S.S.P.C.K.). This work had begun in the first decade of the eighteenth century through the enthusiastic efforts of a group of gentry in the Lowlands, “men of knowledge, solid piety, and estates”²⁵ who had been moved by the perceived illiteracy, ignorance, and superstition of the Highlands. These Protestant gentlemen of the south were concerned with the abiding Jacobitism of the Highlanders and with the current success of Catholic missionaries in winning converts in the north of Scotland.²⁶ As a result, the Society, whose work in educating and evangelising the north was a major vehicle of social change in the eighteenth century, was formed in 1709.

The purpose of the Society was to found schools “where religion and virtue might be taught to young and old” in the shape of reading, writing, arithmetic, and religious instruction. Since Gaelic was believed to be the root of the superstition and barbarity in the Highlands, the S.S.P.C.K. would teach only English in their schools. Many of the Highlanders realised the advantage their children could have in the external world if they could speak and read English and accepted the schools. The influence of the society is evidenced by supplying the minister for the first organised group of Highland settlers going to Georgia in 1735.

However, not everyone was ready to discard their Celtic society and Gaelic culture. Some of the most staunch defenders of traditional Highland life were the Chiefs of Mackay and the Mackay clan. A full third of the Scottish emigrants to Georgia in 1735 were from this clan, taking their heritage and society with them for preservation. In one of the Mackay groups to sail to Georgia in 1741 only two persons out of forty-three spoke English.²⁷ It would not be until the nineteenth century that the house of Sutherland succeeded in implementing the policy for the Mackays laid down earlier by Sir Robert Gordon to “purge the country piece by piece of the Irish barbarity [Gaelic].”²⁸

Along with these economic and social changes other conditions unique to the first half of the eighteenth century for the Highlanders were the result of the failed effort to restore the Stuarts to the throne of Great Britain, known as the Jacobite “Rising of 1715.” The doomed rebellion lasted only five months and was over by February, 1716.²⁹ However, George I’s government took immediate action to prevent another such outbreak. In Scotland hundreds of Highlanders were taken prisoner and tried. None were put to death; however, 639 prisoners were transported for treason to the American colonies.³⁰ The men would be the forerunners of the organised groups of Highland settlers in America.

The British government feared a resurgence of Jacobite sentiment in Scotland and decided other measures must be taken to secure the peace. These measures would affect the clans and provide the impetus for many to leave the Highlands. The Act of 1716, for “the more effectual securing the Peace of the Highlands in Scotland,” ordered the commutation of a long list of feudal services for cash rents. These included personal attendance, hosting, hunting, watching and warding, whether due by charter, contract, custom, or agreement. This section of the Act, in effect, removed the military ties of the clansman to his chief.³¹ It is apparent that the real purpose of the Act was to weaken the personal responsibilities and loyalties between chief and clansmen. Most historians attribute the effects of repressive measures taken by the government in 1745 as destroying the clan system, but clearly the groundwork was laid here in 1716.

It is important to note that the basic organisation of the clan was put in jeopardy by the change in the method of land-holding. Farms could be re-let to the tacksmen or to the former sub-tenants, giving the latter the advantage of holding their land by lease or at fixed rent and by-passing the traditional tacksmen as middleman. Also, instead of being tenants-at-will, the sub-tenants would not be subject to services unlimited and undefined. In many areas of the Highlands the traditional standing of the tacksmen was being threatened by changing attitudes of the landowners about their usefulness. As early as 1717 Bailie John Steuart, acting as factor to the Earl of Moray for the Petty estates, protested against his instructions to turn out tenants to make room for William McGillivray, a cadet of the Clan Chattan. He complained saying that he was "already sick of too many gentlemen tenants in Pettie."³²

Duncan Forbes of Culloden, after surveying the Argyll estates in 1737, argued that the tacksmen had outlived his usefulness and that sub-tenants could offer higher rents.³³ Forbes had seen the poverty and dire distress of the people populating the Duke of Argyll's lands and strongly denounced the tacksmen as the culprits responsible. He reported that "had the tacksmen been suffered to continue their extortions a few years longer the islands would have been depeopled."³⁴ It is more likely that the pressures of emerging commercialism in the Highlands and a changing society were the real reasons for migration. "The inhabitants," as E. R. Creegan points out, "living neither wholly under their traditional clan system nor wholly under a free individualistic, commercial system, were exposed to conflicting demands."³⁵

Either under the tacksmen or under direct leases from modern landlords, the tenants were faced with ever increasing rents. They were caught between two conflicting ideologies of traditional culture with familiar expectations and modern commercialism with unknown pressures. Throughout the Highlands farms had been sub-divided to meet the increase in population to such an extent that most of the land holdings were far too small to be economically viable.³⁶ Already Highlanders were making the move to Lowland cities due to the increasing commercial pressures, and in such numbers that, in 1727, the Glasgow Highland Society was founded for the purposes of apprenticing poor Highland boys to various trades.³⁷ People in the Highlands were becoming more mobile and were finding the idea of emigration a viable alternative.

In a letter to the Trustees for Establishing the Colony of Georgia in America dated May 9, 1735, Daniel McLachlan expressed the desire of many of Clan Cameron to leave the Highlands of Scotland.³⁸ He explained that their reason for wanting to emigrate was because rents were being raised of late, not, as he said, because of the avarice of the landlords, but because of the "vast increase of the people." McLachlan also complained that the price of cattle, "which is the only support and proper produce of this country," had fallen. In this assessment McLachlan was correct. Between 1730 and 1740 the price of cattle remained consistently low (see Table 1).³⁹ As a result of cattle prices dropping and several years of bad harvest, the bulk of the people in the Highlands were "in a poor starving condition."⁴⁰

Table 1* Cattle Prices: Knockbuy, Argyll, 1730-1740

Average Price of Cows				Average Price of Cows			
Date	£	s.	d.	Date	£	s.	d.
1730	15	18	0	1736	13	2	2
1731	16	15	7	1737	12	6	8
1732	13	0	0	1738	12	13	11
1733	13	5	4	1739	13	10	4
1734	14	10	10	1740	15	14	5
1735	12	15	0				

The Act of 1716 did more than release tenants from feudal manservice and change the method of land holding; it also declared it unlawful for any person or persons to carry arms within the Highlands. The Act was ineffective because of the remoteness and inaccessibility of the Highlands. In 1725, another act was passed which commanded that all arms should be taken from the Highland clans who were known to be friends or followers of the House of Stuart.⁴¹ To carry out this law General George Wade was sent to the Highlands with a body of British troops. The great difficulty in enforcing the law, according to Wade, was that "the Highlands of Scotland are still more impracticable, from the want of Roads, Bridges, . . . , [and] very difficultly supported by Regular Troops."⁴²

General Wade was ordered to construct great roads, crossing the Highlands and connecting the garrisons at Fort George, Fort Augustus, and Fort William. Also, he was to build roads connecting Crieff to Inverness "for encouraging their Trade and Commerce with the Low Country; and to endeavor by mild and moderate Usage to convince them of the happiness they may enjoy by peaceably Submitting to Your Maty's [King George I] Governm't."⁴³ The work on the roads began in 1726 and took eleven years to complete. Wade employed five hundred soldiers and constructed more than forty stone bridges in the process.

The British troops did not work without help from the locals. In a letter from Edmund Burt to Mackintosh of Mackintosh in April 1728, Burt asks The Mackintosh to order his clansmen to furnish Wade's workmen with provisions and "Necessary's."⁴⁴ Obviously, this added additional strain to an already meagre food supply in the Highlands. It was Wade's intentions in building these roads to better police the Highlands of Scotland, both for criminal protection and to lessen the likelihood of a Jacobite resurgence. However, these roads would do more than provide an avenue for troop transport through the Highlands. They became a gateway for commerce and travellers into the Highlands and an exit for emigrants from the region.

The residual effects of the "Rising of 1715" and the invasion of commercialism, along with education, overpopulation, and the poverty of the Highlands, created an underlying current for migration. All of these elements contributed significantly to the decline of the clan long before the "Rebellion of 1745" and the introduction of sheep farming in 1763. The motive for commercial gain, introduced through the expansion of trade in cattle and timber along with industrial pursuits, was inconsistent with the patriarchal and military loyalty upon which clanship was based. The advance of military roads built by General Wade through the Highlands contributed to the availability of commercial enterprise as well as military strategy. The roads provided mobility and easier access to the various markets at Inverness and Crieff, along with the commercial needs of the garrisoned forts.

With all of the various social, political, economic, and educational forces at work in the Highlands, the decade of the 1730s was the opportune time for recruitment and propaganda offering attractive incentives from America to receive serious attention in the Highlands of Scotland. All of the forces for emigration attributed by many historians to the last half of the eighteenth century were already at work by 1735 among the many clans such as Clan Chattan in Inverness-shire and Nairn, the Clan Mackay in Sutherland, Ross and Cromarty, and the Campbells in Argyll. Relatives were in the area of the Georgia colony, some having been sent to Carolina as Jacobite prisoners and others already in the service of James Oglethorpe, the founder of the colony. Others were already in North Carolina as well in the colony of New York. The changing conditions in the Highlands were such that many of the clans were eager for some sense of comfort in the familiarity of a traditional life style and emigration might provide the means of preserving a culture that was fast being lost in Scotland.

News of the colony of Georgia had already spread throughout the country via frequent reports in the *Caledonian Mercury* and the *Edinburgh Echo* giving accounts of the progress and success of the settlements in America.⁴⁵ Correspondence from North Carolina and favorable reports from groups sent to America added to a growing sense of anticipation for possible migration.⁴⁶ With such positive news appearing in the press and in letters against the backdrop of the hardships in the Highlands, the lure of America would be attractive for perspective emigrants.

Lieutenant Hugh Mackay and Captain George Dunbar arrived in the Highlands in early 1735 to recruit men and families for a new settlement on the southern frontier of Georgia. They could offer perspective emigrants free land, subsistence for the first year, and transportation to Georgia. Governor

Gabriel Johnston of North Carolina, a Scotsman, followed in 1739 with offers of free land and tax exemptions for ten years. In 1734 the governor of the colony of New York could offer large tracts of free land which were taken up by Highlanders from Argyll beginning in 1738.⁴⁷

The recruitment efforts by Mackay and Dunbar met with great success among the clans throughout Sutherland and Invernessshire. Mackay informed Oglethorpe and the Trustees of Georgia that “were it not for want of specie in the country many would embrace the opportunity” and went so far as to boast that “if this convoy safely arrives [in Georgia] and accounts transmitted here of their being happily settled, the Trust may have annually what numbers they please from the Northern Highlands.”⁴⁸ Captain Dunbar’s method of recruitment was “to bring the enterprise into vogue with the chief Gentlemen” in order to gain favor with the cadets of the clans.⁴⁹ As a result, he was effective in his efforts, as evidenced by his meetings with the gentlemen of the areas around Inverness, in particular, the gentlemen of Clan Chattan.⁵⁰

Apparently word had spread throughout the Highlands of the potential success of the Georgia venture. The clergy played an important part in turning the minds of the people around, particularly one churchman whom Mackay does not name. He writes, “Shocked to see his fellow creatures in the utmost slavery and endeavour’d to be continued so by their Masters by false aspersions against the scheme for the settling the Colony,” this unnamed clergyman “did his utmost to open their eyes.”⁵¹ Mackay’s agents had been effective, the clergy had helped, other agents of the Trust were at work (Mr. Cuthbert of Draikes and Mr. Baillie), and newspaper advertisements had been used as well.⁵² Whatever the reason, Dunbar received “petitions from many parts of the Highlands in the name of considerable numbers.”⁵³ By October 22, 1735, Dunbar was writing the Trustees saying that he had a “young Gentleman, a son of McLean of Argours who takes passage for Self and Servant to See our colony and his report will bring many of his class there.”⁵⁴ He further reported that “the other gentlemen are from different parts of this country, most of them lads and I hope will answer to the benefit of Georgia since I assure you they are all of the best families in this country and fit for any service.”⁵⁵

On October 29, 1735, the Earl of Egmont noted in his journal that “Captain George Dunbar of the *Prince of Wales* carried from Scotland 180 persons, of whom 130 were contracted to be at the Trustees’ expense, but believed these last would be but 120.”⁵⁶ Oglethorpe corrected that number to 177 by stating that three men were left behind.⁵⁷ The number on board still exceeded that for which the Trustees had contracted and Dunbar had to remove many others who had flooded the docks and tried to gain passage before the ship sailed.⁵⁸ The first phase of group organised Highland emigration had begun. More emigrants to Georgia would sail in 1737 and in 1741.

The success of the Georgia recruiters was followed by that of Captain Lachlan Campbell who organised groups to settle in the colony of New York from Islay in Argyll and, between 1738 and 1742, brought over groups numbering 423 people. The McNeils, with the encouragement of North Carolina’s Governor Gabriel Johnston, would continue the ever expanding flow of migration to America by bringing 350 Highlanders from Argyll to settle in the Cape Fear region of North Carolina in 1739.⁵⁹ There is evidence of additional groups sailing to South Carolina in 1737 and again in 1739 to settle on lands granted to Captain Joseph Avery.⁶⁰

Although the numbers were relatively small, the response and the eagerness of large numbers of people in the Highlands, not just the poor sub-tenants but also the tacksmen or cadets of the families, to migrate to America beginning in 1735 was important in showing that it was not the result of a failed Jacobite rebellion in 1745 or the introduction of sheep in 1763 that motivated the people of the Highlands to leave. These later events certainly accelerated the movement of people, but the Highlanders were already looking for an escape from the immense changes that were happening in their lives from the beginning of the eighteenth century. The Georgia settlers were the first small trickle that forced opened the floodgates of later massive migrations. Indeed the decade of the 1730s was the turning point in Highland emigration to America.

NOTES

- 1 This article is based upon a research paper presented at the Charles Warren Center for Studies in American History at Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts in 1996.
- 2 Ian Charles Cargill Graham, *Colonists from Scotland: Emigration to North America, 1707-1783* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1956), 1,3-4.
- 3 J. M. Bumsted, *The People's Clearance, Highland Emigration to British North America, 1770-1815* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1982), 4; Marianne McLean, *The People of Glengarry; Highlanders in Transition, 1745-1820* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1991), 6-9.
- 4 For a complete discussion of the changes made by the Duke of Argyll see E. R. Creegan, "The Tacksmen and their Successors; A Study of Tenurial Reorganization in Mull, Morvern, and Tiree in the Early Eighteenth Century," *Scottish Studies XIII* (1969); See also Bruce Lenman, *The Jacobite Risings in Britain, 1689-1746* (London: Methuen Co., 1980), Chapter 6; Robert A. Dodgshon, *Land and Society in Early Scotland* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), 306-308; Allan I. Macinnes, "Scottish Gaeldom: The First Phase of Clearance," *People and Society in Scotland, 1760-1830*, volume 1, T. M. Devine and Rosalind Michison, eds. (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers, Ltd., 1988), 70-88; William Ferguson, *Scotland: 1689 to the Present*, The Edinburgh History of Scotland, Volume 4 (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1968; reprint, 1978), 176.
- 5 William Mackintosh of Borlum, *An Essay on Ways and Means for Inclosing, Fallowing, Planting, &c. Scotland; and that in Sixteen Years at Farthest* (Edinburgh: Mr. Freebairn's Shop, 1729).
- 6 T. M. Devine, *Clanship to Crofters' War; The Social Transformation of the Scottish Highlands* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994), 17.
- 7 "Sir John Clerk's Observations on the Present Circumstances of Scotland, 1730," T. C. Smout, ed., *Miscellany of the Scottish History Society, Volume X* (Edinburgh: printed for the Scottish History Society by T. and A. Constable, Ltd., 1965), 195.
- 8 T. C. Smout, "Where had the Scottish Economy got to by the third quarter of the eighteenth century?" *Wealth and Virtue; the Shaping of Political Economy in the Scottish Enlightenment*, Istvan Hont and Michael Ignatieff, eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 47-48.
- 9 Mackintosh of Borlum, *Ways and Means*, 232.
- 10 [Edmund] Burt, *Letters from a Gentleman in the North of Scotland to His Friend in London; Containing the Description of a Capital Town in that Northern Country; with An Account of some uncommon Customs of the Inhabitants: Likewise An Account of the Highlands, with the Customs and Manners of the Highlanders*. 2 volumes, (London: Printed for S. Birt, 1754; reprinted Edinburgh: William Paterson, 1876), I: 83. (Hereinafter cited *Burt's Letters*). There has been much controversy on the identity of Captain Burt. Many publishers and historians in the past have erroneously named him Edward; however, I have located several letters and orders signed "Edmund Burt" in Scottish Records Office GD/176, Mackintosh of Mackintosh Muniments, no. 1708 in particular notifying Mackintosh of General Wade's road construction in 1728; also for the definitive argument on Burt's identity see David Stevenson, "Who was Edmund Burt?" *Essays for Professor R. E. H. Mellor*, W. Ritchie, J. C. Stone, and A. S. Mather, eds., (Aberdeen: University of Aberdeen, 1986), 250-259.
- 11 A. Gibson and T. C. Smout, "Scottish Food and Scottish History, 1500-1800," *Scottish Society, 1500-1800*, R. A. Houston and I. D. Whyte, eds., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 77.
- 12 Devine, *Clanship to Crofters' War*, 15.
- 13 *Burt's Letters*, 2: 125.
- 14 Both Bailie John Steuart (*Steuart's Letter-Book*) and Alexander Mackintosh (SRO GD23/6.48-53, Bought Papers) had extensive trade dealings with England and the European continent.
- 15 SRO GD128/11.2, correspondence of Mackintosh of Mackintosh in Fraser-Mackintosh Collection.
- 16 David Murray, *The York Buildings Company, A Chapter in Scotch History* (Edinburgh: T. & A. Constable, 1883), 57.
- 17 Murray, *York Buildings Company*, 59n2; Stephens became the Secretary for the Trustees for Establishing the Colony of Georgia in America in 1737 and later became the first president of the colony, 1741-1751.
- 18 *The Inventory of Chisolm Writs, 1456-1810*, Jean Munro, ed., (Edinburgh: Scottish Record Society, 1992), No. 871, p. 125-126.

- 19 *Burt's Letters*, 2: 10-11.
- 20 William Ramsey Kermack, *The Scottish Highlands; a short history*, (c. 300-1746) (Edinburgh: W. & A. K. Johnston, 1957), 117.
- 21 *Clerk's Observations*, 198; Clerk was overly optimistic about York Buildings Company and its endeavors in the Highlands; however, his attitude reflects the sentiment of many people in Scotland in 1730.
- 22 *Caledonian Mercury*, 27 August 1728.
- 23 *Caledonian Mercury*, 7 August 1729.
- 24 SRO GD176/2094, Mackintosh of Mackintosh Muniments, 3 July 1730, John Smith to Lachlan Mackintosh of Mackintosh.
- 25 M. G. Jones, *The Charity School Movement* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964), 176.
- 26 T. C. Smout, *A History of the Scottish People; 1560-1830* (London: Fontana Press, 1969), 433-434.
- 27 23 July 1741, "Egmont Journal," *The Colonial Records of the State of Georgia*, Allan D. Candler, Lucian Lamar Knight, Kenneth Coleman, and Milton Ready, eds. 32 volumes to date (Atlanta and Athens: 1904-1916, 1976-), 5: 539. (Hereinafter cited as *CRG*).
- 28 Sir Robert Gordon, quote in Ian Grimble, *Chief of Mackay* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965), 183.
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- 30 David Dobson, *Scottish Emigration to Colonial America, 1607-1785* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1994), 95.
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- 32 William Mackay, ed. *The Letterbook of Bailie John Steuart of Inverness* (Edinburgh: T. & A. Constable for the Scottish History Society, 1915), xli.
- 33 "Report by Duncan Forbes of Culloden to John, Duke of Argyll and Greenwich, 1737," *Crofters Commission Report, 1884*, Appendix LXXXV: 380-394.
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- 35 Creegan, "The Tacksmen and their Successors," *Scottish Studies*, 107.
- 36 Dodgshon, *Land and Society in Early Scotland*, 289-292; Dodgshon estimates that the general average of arable acreage per person on all estates in the Highlands by the mid-eighteenth century was two acres or less; see especially his Table 7 on page 290.
- 37 Kermack, *The Scottish Highlands*, 111.
- 38 Daniel McLachlan to the Trustees for Establishing the Colony of Georgia, 9 May 1735, *CRG*, 20: 339.
- 39 A. J. S. Gibson and T. C. Smout, *Prices, food and wages in Scotland, 1550-1780* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), Table 6.13, 214; additionally, exceptionally good records of cattle prices were kept throughout this period by Archibald Campbell, SRO GD14/10, 3 volumes, Letter Books of James and Archibald Campbell of Stonefield.
- 40 McLachlan to Trustees, 9 May 1735, *CRG*, 20: 339.
- 41 Disarming acts seldom had the desired effect; however, the orders were posted on the parish church doors. An example of the summons to disarm is found in the manuscripts of the Fraser-Mackintosh Collection, SRO 18/38.4, sent by General Wade to the Mackintosh clan.
- 42 General George Wade, "Report, &c., Relating to the Highlands, 1724," *Historical Papers*, 139.
- 43 General George Wade, "Report, &c., Relating to the Highlands, 1727," *Historical Papers*, 158-159.
- 44 Edmund Burt to Mackintosh of Mackintosh, 22 April 1728, SRO GD176/1708, Mackintosh of Mackintosh Muniments.
- 45 *Caledonian Mercury* (Edinburgh), 11 February; 15 June; 20, 25, 29, 31 July; 3, 8, 10, 14 August; 7 September; 3, 18, 24 October; 23 November; 28 December 1732; 6, 15 March; 23 April; 3, 7 May; 17, 25 July 1733; etc. To 18 August 1735; *Edinburgh Eccho* (Edinburgh), 25 July 1733; 12 December 1733; 10 April 1734.
- 46 Dobson, *Scottish Emigration*, 109-111.

- 47 Dobson, *Scottish Emigration*, 89, 109-111.
- 48 Hugh Mackay to James Oglethorpe, 1 September 1735, from Kirktomie, *CRG*, 21: 13-14.
- 49 Oglethorpe to Trustees, 13 February 1736, *Georgia Historical Society Collections*, 20 volumes (Savannah: Published by the Society, 1840-1980), 3: 10-13; see also *CRG*, 21: 450.
- 50 George Dunbar to James Oglethorpe, 20 September 1735, *CRG*, 21: 20-21; For an accurate newspaper account of the recruitment efforts see *Caledonian Mercury*, 18 August 1735.
- 51 Hugh Mackay to James Oglethorpe, 1 September 1735, from Kirktomie, *CRG*, 21: 14.
- 52 Mackay to Oglethorpe, 1 September 1735, *CRG*, 21: 13-14.
- 53 Dunbar to Oglethorpe, 20 September 1735, *CRG*, 21: 21.
- 54 Dunbar to Trustees, 22 October 1735, *CRG*, 21: 27.
- 55 Dunbar to Trustees, 22 October 1735, *CRG*, 21: 27.
- 56 Robert McPherson, ed., *The Journal of the Earl of Egmont; abstracts of the Trustees' Proceedings for Establishing the Colony of Georgia, 1732-1738* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1962), 114.
- 57 James Oglethorpe to the Trustees, 13 February 1736, *CRG*, 21: 449.
- 58 George Dunbar to the Trustees, 21 October 1735, *CRG*, 21: 26.
- 59 Dobson, *Scottish Emigration*, 89, 109-111.
- 60 Mackay, *The Letterbook of Bailie John Stewart of Inverness*, 404; Dobson, *Scottish Emigration*, 106.

The 'Foreign Plot' and the Terror in the French Revolution

DR MIKE RAPPORT

'History', wrote the republican writer, Louis-Sébastien Mercier, 'will eventually explain what I am merely pointing out here ... under every mask, and in every guise, the British fanned discord and prolonged the reign of anarchy. The parties the most opposed to each other suited them, Louis and d'Orléans, Robespierre, Babeuf and Puisaye, for as long as they obstructed Frenchmen in their attempts to rally around the republican government.'¹ This was published at the end of the revolutionary decade, almost five years after the Terror. Mercier saw conspiracy behind every major opponent of the moderate republican course which he thought best for the Revolution. The inclusion of Maximilien Robespierre in his rogues' gallery implies that even the Terror itself was the product of intrigue. Mercier was no paranoid eccentric. He was articulating a deep-rooted fear among the revolutionaries: an anxiety over conspiracy.

This phobia was so widespread that some historians have claimed that it was the very motor which drove the Revolution along the blood-spattered road from 1789 into the carnage of the Terror in 1793-1794. Since Alfred Cobban opened the 'Revisionist' assault on the so-called 'Marxist' interpretation of the French Revolution, the Revolution is rarely seen now as the outcome of a dynamic bourgeoisie breaking out of the straightjacket of the Ancien Régime.² Instead, the significance of the French Revolution has been regarded more in the 'creation of modern political culture', whereby the issues surrounding democracy, totalitarianism, citizenship and human rights were thrown into European political life.³ Besides shifting the emphasis from social history to analyses of political practice and 'discourse' (ideology, language and symbolism), this transformation has also tended to put the Terror at the heart of the Revolution. The central issue has become not how a revolutionary bourgeoisie managed to destroy the Ancien Régime and clear the way for the eventual development of a capitalist society, but rather why the French Revolution degenerated so rapidly into the bloodshed and dictatorship of the Terror.

When historians seek to explain the Terror, they tend to fall between two poles. At one end, writers (mainly of the 'Marxist' school, like Georges Lefebvre and George Rudé) stress that the Terror was forced on the revolutionaries by circumstances in 1793: foreign invasion, civil war, counter-revolution and the financial and economic crisis.⁴ At the other end (among the more radical 'Revisionists' such as François Furet, Lynn Hunt and Simon Schama) there are those who argue that the Terror was inherent in the Revolution from 1789. In Simon Schama's memorable soundbite, the Terror was 'merely 1789 with a higher body count'.⁵ This brief outline, of course, caricatures the two positions, which are more nuanced: Lefebvre, for example, also admits that there was a 'punitive mentality' within the Revolution itself. Moreover, most historians seem to accept that, while there were dictatorial, paranoid and violent tendencies within the Revolution from the outset, they might not have been exerted had it not been for the desperate situation of 1793. As Tim Blanning suggests, 'However flaccid it may sound ... the Terror was latent in revolutionary ideology but needed the strains of war to be activated'.⁶

This location of the Terror within revolutionary ideology has been controversial. The leading proponent of this interpretation was François Furet. He argued that the revolutionaries in the National Assembly, deeply influenced from the outset by Jean-Jacques Rousseau, sought not to represent conflicting social interests in a party system, but to claim that they were the mouthpieces for the sovereign nation, for the 'general will' of the people. Opposition did not, therefore, express legitimate concerns, but ran against the nation itself, for whom the revolutionaries claimed to speak. Thus, from 1789, there was no space for pluralist, party politics in the French Revolution. As opposition was actually illegitimate and counter-revolutionary, so it could never entirely reveal itself: it also had to be conspiratorial. For Furet, this anxiety over conspiracy was the inevitable product of the revolutionaries' monolithic doctrine of national sovereignty. Belief in one 'universal, omnipresent and omnipotent' counter-revolutionary plot was pervasive throughout the revolutionary years until it made its ultimate expression in the surveillance, repression and killing of the Terror.⁷

Among the most important conspiracies denounced during the Revolution was the 'Foreign Plot' of the Year II (1793-1794). Its significance lies, firstly, in that it arose during the Terror itself and had a fatal impact upon its course. Secondly, the evidence available suggests that revolutionary fears were more than just the product of ideology or over-active Jacobin imaginations. The conspiracy was initially denounced by two deputies of the National Convention, independently of each other. The dramatist and friend of Danton, Fabre d'Églantine, came forward first, around 12 October 1793. The sleazy former Capuchin friar, François Chabot, awoke Robespierre early on 14 November to offer his own version.

Fabre made his denunciation before a special meeting, which he had requested, of ten members of the two governing committees (General Security and Public Safety), including Robespierre. He claimed to have uncovered a plot led by revolutionary extremists who were, in fact, working for the enemy. The people he named were left-wing opponents of the government who believed that the Terror was not going far enough to prosecute the war and eliminate the domestic enemies of the Revolution. These extremists were known as 'Hébertists' after the journalist Jacques-René Hébert, whose popular paper *Le Père Duchesne* made a habit of calling for more executions, economic controls and a purge of moderates from the Convention. Their sources of power were the radical Cordeliers Club, the Paris municipality (the Commune) and the Ministry of War. From the first two institutions, in particular, they could influence and even direct the physical force of the Revolution, the Parisian popular movement. Those whom Fabre named were Desfieux, Dubuisson and Pereira, who, he claimed, were the puppets of the slippery Belgian financier Pierre Proli and the Moravian Frey brothers, whom he accused of being agents in the pay of Austria. These foreigners were being protected, in turn, by three corrupt deputies to the Convention: Chabot, Julien de Toulouse and Hérault de Séchelles. The first two, neither of whom could be labelled Hébertists, had been members of the Committee of General Security until they were voted off on 14 September. Chabot, in fact, was a bitter enemy of the Hébertists and owed his dismissal from the Committee to their pressure. Hérault, whose attitudes towards the war and whose political relationships did suggest *hébertisme*, was still a member of the Committee of Public Safety. Fabre suggested that Hérault ran a spy network on behalf of the foreign powers and that Proli and the Frey brothers pushed Desfieux, Dubuisson and Pereira into greater and greater extremes in order to discredit the Revolution.⁸

Far-fetched as Fabre's story appears, the government treated it with respect, if only because it appeared to confirm some awkward suspicions about some of the individuals named. Only on 10 October, the Committee of General Security had received a letter from a German named Jean-Baptiste Wilhelm, advising that the Frey brothers be closely watched.

Chabot had married their sister, Léopoldine, on 6 October, with a dowry of 200,000 *livres*. When he announced this to the Jacobin club, it was whispered that this money had been supplied by himself as a means of hiding the fruits of his corrupt practices. Chabot's problems multiplied in the month after Fabre's denunciation. On 14 October, the Committee of General Security interrogated him about his financial dealings, although he was not yet arrested. On 11 November he was bitterly attacked in the Jacobin club by Hébert, who persuaded the society to establish a commission of enquiry into his behaviour.

Robespierre and his close ally Saint-Just had long had suspicions about Hérault, because of his lifestyle and his tendency to change political colouring with circumstances. Fabre's denunciation had destroyed what little confidence Hérault still enjoyed among his colleagues. Perhaps in an effort to sideline him, the Committee of Public Safety sent him on mission to Alsace at the end of October.⁹

Probably sensing the need to strike back at the charge of corruption, Chabot made his own denunciation on 14 November. Early in the morning, he woke Robespierre, who persuaded him to tell his story to the Committee of General Security, which Chabot did that same day. In his version, the plot aimed at corrupting the Convention and slandering those deputies who could not be bought, ultimately sowing such suspicion and hostility that the Revolution would destroy itself through bitter internal feuding. This would leave the way open for a restoration of the monarchy. The brains behind this conspiracy was a royalist, named the baron de Batz, who was financed by the British government.

Among those whom Chabot implicated were his Hébertist enemies, known royalists and associates of Batz and the deputies Delaunay d'Angers and Julien de Toulouse, both of whom were, along with Chabot and Fabre themselves, members of the Convention's Finance Commission. Corruption in the Convention, Chabot declared, was to begin with an attempt by these deputies to blackmail the East India Company. Batz, Delaunay and Julien had tried to recruit him to this scheme in August, and, naturally, he joined in just so that he could expose it later. The Convention voted to liquidate the company on 24 August 1793, but the precise terms had not been worked out. Delaunay and his accomplices therefore threatened the directors that they would ensure closure on such harsh terms that they would be ruined. They would, however, propose a softer decree of liquidation in return for a substantial sum of money.¹⁰

Chabot's denunciation, although he named different people, seemed to confirm Fabre's earlier tale. The first person he incriminated, therefore, was himself, because he had figured prominently in Fabre's version. Most of all, Chabot had provided some real evidence of corruption. On 8 October Delaunay d'Angers had indeed presented the bill specifying the terms of liquidation, proposing that the Company directors be allowed to distribute the assets among its creditors. None other than Fabre and Robespierre, however, had successfully amended the bill to ensure that this would be carried out by the Ministry of Finance. Cambon, another member of the commission, suggested, further, that the state not be held liable for the Company's debts. These two changes to Delaunay's bill made the law which emerged much less favourable to the Company. Fabre's involvement in the amendments suggests that he was not yet involved in the bribery which Chabot denounced.

The decree which was actually published was not the amended version, but one which added two provisions favourable to the Company and which suppressed the essence of Fabre's amendment. The implication was, of course, that Delaunay d'Angers had accepted a bribe from the Company, tried to ensure good terms for it and then, when the Convention amended his bill, he falsified the published version. For any draft decree to be formally published, its sponsors – in this case the members of the commission – were required to sign it. That included Fabre, who would surely notice the suppression of his own amendment. Chabot claimed that he was instructed to bribe Fabre with 100,000 *livres* to buy his signature. While Fabre did sign the false decree, Chabot never gave him the money: instead, when he made his denunciation on 14 November, he handed it over to the Committee of General Security as evidence.¹¹

Fabre still had the confidence of the government, because even by Chabot's dubious testimony he had not accepted the bribe. Fabre and Amar, a member of the Committee of General Security, were put in charge of the enquiry. Arrest warrants were issued for, among others, Chabot, Delaunay d'Angers, Julien de Toulouse, Proli, the Frey brothers, the baron de Batz, Desfieux, Pereira and Dubuisson, all of whom had been included in one or other denunciation. Batz and Julien de Toulouse escaped, but the others were imprisoned. There is little concrete evidence to suggest that this affair was anything more than a bribery scandal. Fabre may have made his denunciation to attack his Hébertist enemies, while Chabot, prodded by the Hébertist campaign against him in the Jacobins and by the accusations of corruption, probably grassed on his accomplices in order to save himself. The government, however, certainly believed that there was substance to both Fabre's and Chabot's broader claims.

Fabre's accusations against Proli, Dubuisson, Desfieux and Pereira seemed to be confirmed when, shortly after his denunciation, they joined in the iconoclastic assault on the Catholic Church, sponsored by the Hébertist Commune. Another foreigner was also involved: the Prussian Anacharsis Cloots, who was a deputy to the Convention and who supported some of the extreme policies of the Hébertists. Robespierre, in particular, feared that such atheist extremism would alienate the majority of the French population from the Revolution. He considered this campaign of 'dechristianisation' so damaging to the interests of the Republic that he claimed that it was sponsored by her enemies. Chabot's denunciation came in the middle of the Hébertist frenzy against religion and appeared to confirm Fabre's suggestions that there was some sort of broader conspiracy afoot. On 21 November, Robespierre publicly linked dechristianisation to the 'foreign plot'. It was, he declared 'the trap set for us by the enemies of the Republic and the cowardly emissaries of foreign tyrants'. He mentioned some of these agents by name: Dubuisson, Proli, Desfieux and Pereira, all of whom had been denounced by Fabre

and had been arrested a week before.¹² By this time, Fabre and his friend, the bullish Georges Danton, were ready to wage their own campaign against the Hébertists and against the Terror itself. On 22 November, Danton fired the first salvo when he called for fewer executions. For as long as Fabre's credibility with the Committees, and particularly with Robespierre, remained intact, the campaign of the Dantonists would be tolerated as it strengthened the government against the Hébertists.

Early in December, the Committee of Public Safety also received evidence to suggest that there was a leak in the government, as Fabre had claimed. The Foreign Minister received a nervous letter from the French envoy to Constantinople, Henin. Henin had received from his old friend, the Spanish ambassador to Venice, copies of two spy reports, describing the meetings of the Committee of Public Safety. Henin forwarded the documents to Paris, explaining that he was worried because he himself had been mentioned in them. These bulletins were in fact part of a series of twenty-eight which were dispatched from Venice to Francis Drake, the British envoy to Genoa, between 2 September 1793 and 22 June 1794. Drake dutifully sent these bulletins to Grenville, the Foreign Secretary, but the latter does not appear to have taken them seriously. He was right not to: the bulletins have many errors, even getting the personnel of the French government wrong.¹³

As Colin Duckworth has shown, the author of these dubious documents was, in fact, the comte d'Antraigues, who was working on the staff of the Spanish embassy in Venice. He was an active French royalist, tired of apparent British reluctance to support an aggressive campaign of domestic counter-revolution within France. D'Antraigues's job was to receive and analyse intelligence reports, which would then be sent on to Madrid. The count, however, also passed information to Drake, with the aim of coaxing the British government into a more active role in supporting French royalism. Among this information he filed the false reports on the Committee of Public Safety, which describe fictitious discussions of plans to foment insurrection and assassination in Britain. D'Antraigues was trying to provoke the British government into retaliatory action.¹⁴

Given the factual mistakes which litter even the two bulletins which were now in its possession, the French government ought not to have been alarmed. Yet they were unaware that d'Antraigues was the author and, of course, the existence of two spy reports suggested that there may have been other, more accurate, ones. Hérault de Séchelles, already accused by Fabre in October, was the obvious suspect. He had, moreover, employed as his assistants none other than Dubuisson, Proli, Desfieux and Péreira. Hérault was not arrested until 17 March 1794, probably because as a member of the Committee of Public Safety he was too powerful, but he was recalled from Alsace on 11 December. When he was finally put on trial, ironically with the Dantonists, one of the bulletins was used as evidence against him by the Revolutionary Tribunal, although the government thought it best to doctor it and add his name to the script.¹⁵

The presence of counter-revolutionary agents in France was not just a mere fantasy. The baron de Batz did exist and, like a genuine 'Scarlet Pimpernel', had tried to rescue Louis XVI on his way to execution in January 1793. He also planned a similar attempt to save the queen, who went to her death in October. Yet his precise links to the financial corruption were well covered up, if they existed at all.¹⁶ Intriguingly, Arnaud de Lestapis has shown that the revolutionary government scrupulously avoided citing Batz by name, even though they knew of his activities, between mid-November 1793 (when Chabot made his denunciation) and early April 1794. By that time, the government's main opponents, the Hébertists and the moderate Dantonists, had been guillotined. Lestapis suggests that both the Hébertists and the Dantonists had a tacit agreement not to mention Batz, because both sides may have had shady dealings with the baron. Norman Hampson implies that Batz may have enjoyed some protection from the government for a period, possibly because he was working as a double agent.¹⁷ Whatever the case, the behaviour of the government was surprisingly quiet towards someone who, more than anyone, ought to have pricked their phobia for conspiracy.

At first, it was the Hébertist opposition which suffered for alleged connections with the 'foreign plot'. Their role in dechristianisation in the last quarter of 1793 seemed to lend weight to Fabre's suggestion, accepted by Robespierre, that their extremism was a tactic to discredit the Revolution. Danton, Fabre, and their newspaper, the *Vieux Cordelier* written by the young, vibrant journalist, Camille Desmoulins, were therefore protected by Robespierre as they waged war on the Hébertists. In

December, it looked even as if the government might be considering softening the Terror, if not dismantling it altogether, as the Dantonists wanted. Danton supported the government in the Convention when it secured passage of the law of 14 Frimaire (4 December). This centralised the machinery of repression, making it subject to the Committee of Public Safety. In so doing, it brought an end to the worst excesses of the Terror in provincial France.

The tragic turning point, not just in the government's relations with the Dantonists, but perhaps also in the entire course of the Terror, was the discovery that Fabre himself was implicated in the 'foreign plot'. On 4 January 1794, the Committee of General Security finally got around to inspecting Delaunay d'Angers's papers in his apartment on the Boulevard Montmartre. There they found evidence which suggested that Fabre, too, had been bribed to sign the false East India Company decree. His signature does appear on the offending document.¹⁸

Michel Eude, however, has examined the papers carefully and suggests that Fabre may, in fact, have been merely duped. Chabot secured Fabre's signature by waking him very early in the morning, perhaps on 15 October, and presented him with a copy, not of the final decree, but of another *bill* ('*projet de décret*') regarding liquidation. Eude suggests that Fabre signed it, possibly assuming that, as a bill, it would be submitted to another vote in the Convention. Chabot, however, went to see Delaunay, claiming that he had bribed Fabre with the 100,000 *livres*. Delaunay took the document and crossed out the words '*projet de*' at the top, leaving only '*décret*'. In doing so, he had transformed the bill which Fabre had signed into something purporting to be an actual law. He also made further, minor, changes favourable to the East India Company and, above Fabre's signature, squeezed in the words '*ont signés*' (signed).¹⁹ A point which Eude does not explain is why he added the names of all his other colleagues on the Finance Commission, including Chabot's, in his own handwriting, when he and Chabot had gone through so much trouble to secure Fabre's. None the less, the changes made to the text are obvious and, while the evidence supporting Eude's claims is ambiguous, there is at least a suggestion of foul play by Delaunay.

If Fabre was indeed innocent, then what followed is doubly tragic. Robespierre, faced with the evidence of Fabre's corruption, denounced him in the Jacobin club on 8 January. He was arrested four days later. To Robespierre, Fabre's campaign for clemency and an end to Terror appeared to be nothing more than an effort to escape punishment for his own misdoings. Robespierre was not a dictator: he could not decide the policies of the Committee of Public Safety alone, but he exerted persuasive moral authority, both in the government and in the Convention. There were already members of the Committee, like Billaud-Varenne and Collot d'Herbois, who, extremists themselves, were ready to place the necks of Fabre and Danton under the guillotine blade. As long as Robespierre defended the Dantonists they could be kept in check. Now he abandoned them and with it, their campaign for 'indulgence'. It took an Hébertist resurgence in March to force the government to make their first move. Robespierre's closest ally on the Committee, Saint-Just, appeared before the Convention on 13 March and described a sinister foreign conspiracy against the Republic.²⁰ The Hébertists were arrested the next day, and the popular movement, their natural reservoir of support, did not mobilise in their defence, precisely because the government could present them as foreign agents. When Hébert and his associates were tried and then executed between 21 and 24 March, it was with a motley collection of foreigners including Cloots, Proli and a Dutch banker named Joannes de Kock. The others accused by Fabre - Dubuisson, Pereira and Dufourmy - also perished.²¹

The extremists were still being tried when the government prepared its next move. Robespierre insisted in the Jacobins that the moderates were equally embroiled in the foreign conspiracy.²² Danton, Desmoulins and others were arrested in the night of 30-31 March and put on trial with Fabre, Delaunay d'Angers, Hérault de Séchelles, the Frey brothers, their Danish associate, and a Spanish businessman named Andreas Guzman. The indictment mentioned Chabot's marriage to Léopoldine Frey and the suspicious nature of his dowry. Fabre, Chabot and Delaunay were found guilty of 'having sold their opinion as representatives of the people'.²³

The government, in other words, had used the myth of the 'foreign plot' to destroy both sides of the opposition. Once both the Hébertists and the Dantonists had been killed, the Committee of Public Safety's main political spokesmen, Robespierre, Saint-Just and Barère, could use this theme to imply

that any further dissent might lead to the scaffold on the Place de la Révolution. Claims that the plot persisted also allowed the government to emphasise that Terror and rule by the committees was still needed. The foreign conspiracy therefore not only became a rhetorical tool which cowed opposition, but also justified the intensification of the Terror.

On 10 June 1794, in response to two assassination attempts, one on Collot d'Herbois, the other on Robespierre, the Convention voted the law of 22 Prairial. Among other clauses, this decree denied any defence to those arraigned before the Revolutionary Tribunal. Laced with fear of counter-revolution, peppered with suggestions of espionage and corruption, Robespierre warned the legislators of 'that countless multitude of foreign agents' which abounded across the face of the struggling Republic.²⁴ While this law was provoked by the assassination attempts, it was certainly justified by the rhetoric of conspiracy, as François Furet's thesis suggests. The law drastically altered the face of the Terror. In the fifteen months between its foundation in March 1793 and the Prairial law, the Revolutionary Tribunal in Paris had sent 1251 people to their deaths. In the seven weeks between 10 June 1794 and the end of July, when the Terror ended, 1376 victims were decapitated. The daily rate of execution, in other words, had multiplied more than tenfold.²⁵ The failure of Fabre's and Danton's campaign for clemency had a high price in human life. The political situation which made the law of 22 Prairial possible may be traced to Fabre's implication in the foreign plot.

The idea of a single conspiracy uniting all opponents of the government certainly came from this revolutionary obsession, but it was not the sole or even the main engine which drove the Terror. The 'foreign plot', which appeared to have an important impact on the course of the Terror, perhaps even destroying a chance of an early end to it, was not only the product of the revolutionaries' imagination. There was certainly corruption and, if the people implicated by the denunciations of Fabre and Chabot were not all part of a tightly-woven conspiracy, some of the individuals – Batz, the Frey brothers, Proli, for example – were certainly involved in activities at which we can only get a glimpse.

This last point suggests that theories which try to explain the Terror primarily with reference to the theatrical world of revolutionary discourse are missing part of the picture: what went on backstage. At the heart of revolutionary politics were not just the very public expressions of rhetoric and ideology, but also a shadier, venal world which also exerted its influence. The law of 22 Prairial was made possible in the long run not only by the rhetoric of conspiracy, but also by the embroilment of politicians in a very real financial scandal – and possibly something more. Robespierre and his colleagues certainly drew on the phobia for plots to embellish what they knew for certain, but it was the more concrete, if ambiguous, evidence of Fabre's involvement in the bribery of the East India Company which led Robespierre to break with the campaign for 'indulgence' in the first place. This change of course early in January 1794 suggests in itself that this most public of men and his colleagues were not being driven only by the logic of revolutionary ideology, but were also fumbling their way through the murkier world of revolutionary politics. The very fact that we do not know everything that went on in the backrooms suggests that we cannot explain the Terror – or even the course of the Revolution itself – solely in terms of its public face.

NOTES

- 1 L.-S. Mercier, *Le Nouveau Paris* (Paris, An VII/1799), ch. lxxix.
- 2 See, however, some 'neo-Marxist' ripostes, such as George C. Comninel, *Rethinking the French Revolution: Marxism and the Revisionist Challenge* (London, 1987); George Rudé, *The French Revolution* (London, 1988) and Eric Hobsbawm's polemic, *Echoes of the Marseillaise: Two Centuries Look Back on the French Revolution* (New Brunswick, N.J., 1990).
- 3 Key essays in this development may be found in the collection edited by Keith Baker, François Furet, Colin Lucas and Mona Ozouf, *The French Revolution and the Creation of Modern Political Culture* (4 vols.) (Oxford, 1987-1994).
- 4 See, for example, G. Lefebvre, *The French Revolution* (2 vols.) (New York, 1962-1964), ii, pp. 94-95, 116-124; Rudé, *The French Revolution*, pp. 100-101.
- 5 F. Furet, *Penser la Révolution française* (Paris, 1978), pp. 103-119; L. Hunt, *Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution* (London, 1986), pp. 44-48; S. Schama, *Citizens: a Chronicle of the French Revolution* (New York, 1989), p. 447.
- 6 T.C.W. Blanning, *The French Revolutionary Wars 1787-1802* (London, 1996), p. 139.
- 7 Furet, *Penser la Révolution française*, pp. 90-95; Furet, 'The Terror', P. Jones (ed.), *The French Revolution in Social and Political Perspective* (London, 1996), pp. 450-452. See also Hunt, *Politics, Culture, Class*, pp. 38-45. The idea that the Terror was inherent in revolutionary ideology had also been developed by Jacob Talmon in *The Origins of Totalitarian Democracy: Political Theory and Practice during the French Revolution and Beyond* (1952) (Harmondsworth, 1986), pp. 107-128.
- 8 A. Mathiez, *La Conspiration de l'Étranger* (Paris, 1918), pp. 1-13; Mathiez, 'Le Comité de Salut Public et le Complot de l'Étranger (octobre-novembre 1793)', *Annales historiques de la Révolution française*, iii (1926), pp. 319-320.
- 9 Archives Nationales (hereafter, AN), W//342, dossier 648 ('Lacroix, Danton et autres'), 1ère partie, liasse 1; Mathiez, 'Le Comité de Salut Public et le Complot de l'Étranger', pp. 309, 322-323, 325.
- 10 N. Hampson, 'François Chabot and his Plot', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th Ser., xxvi (1976), pp. 4-6; A. de Lestapis, *La 'Conspiration de Batz' (1793-1794)* (Paris, 1969), pp. 11-24.
- 11 AN, W//342, dossier 648, 3ème partie, liasse 9; M. Eude, 'Une Interprétation "non-Mathiézienne" de l'affaire de la Compagnie des Indes', *Annales Historiques de la Révolution française*, liii (1981), pp. 240-242; Hampson, 'François Chabot and his Plot', p. 1.
- 12 M. Robespierre, (ed. M. Bouloiseau, G. Lefebvre, A. Soboul), *Oeuvres de Maximilien Robespierre* (10 vols.) (Paris, 1939-1967), x, pp. 197, 199-200.
- 13 Historical Manuscripts Commission, *The Manuscripts of J. B. Fortescue, Esq., preserved at Dropmore* (10 vols.) (London, 1892-1927), ii, pp. 456-457, 460, 462-463; Mathiez, *La Conspiration de l'Étranger*, pp. 158-162.
- 14 C. Duckworth, *The D'Antraigues Phenomenon. The Making and Breaking of a Revolutionary Royalist Espionage Agent* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Averro, 1986), pp. 204, 220.
- 15 Mathiez, *La Conspiration de l'Étranger*, pp. 165, 167.
- 16 Batz, Baron René de, *Études sur la Contre-Révolution. Les Conspirations et la fin de Jean, Baron de Batz, 1793-1822* (Paris, 1911), pp. 148-164.
- 17 Lestapis, *La 'Conspiration de Batz'*, pp. 106-107; Hampson, 'François Chabot and his Plot', pp. 12-13.
- 18 AN, W//342, dossier 648, 3ème partie, liasse 9, pièce 14.
- 19 'Une Interprétation "non-Mathiézienne" de l'affaire de la Compagnie des Indes', pp. 241-242. The title of the article refers to Albert Mathiez, who believed that Fabre was guilty as charged and that, above all, his ally Danton was corrupt.
- 20 Archives Parlementaires, lxxxvi, pp. 434-442.
- 21 *Gazette Nationale, ou le Moniteur Universel*, (1794), No. 183 (3 Germinal/23 March).
- 22 Robespierre, *Oeuvres*, x, p. 411.
- 23 H. Wallon, *Histoire du Tribunal Révolutionnaire de Paris, avec le Journal de ses Actes* (6 vols.) (Paris, 1880-1882), iii, pp. 157, 159, 187.
- 24 Robespierre, *Oeuvres*, x, p. 485.
- 25 H. Gough, *The Terror in the French Revolution* (Basingstoke & London, 1998), p. 57.

Turning Points or Continuity? German foreign policy between the wars.

SABINE WICHERT

If there were any turning points in the history of German foreign policy in the first half of the twentieth century, they are more likely to be found at the end of the first and half way through the Second World War rather than at any point in between. It was the Paris peace settlement, less the Versailles Treaty itself, which provided German foreign policy makers with potential opportunities which previous governments could only have dreamt of; and it was the American entry into the second war and Germany's defeat at Stalingrad the following year which ended the exploitation of these opportunities. In order to understand 'turning points' or important moments in history (which, perhaps needless to say, only emerge with hindsight and are rarely visible at the time they are supposed to have occurred), however, one has to take a longer perspective: how else could one understand their significance.

By 1914 European states were fairly well balanced against each other, if none of them could quite stand on its own. By and large any attempt at expansion within Europe would result in a European war which no government was quite willing to risk (notwithstanding the fact that many did just that in August of that year). The re-ordering of Europe which the Congress of Vienna had undertaken a hundred years before had prevented a major European conflagration. It is true, that the emergence of a united Germany in the last third of the century changed the balance and, as it would soon turn out, at the expense of France, but for most major states, or Great Powers as they were apt to be called, this did not weaken the overall balance. As the thriving industrial economy of Germany soon allowed her to become a Great Power as well and compete with the others, it appears necessary to look for a definition of this term and in turn for the essential ingredients which govern foreign policy making.

As Paul Kennedy has stressed¹, it is invariably the economic strength of a country which enables its military strength and hence determines its power status. While in pre-industrial times the size of the territory and its fertility were of prime importance, in order to provide and feed large armies, with industrialisation and the changes in the technology of war it brought, the ability to industrialise dictated the potential strength of a state, while size, though still important, was no longer the first determinant. So that a small, but highly industrialised country like Belgium could never become a Great Power again, while a large, but under-industrialised state like Russia could only remain a major power, if it succeeded in catching up with Western European industrialisation. The final test for Great Power status was thus the ability to win wars.

Every state will try to maximise its potential power and influence. It is the task of foreign policy makers to look after the interests of the state – and by definition that can only be self-interest – to maintain or improve its position in the context and within the constraints of domestic and international conditions. Its own real and potential strength has to be taken into account as much as that of its potential friends and enemies. Domestic restraints tend to be twofold: the real and potential economic and military strength of the state and, to a considerably lesser extent, public opinion which has to be persuaded or manipulated to support whatever is perceived by the decision makers to be in the best interest of the country.

The Second German Empire, established in 1871 and soon consolidated internally, had on the eve of the First World War economically drawn equal with Britain as one of the two most powerful Great Powers in Europe. Only the United States, which pursued an isolationist foreign policy and thus had not to be taken into account by Germany's foreign policy makers, was stronger. An extension of German power and influence in Europe was not possible without risking war, hence the overall rather futile attempts to gain a firmer image as an imperial power which brought ultimately neither economic nor military advantages. It was only during the First World War that plans for European, primarily eastern, expansion surfaced. The intention was to use the disturbed and unsettled European boundaries

to carve out a Germany that would be supreme for a long time and possibly forestall the inevitable rise of Russia as the major European power.²

The American entry into the war put an end to these dreams and Germany was settled with a peace treaty which reduced her immediate power considerably, but left her economic potential almost completely intact. If the dismantlement of the two bordering empires to the east and southeast and the weakened state of its former enemies in Europe are taken into account, however, her potential was rather increased. She may have lost her colonies and large areas of German territories along her borders together with much of their population, she may have had to return Alsace-Lorraine to France and her army may have been drastically cut, but her long-term potential had been enhanced. If she could recover economically, she would be considerably stronger than France and might be able to renegotiate her lost territories. Given the weakness of the successor states which surrounded her, this was something easily and promisingly aspired to. One should therefore expect the drift of German foreign policy after Versailles to go in the direction of re-establishing full sovereignty with subsequent attempts to return to the borders of 1914 or even beyond.

It should then not come as any surprise that the foreign policy makers of the Weimar Republic tried to resist, subvert, circumvent, undermine, revise and/or destroy the conditions of the Versailles treaty that severely restricted German sovereignty and thus made it almost impossible to pursue any independent foreign policy. But initially the outlook was bleak. Even though German politicians and the public were enraged by the perceived hypocrisy of the American peacemakers who appeared to apply their idealistic principles to everyone but Germany, it was the presence of the United States in Europe which made any German recovery unlikely. Of the victorious powers it was only the USA who could enforce the treaties or even make the League of Nations a viable instrument of foreign policy enforcement, while Britain and France were recovering from the ravages of the war and Russia encountered the turmoil of civil war. When America rejected the covenant of the League and thus signalled its political withdrawal from Europe, the long-term prospects for Germany improved. Furthermore, Turkey soon showed that a persistent resistance could achieve results.

Given the domestic difficulties that the early governments of the Weimar Republic had to face, its policy of 'fulfilment' which tried to show the victors that while governments were willing to fulfil the conditions of Versailles, the economy simply could not bear it, made a great deal of sense. The continued pursuit of inflationary policies helped both the domestic social peace (by keeping wages cheap and thus maintaining full employment) and the foreign policy aim of having the demands for reparations diminished. Revision of the treaty and a return to the *status quo ante* was the major aim of all Weimar and, as I shall argue, Nazi foreign policy, but the timing, methods, priorities and extent was often disputed and varied according to circumstances and the personalities involved. The initial focus was not on territorial revision, but on economic consolidation.³ Only with greater economic security could diplomatic advances in other areas be undertaken. The treaty of Rapallo with the Soviet Union was an example where these two aspects could go hand in hand, but only because the Soviet Union, as Germany, was not a member of the League and thus not obliged to pay lip service to it. Economically Eastern Europe was as important to Germany as it was diplomatically. The German-Soviet alliance finally settled the potentially still open post-war accounts between the two countries, opened economic co-operation and diminished the importance of any French-Polish alliance. The importance of Rapallo must, however, not be exaggerated, since it was only possible because its participants found themselves outside the newly established international structures and were both still relatively weak.

Relations with Britain, but in particular France, went not so smoothly. French insistence on the payment of reparations and their willingness to coerce Germany into fulfilling her obligations under the treaty was much more difficult to handle. It must be remembered that the rift between British and French interests in the post-war world, first visible at the Paris negotiations, had widened with the American political departure. France's genuine concerns about her security *vis-à-vis* Germany had been increased, while Britain was worried about the imbalance that might be created on the continent, if Germany was allowed to grow too weak and France too strong. Britain needed to concentrate on her imperial trade, while France needed economic and diplomatic assurances that Germany would be kept

under control. When Poincaré thus ordered the occupation of the Ruhr area he acted against British opinion and in order to prevent Germany's long-term predominance over France. While technically a victory for France, the occupation showed that without American and British support the treaty could not be enforced which made it necessary to consider renegotiating it. With Britain in support and the USA primarily interested in the repayment of her war loans, this led to the negotiations which ended in the Locarno treaties.

For German foreign policy makers the occupation of the Ruhr area was a dangerous turn of events. Not only could she not afford passive resistance and its economic consequences for any length of time, but continued French occupation would effectively lose her much of this territory. When Stresemann ended the occupation, his primary aim was a national one: to prevent the loss of German lands to France. While for many years the nature and objectives of Stresemann's foreign policy were subject to much debate among historians, there is now an overall consensus that sees him as a nationalist and pragmatic politician whose prime aim was 'the restoration of Germany as a sovereign "great power" with equal rights.'⁴ If Britain was unwilling to allow French coercion of Germany, then it might be possible to renegotiate the Versailles treaty. Locarno was the beginning of this, but as far as the legitimacy of the treaty was concerned, also its end. Since the terms of the treaties merely confirmed what the Versailles treaty dictated, the difference between them was in the manner of their acceptance which implied legally that only those clauses freely signed by Germany were valid. With this the legitimacy of the rest of the Versailles treaty was at the very least very doubtful.

Looked at in these terms, Locarno was a defeat for France and a victory for Stresemann's attempts to replace the exploitation of difference between Britain and France and the resulting obstructionist foreign policy with one of reconciliation. The successive stages of this successful approach can be seen in the end of the Ruhr area occupation, the Dawes Plan, the Locarno treaties, the Treaty of Berlin, German membership in the League of Nations, and the Young Plan. The Dawes Plan brought American support for this approach. Stresemann considered economic co-operation with the USA crucial to the recovery of Germany's economic potential. Locarno appeared to satisfy France's need for security and was supported by Britain and America. It was the latter two countries' acquiescence that was considered necessary for any negotiated settlement of outstanding problems, in particular with regard to reparations and armaments issues. Locarno also had a defensive dimension: it prevented Franco-British agreements against Germany and with it German isolation. In the Treaty of Berlin Germany confirmed her neutrality and newly confirmed independence by committing it to friendship with the Soviet Union.

If the early years of foreign policymaking in the Weimar Republic had been dominated by attempts to reduce, or at least regularise reparation payments and thus focus on economic recovery, the mid-twenties saw the emphasis move to more political aims and the recovery of territory still under foreign occupation. Stresemann certainly aimed for the recovery of the Saarland and the abolition of military control within Germany. After that the re-negotiation of the eastern frontiers would move onto the agenda. Only by this step-by-step approach could German power be restored. For Stresemann, European peace and treaty revision were interdependent. Most historians agree that he did not consider military power as an option. To start with Germany was too weak for any such pursuit, but even an economically fully recovered country would not be able to stand up to the combined military power of the Western states. Thus co-operation with the Western powers was a *sine qua non* for Stresemann's foreign policy. It was after all Germany's eastern frontiers that had been more permanently damaged and needed eventually to be recovered. While France had tried to pre-empt this at Locarno, Britain had shown little interest, so that the continuing division between the former allies could still be exploited. The Treaty of Berlin implied further reassurances for this long-term aim.

It appears then that the recovery of former German strength through the revision of the peace treaty was the main aim of all Weimar foreign policy, first and foremost conducted in an economic context through reductions in the reparation demands and American investment in the German economy and followed soon by diplomatic moves to create a climate in which Germany could conduct negotiations on the conditions of the treaty as an equal power. The Republic only lasted for little more than thirteen years, but it was already perfectly conceivable that in the long term Germany might very well be able

to expand beyond her borders of 1914. While the pace of revisionism was speeded up under Stresemann's successors, the aim remained the same. Brüning's, and even more so Papen's and Schleicher's foreign policies may have been more outspokenly nationalist, but this may have had more to do with the dominance of economic issues on the international scene and the concomitant domestic climate than with real policy aspirations. On the other hand it was the Depression which weakened the former allies even further and thus made it more likely that Brüning's more aggressive bid for an early solution to the reparation and armaments issues could be successful.

Brüning's foreign policy did indeed show a more forceful manner than that of his predecessor, but it would be difficult to argue that he harboured military intentions. He was certainly less willing to accept the continuing ties of reparations and he wanted to end German disarmament. The domestic and international climate, weakened by the economic difficulties of the time, made it easier to pursue what were essentially Stresemann's aims by more aggressive methods. The Hoover-Moratorium which postponed war debt payments and the Disarmament conference of the following year which demanded general disarmament down to Germany's level, may thus have come as the result of financial despair throughout the capitalist world, but they could still be portrayed at home as a success of a more aggressive approach in German foreign policy. When the Lausanne conference finally effectively ended all reparation payments, Brüning was no longer in office, but his continued revisionist foreign policy had clearly been successful.

Most historians argue that the early thirties saw a transitional period in German foreign policy, a turn towards more assertive nationalistic aims, which then blended into the even more forceful pursuit of these ends by Hitler. He, it is argued almost invariably, broke with the traditions established by Weimar's policy makers and followed a radically different foreign policy, even though this only became apparent after some years into his rule. Some have gone as far as talking of a 'diplomatic revolution'⁵. If one accepts the principles and aims of all foreign policy as outlined above, however, it can be argued that Germany's foreign policy during the Third Reich was in direct continuation of that of the Weimar Republic. Only now it could be pursued under much more favourable circumstances, since the full benefits of Germany's improved post-war position finally came into play. The only radical difference in Hitler's foreign policy was not in his aims – and there is still some debate about their ultimate dimension – but in their content. That is to say, the inclusion of an overt and extreme racial dimension last encountered more or less overtly during the imperialism of European powers in the previous century. But this is the only aspect where there is indeed a return to 'outmoded' aims of a previous period.

Whether one tends to support 'intentionalist' or 'functionalist' interpretations of Nazi Germany⁶, foreign policy making would still have to follow the same basic rule, being restrained by domestic and international conditions and ultimately determined by the economic strength that sustained it. Whatever Hitler may have intended as his ultimate aim would still have to negotiate the same difficulties as a more pragmatic, improvised, opportunistic or experimental foreign policy. There can be no doubt that he wanted Germany to achieve its greatest power potential, and on that lowest common denominator at least, he did not differ from any of his predecessors. This positive aim, propagated in terms of the all-powerful 'thousand-year Reich', was accompanied by a negative ideological dressing of anti-bolshevism and antisemitism. While it is no longer possible to understand Hitler entirely as a 'mere' power politician, as A.J.P. Taylor tried to⁷, since varying degrees of ideological motivation have to be taken into account in any interpretation, he was and had to be that, too, in the first and last instance. As politician he could only continue with what foreign policy he had inherited from his predecessors. In domestic as in foreign policy he depended, at least initially, on the support of the traditional elites who were in favour of an assertive foreign policy stance. No clear turning point can be found here. The degree of continuity then needs a little closer attention.

The first break with the past might be seen in Nazi Germany's departure from the disarmament conference in Geneva and the subsequent withdrawal from the League of Nations in October 1933. Yet Germany had been committed to rearmament before 1933 and the League had become an obvious irrelevance for major power brokers for many years. After all, the Locarno treaties had not come about by the good services of that institution, nor had the resolution of the reparations issue. In fact it was

an indication of strength to be able openly to disregard the League, even though everyone felt obliged, for reasons of public opinion of the domestic as well as the international kind, to pay lip service to it. It was this latter practice which Hitler openly defied, accusing the Western democracies of hypocrisy which in turn served his own public opinion needs.

Not unrelated was what appeared to be a reversal of Germany's relations with Poland and the Soviet Union which was completed by January 1934. Here, too, one can observe more of a change in tactic than one of substance, but also an underlying speeding-up process. Where the foreign policy makers of the Weimar Republic had thought of piecemeal negotiations to rectify Germany's eastern borders and then possibly considering further expansion, Hitler appears to have taken a longer perspective: if the long-term aim was an expansion into the territory of the Soviet Union, it might be seen as of greater advantage to have an alliance with the anti-Russian Polish government than with the Soviet Union itself. The one truly consistent aim of Nazi foreign policy from the moment of the take-over was indeed its anti-Soviet stand. But from Stresemann onwards it is also possible to see the good relations with the Soviet Union as a diplomatic necessity rather than inherent in German foreign policy aims. After all the eastern borders were considered of greater significance than the western ones, and in the long term much easier to renegotiate, once relations with France had been sorted out.

While relations with the Eastern powers thus changed, towards the West Hitler initially followed the practice of the Weimar Republic. His long-term planning envisaged an alliance with Britain and Italy against the Soviet Union in the first instance, but also threatening France. The bilateral naval agreement with Britain of 1935 seemed to be moving successfully in that direction, although the failure to achieve the desired overall alliance with Britain was clearly Hitler's greatest foreign policy failure in the thirties. Partly in response to the Franco-Soviet pact of 1935, but also exploiting the diplomatic upheaval created by Mussolini's Abyssinian adventure, the reoccupation of the Rhineland was the first militarily risky move Nazi Germany undertook. But given French weakness and Britain's lack of interest, it was a success. This, too, cannot be seen as a break with previous foreign policy: tidying up the remaining restrictions on Germany's western borders was on the cards since Locarno and had been reinforced by the conditions that came with the Young plan.

A not dissimilar point of revising the Versailles treaty can be seen in Nazi Germany's relations with Austria which were initially only restrained by Italian interests and the perceived need to keep good relations with Mussolini. The annexation of Austria, although primarily insisted on for economic reasons by Goering, was certainly something that almost every Weimar politician would have welcomed. Given the attitude of the majority of the Austrian population towards the Paris peace settlement, it did not even involve any military risk, since Mussolini, as it turned out, no longer felt in a position to object. The Sudeten crisis of 1938, on the other hand, was a return to the high-risk policy of 1936. Hitler's intention of subduing Czechoslovakia completely by military action was only delayed by the Munich conference. While the traditional elites were worried about the element of risk in Hitler's planning – and domestically some purges of the most relevant people took place – they had no principle objections to the direction in which Hitler's foreign policy was moving. The same could be said for the attack on Poland.

As Hitler's risky foreign policy proved successful, so the restrictions on his decision making diminished, both domestically and in international terms. As he grew stronger at home, he gained in support and it was easier to silence any remaining opposition; and the stronger Germany grew as a state the less likely she was to encounter international opposition, as witnessed in the Munich conference. The initial dynamics inherent in the methods of Hitler's foreign policy making instigated diplomatic upheaval and an arms race which in turn reinforced the dynamics and required ever greater speed and adventurous daring in executing the policy. The continuity with Weimar was guaranteed through the continuing support of the conventional elites. Kershaw has proposed that 'the evidence suggests ... that German expansionism in the 1930s was an inevitability'⁸, which only leaves the methods and speed of Hitler's foreign policy as distinct from that of the Weimar Republic. The qualitative change introduced into this policy, namely the inclusion of an extreme form of 19th century racism, came only with, and partly at least as a result of the European war that Hitler started when he attacked Poland. While extraneous to any foreign policy aim, yet part and parcel of the making of this

particular one, it is difficult to decide whether or not this constituted a substantial break in German foreign policy of the period. The definite break, however, came with Hitler's over-stretching of Germany's economic and thus military abilities and the dynamics he had engendered began to turn against him.

NOTES

- 1 Kennedy, Paul, *The rise and fall of the great powers. Economic change and military conflict from 1500 to 2000*. New York 1988.
- 2 Fischer, Fritz, *War of illusions*, London 1975. See also Fischer, Fritz, *From Kaiserreich to Third Reich. Elements of continuity in German history*. London 1986.
- 3 Kolb, Eberhard, *The Weimar Republic*. London 1988, has a good summary of the historiography. Also useful Heiber, Helmut, *The Weimar Republic*. Oxford 1993.
- 4 Kolb, op.cit., p. 175.
- 5 Weinberg, Gerhard, *The foreign policy of Hitler's Germany. Diplomatic revolution in Europe 1933-36*. London and Chicago 1970.
- 6 Kershaw, Ian, *The Nazi dictatorship. Problems and perspectives of interpretation*. Third edition, London 1993, is still the best of its kind in English.
- 7 Taylor, A.J.P., *The origins of the Second World War*. Harmondsworth 1971.
- 8 Kershaw, op. cit., p.122.

The Czech Crisis of 1938: Key Turning Point on the Road to the Second World War

DR FRANK McDONOUGH

The Czech crisis of 1938, which led to the Munich agreement was a crucial turning point on the road to the Second World War. The agreement prevented the outbreak of a major European War in September 1938, but it also brought Britain and France directly into the crisis in central and eastern Europe which Adolf Hitler's actions had escalated through the occupation of Austria in February 1938. At the centre of the Czech crisis was the determination of Neville Chamberlain, the British Prime Minister, who believed through a policy of appeasing German grievances left behind by the Treaty of Versailles that Germany would live at peace with the rest of Europe.

In 1938, Czechoslovakia consisted of a number of diverse nationalities, amalgamated into a multi ethnic nation state by the peace settlement of 1919. It was one of the few democracies left in eastern Europe, led by Edouard Benes, a leading figure in the League. Yet conflict between different national groups in the Czech republic was acute. Among these groups- who included Poles, Hungarians and Rumanians, were approximately 3.5 million German speakers residing in a border frontier with Germany and Austria, dubbed the Sudetenland. During the 1930s, a Nazi style Sudeten German Party, led by Konrad Henlein, which gained financial support from Hitler, and demanded greater autonomy for the Sudeten region, had gained enormous electoral support. On 24 April 1938, Henlein outlined his famous 'Karlsbad Demands' which demanded the recognition of the Sudetenland as a zone of settlement, with the right to profess membership 'in the German race'. In other words, Henlein and his supporters wanted complete autonomy from the Czech state.¹ The Czech government was willing to cede autonomy in local government, and to safeguard minority rights, but not independence. After all, the Sudeten area was a key border region with natural mountain defences, and heavily defended fortifications.

It was, however, hard to deny that the Sudeten Germans had genuine grievances, which enabled Henlein to come to London, in May 1938, and gain valuable support for the Sudeten case. The Czech government found it more difficult to arouse sympathy, Jan Masaryk, the Czech Minister in London, claimed he spent a great deal of energy trying to convince everyone Czechoslovakia was not a 'contagious' disease. But what really made the Czech crisis so dangerous to European peace was the existence of the Franco-Czech alliance (1925), and a Czech pact of mutual assistance with France and the Soviet Union which promised that if Germany attacked Czechoslovakia, and France intervened, then so would the Soviet Union.

In the light of the knowledge that the Czech crisis could produce a European War, the British government could not remain completely aloof. In March 1938, the British Cabinet discussed policy towards Czechoslovakia. At this meeting, it became clear that most British Ministers did not see Eastern Europe as a vital British interest. Neville Chamberlain viewed Czechoslovakia as indefensible, if Hitler wished to absorb it, and he did not think a European War should be fought to save one small country. 'You only have to look at the map', Chamberlain wrote in his diary 'to see that nothing that France or we could possibly do could possibly save Czechoslovakia from being overrun by the Germans if they wanted to do it'. From the very beginning, Chamberlain wanted to secure a peaceful solution.² To convince the Cabinet that Czechoslovakia was not worth fighting for, Chamberlain asked the Chiefs of Staff to examine the military implications of a German assault on Czechoslovakia, but advised them to exclude the possible military strength of the Soviet Union from their calculations. The Chiefs of Staff produced a report which argued that German forces would defeat Czechoslovakia in weeks, and that Czechoslovakia could only be liberated by success in a long and bloody European War. Armed with this military evidence, Chamberlain easily gained Cabinet support for his view that the Czech crisis should be solved by negotiation.³ On 22 March 1938, Chamberlain summed up the agreed policy of the Cabinet towards Czechoslovakia: 'We should endeavour to induce the Government of Czechoslovakia to apply themselves to producing a direct settlement with the Sudeten

Deutsch. We should persuade the French to use their influence to obtain such a settlement' In other words, British policy wanted the Czech government to solve the problems without the involvement of Germany. Underlying this policy were two key elements- Chamberlain's strong assumption that Britain should avoid fighting a European War to save Czechoslovakia; and the desire to keep the Hitler guessing about whether Britain would stand aside in the event of war over the issue.⁴

The next priority for Chamberlain was to win over the French government to this position. On 28 April 1938, Edouard Daladier, the French Prime Minister, and Georges Bonnet, the Foreign Minister, came to London. To Chamberlain's surprise, Daladier insisted that German policy aimed to tear up treaties and fully intended to destroy the Czech state. In such circumstances, he said that what the French government wanted was 'a determined policy' by Britain and France to resist Hitler during the Czech crisis. Chamberlain described these views to Cadogan as 'awful rubbish', and attempted to convince the French of the need to secure a negotiated settlement. It seems the French plan of action, was not as tough as Daladier's words. The French cabinet and public opinion were bitterly divided about taking strong action over Czechoslovakia. This was especially true of Bonnet, a keen supporter of appeasement who confessed that Britain and France could not 'sacrifice ten million in order to prevent 3.5 million Sudetens joining the Reich'. Indeed, Bonnet had already informed the Czech government that France would not go to war over the Sudeten issue.^{5 6}

The Czech crisis reached the first of many dangerous points in May 1938. It was reported that two Sudeten German motorcyclists had been shot dead by the Czech police. This led to rumours, largely inspired by the Czech government, that Hitler was about to use the incident as a pretext for a German invasion. It is clear the incident did not come out of the blue, but German evidence suggests no immediate plan of invasion existed. The French government, and the Soviet government both pledged support to the Czechs. Even Lord Halifax, the British Foreign Secretary was forced to send a stiff message to Berlin which warned that if force was used, Germany 'could not count upon this country being able to stand aside'.⁷ Of course, because Hitler had no plans to attack, the crisis blew over.

The two most important consequences of the 'May Crisis' were: to push the British government to adopt more strenuous efforts to find a peaceful solution of the Sudeten problem, and for Hitler to summon his generals on 28 May 1938, and order them to draw up plans for 'Case Green'- the invasion of Czechoslovakia, which was scheduled to occur on 1 October 1938.

The 'May Crisis' made Chamberlain even more determined to find a negotiated settlement. On 16 July 1938, Halifax suggested to the Foreign Policy Committee that, Britain should send a 'distinguished mediator' to investigate the Sudeten claims for self determination. This idea was accepted by Chamberlain who selected Lord Runciman, a Liberal, former President of the Board of Trade, and a shipping magnate, with no experience of high level diplomatic negotiation to visit Czechoslovakia in order to broker a settlement. The declared aim of the 'Runciman Mission', which arrived in Prague on 4 August 1938, was to find an internal solution. As Runciman investigated the problem, and he saw all the major figures involved in the dispute within Czechoslovakia, he became extremely sympathetic to the Sudeten desire for 'Home Rule'. In his report, Runciman placed the major share of the blame for the breakdown of talks on the Czech government, and recommended that the Sudeten Germans should be allowed the opportunity to join Nazi Germany.

In August 1938, war over Czechoslovakia seemed to be edging closer and as it did, control over British policy came more into the hands of the Prime Minister. The Cabinet met only once in August 1938, and little more than a handful of times in September 1938. The Foreign Policy Committee did not meet at all in July, August and September 1938. Parliament was not recalled until 28 September 1938 despite opposition pressure. During this period, the Prime Minister listened, perhaps unwisely, to the advice of Nevile Henderson, the British Ambassador in Berlin. 'However badly Germany behaves', wrote Henderson 'does not make the rights of the Sudeten any less justifiable'.⁸ Advice from those who disagreed with Chamberlain was not welcomed.

An incident which occurred in the summer of 1938 adds weight to this view. A number of German 'moderates' led by Colonel Beck, a leading figure on the German General Staff, sent Edward von Kleist-Schmenzin, a Prussian Conservative, to London as their emissary to warn Chamberlain not only of Hitler's definite plans to invade Czechoslovakia, but also of his future plans to attack France, and

eventually the Soviet Union. It was reported in these conversations that a strong Anglo-French line would force Hitler to back down, but Chamberlain thought these particular German 'moderates' were exaggerating, and he discounted their views because they conflicted with his own view that open threats of force would hasten the outbreak of war.⁹

In any case, Chamberlain had an idea of his own, rather grandly dubbed 'Plan Z' which reportedly 'rather took Halifax's breath away'. If the Runciman mission failed, Chamberlain intended to visit Hitler to find a negotiated settlement. A vital component in the plan would be surprise. The Cabinet, which met on 30 August 1938, in emergency session, were not told about 'Plan Z' but unanimously agreed to support the Chamberlain line: 'that we should not utter a threat to Herr Hitler that if he went into Czechoslovakia we should declare war upon him.'¹⁰

In September 1938, events in the Czech crisis moved at an exceptionally rapid pace. On 5 September 1938, the Czech government announced it would accept virtually all of the Karlsbad demands, but it made no difference. On 7 September 1938, *The Times* offered the opinion that it would be a good idea if the Czech government decided to cede the Sudetenland to Nazi Germany.¹¹ On 12 September 1938, Hitler whipped up his supporters into a frenzy at the annual Nuremberg rally by claiming the Sudeten Germans were not 'defenceless' and 'not alone'. Following Hitler's speech demonstrations broke out throughout the Sudeten area, but they did not attract widespread local support, and the Czech government was able to break them up. On 13 September 1938, the Czech government decided to introduce martial law in the area. At the point, Henlein fled to Germany, and the 'protection' of Hitler.

It was now that Chamberlain, without consulting the French government, put 'Plan Z' into action. He sent Hitler a telegram requesting an immediate meeting, which the Nazi Dictator, somewhat surprised, promptly accepted. It was the first visit by a British Prime Minister to Germany since Disraeli went to the Congress of Berlin in 1878, and returned proclaiming he had secured 'peace with honour.'

As Chamberlain prepared to leave for Germany, it is pretty evident he was already quite prepared to sanction Hitler's demands for the transfer of the Sudetenland to Germany. On 15 September 1938, Chamberlain, aged 69, boarded a Lockheed Electra aircraft, at the start of a seven hour journey to Munich, followed by a three hour car ride up the long and winding hills to meet Hitler at his mountain hideaway at Berchtesgaden. It was the start of an amazing display of personal diplomacy by Neville Chamberlain, which lasted just over a fortnight, and helped to prevent the outbreak of war in 1938.

The chief aim of British policy at this stage was to find out what Hitler's terms were for settling the crisis. The first meeting of Chamberlain and Hitler lasted for three hours in the company of Dr Paul Schmidt, Hitler's interpreter. Chamberlain was informed by the Nazi leader that he intended to 'stop the suffering' of the Sudeten Germans by force. In reply, Chamberlain asked Hitler what was required for a peaceful solution. Hitler demanded the transfer of all districts in Czechoslovakia with a 50% or above, German-speaking population. Chamberlain said he had nothing against the idea in principle, but would need to overcome 'practical difficulties' in order to gain acceptance of Hitler's demands.¹² 'I got the impression', Chamberlain said of his first meeting with Hitler, 'that here was a man who could be relied upon when he had given his word'¹³

After his return from Germany, Chamberlain told the Cabinet of his continuing belief that Hitler's aims were 'limited' to a solution of the Sudeten problem. As the French government harboured suspicions about Chamberlain's unilateral decision to arrange the Berchtesgaden meeting without consultation, it was agreed that joint Anglo-French action was required in the next crucial stage towards a negotiated settlement. As a result, French leaders were invited to 10 Downing Street.¹⁴ On 18 September 1938, Chamberlain met Daladier in order to persuade him to agree to the orderly transfer of the Sudeten areas to Germany. Daladier told Chamberlain that the French would only agree to support Hitler's demands in return for a British agreement to join the French alliance system in eastern Europe. Chamberlain neatly side-stepped this request, and was only prepared to join a general guarantee of Czechoslovakia. The major outcome of these talks was the creation of the Anglo-French plan which agreed to the transfer of all Sudeten areas with over 50% of German speakers. The only obstacle now remaining was the attitude of the Czech government. On 18 September 1938, Halifax told the Cabinet that if the Czechs did not agree to this plan they would be left to face the Third Reich alone. On 19 September 1938, the Czech government was given an ultimatum- accept the Anglo-French plan or face

Hitler alone. Quite bravely, the Czech government attempted to hold out against Hitler's demands, and wrangled with great emotion and dignity for over two days, before reluctantly giving in. On 21 September, Litvinov, the Soviet Foreign Minister told the Assembly of the League of Nations the Soviet Union intended to fulfil its obligations towards Czechoslovakia, if France would do the same.¹⁵ But the attitude of the Soviet Union was of little interest to Chamberlain, as he had already overcome most of the chief obstacles in the way of a peaceful solution. France was immobilised, the Franco-Soviet agreement a virtual dead letter, and the Czechs had been successfully browbeaten into accepting the Anglo-French plan. The decision to sideline the Soviet Union during the Czech crisis was a fatal error as it definitely increased suspicion in Moscow that Chamberlain's policy of appeasement was really a selfish device which was happy as long as Hitler moved eastwards and did not threaten Britain's vital interests. The seeds of the later Nazi- Soviet Pact were probably laid during the Czech crisis.

After the Czechs had agreed to the Anglo-French Plan, the crisis seemed very likely to end peacefully. 'European peace is what I am aiming at', Chamberlain told reporters on 22 September 1938, as he prepared to board his plane for his second visit to Germany, 'and on this trip I hope to get it' The second meeting between Chamberlain and Hitler took place later the same day, at a Hotel in the picturesque Rhineland town of Godesburg. Chamberlain, accompanied by Ivone Kirkpatrick, a Foreign Office official, who acted as his interpreter, confidently read out the Anglo-French agreement. 'I'm sorry', Hitler replied after a brief pause, 'but that won't do any more',¹⁶ and made a series of new demands. He wanted the immediate occupation of Sudeten areas. Non German speakers who wished to leave would only be allowed to take a single suitcase of belongings with them. He also added certain areas with less than 50% German speakers. To make matters worse, Hitler mentioned Polish and Hungarian grievances, and refused to join a guarantee of the remainder of Czechoslovakia.

Chamberlain was flabbergasted, but remained composed, and in a very quiet but assertive tone explained to the Nazi leader how he had already risked his entire political reputation to gain the Anglo-French plan, and could not hope to win further support for Nazi troops marching into the Sudetenland. But Hitler refused to budge, so the Prime Minister decided to break off the talks. He returned to the Hotel Petersburg, where he was staying, and paced the floor, in a tense silence, for the rest of the late afternoon. In a final desperate move, Chamberlain wrote a letter to Hitler requesting a detailed outline of German claims, accompanied by a map of the territory to be occupied. The next day, Chamberlain received what became known as 'The Godesburg Memorandum'. It simply made concrete what Hitler had demanded verbally on the previous day. Late on the evening of the 23 September 1938, Chamberlain met Hitler once more and claimed the memorandum was 'an ultimatum'. 'No', replied Hitler, 'Read the top it says memorandum'. The only concession Chamberlain managed to wring from Hitler during the Godesburg meetings was an agreement by Hitler to delay the proposed occupation of the Sudeten areas until 1 October 1938. As the meeting broke up, Chamberlain knew the crisis had reached another point of deadlock.

On 24 September 1938, the Cabinet met three times to discuss the very harsh and uncompromising Godesburg proposals. Chamberlain told the Cabinet that he remained 'satisfied Herr Hitler would not go back on his word' and was not using the crisis as an excuse to 'Crush Czechoslovakia or dominate, Europe', and that as little 'substantive difference' existed between the Anglo-French plan and the Godesburg proposals, he urged their acceptance. A great deal more grumbling emerged within the Cabinet, against Chamberlain, than he had ever encountered before. Duff Cooper, representing a much larger group of 'the weaker' brethren, claimed that if Czechoslovakia was attacked, public opinion would dictate Britain becoming involved in war. Halifax, pointed out that it was extremely unlikely the Czechs would accept the Godesburg proposals.¹⁷ The meeting broke up inconclusively.

Many Cabinet ministers were reportedly 'intensely disturbed' about the Godesburg proposals. On Sunday 25 September 1938 the Cabinet met twice, but Halifax, who had a 'sleepless night', dropped a bombshell, by stating he could not support a policy based on the Godesburg proposals. Chamberlain later commented that this came as 'a horrible blow'. Halifax told the Cabinet he had seen the acceptance of German demands as the only logical policy to avoid war, but events at Godesburg had convinced him of the 'immorality of yielding to force' and he saw a 'difference in principle' between the orderly

transfer envisaged by the Anglo-French plan and the 'disorderly transfer' outlined at Godesburg. Halifax proposed that Britain should put the facts before the Czechs, and if the French decided to fight, Britain should go to war. Halifax was supported in this view to greater and less degrees by most of the Cabinet.¹⁸

The Cabinet meeting of 25 September 1938 adjourned briefly to allow Chamberlain to meet French leaders. It was soon clear that the French government could not accept Hitler taking the Sudeten areas by force. Daladier insisted that Hitler should either accept the Anglo-French plan or face war. The limit of French weakness had been reached. The Czech government described the Godesburg proposals as a *de facto* ultimatum, usually presented to a nation defeated in war, and rejected it.

In the resumed Cabinet meeting late on the evening of 25 September 1938,¹⁹ Chamberlain reported the views of the French and Czech governments, but outlined another proposal which aimed to keep a last despairing lifeline open for a peaceful settlement. He told the Cabinet he would send a final personal letter to Hitler, delivered by Sir Horace Wilson, his personal envoy, which proposed a conference to reach a negotiated settlement. But, the Cabinet insisted that Wilson should inform Hitler, at the same time, that if he rejected this appeal, the Czechs would fight, France would fight, and Britain would stand by the French.

The heated Cabinet meetings of 24 and 25 September rattled Chamberlain, but they only forced him to neatly find some way to escape this pressure. What Chamberlain was trying to do, was to manoeuvre the Cabinet to keep a lifeline open for continued negotiations. After all, the Wilson mission was making Hitler a completely new offer, namely, to settle the matter peacefully at a international conference. This was Chamberlain's own idea. Chamberlain ensured that the proposed threat to Hitler the Cabinet desired, was only to be uttered verbally, and not contained in the letter the ever faithful Wilson would deliver. This allowed Wilson, no doubt with Chamberlain's permission, the opportunity not to issue the threat, and keep negotiations dragging on further.

The Cabinet was extremely sceptical about the whole idea of the Wilson mission. Halifax had come down firmly against any further pressure being put on Czechoslovakia. According to Oliver Stanley, 'the Foreign Secretary had lost all his illusions about Hitler and now regards him as a criminal lunatic'²⁰ This view is reinforced by the release of a Foreign Office press release on 26 September 1938 which read: 'If in spite of all the efforts made by the Prime Minister a German attack is made upon Czechoslovakia, the immediate result must be that France will be bound to come to her assistance, and Great Britain and Russia will certainly stand by France'. The release of this provocative message, before Wilson had met Hitler, has been attributed to Rex Leeper, Foreign Office Press Secretary. But, it turns out to have been the work of Halifax, acting without Chamberlain's permission, who recalled that 'greatly to my surprise, Neville was much put out when the Communiqué appeared and reproved me for not having submitted it to him'.²¹ This difference of opinion shows that Halifax, the Foreign Office and the majority of the Cabinet were now prepared to openly threaten force against Hitler, while Chamberlain still wanting to conciliate and keep negotiations open.

On 26 September 1938, Wilson met Hitler for a 'violent hour' of heated conversation, and told him that the Godesburg demands were unacceptable, and that a conference of powers was now the best way to solve the crisis. In reply, Hitler only agreed to the Czech government accepting the Godesburg memorandum. At this point, Wilson should have issued the strong warning, but he did not. During the evening, Chamberlain realised further delay was impossible, and told Wilson to issue the warning the next day: 'more in sorrow than in anger'. On 27 September 1938, Wilson finally, and reluctantly, informed Hitler, that if France went to the aid of Czechoslovakia, Britain would 'feel obliged to support France' In response, Hitler said that if Czechoslovakia did not accept the Godesburg memorandum then 'in six days we will all be at war' In a final parting word to Hitler, Wilson promised he would 'try and make those Czechs sensible'.²²

Even at the eleventh hour, Chamberlain was still prepared to 'snatch at the last tuft of grass on the very verge of the precipice' rather than fight a war over an issue 'in a far away country between people of whom we know nothing'. On the evening of 27 September 1938, most people in Britain expected a European War was near. In a letter to Benes, the Czech President, on 28 September 1938, Chamberlain informed him that 'nothing that any power could do' could prevent Germany mounting a massive

invasion of Czechoslovakia. On the same day, Chamberlain received a letter from Hitler, which promised German troops would only occupy agreed areas, and would join in a guarantee of the remainder of Czechoslovakia. This was just the lifeline Chamberlain needed. 'I feel certain' wrote Chamberlain in a reply, 'that you can get all the essentials without war and without delay' and he further promised 'I am ready to come to Berlin myself at once to discuss arrangements for transfer with you and representatives of the Czech government, together with representatives of France and Italy if you desire. I feel convinced we could reach agreement in a week'²³ This personal offer by Chamberlain to give Hitler 'all he wanted' in the presence of 'Four Great Powers' had never even been discussed with the Foreign Secretary, the Cabinet or the French and Czech governments. It reinforces the idea that impromptu decision-making without consultation, was a key part of Chamberlain's method of conducting what often amounted to personal diplomacy. This desire to follow his own views, rather than an agreed policy, influenced Chamberlain to send a telegram to Mussolini, without Foreign Office or Cabinet approval, urging him to place pressure of Hitler to settle the matter at a conference. All this pressure, convinced Hitler, who had wanted all along to crush Czechoslovakia by force, that he could get all he wanted without the need of a war. On 28 September 1938, Hitler announced he would settle the matter peacefully at a conference to be held at Munich, beginning the next day. When this news was announced in the House of Commons, Churchill said to Chamberlain: 'I congratulate you on your good fortune. You were very lucky'. But Chamberlain, tired, and under immense strain, felt vindicated. On the evening before departing for Munich, he did not summon the Cabinet.

After all this high drama, the Munich Conference was something of an anti climax. Hitler (Germany), Chamberlain, (Britain), Daladier (France) and Mussolini (Italy) gathered in Munich on 29 September 1938 to finally resolve the high anxiety of the Czech crisis. The Munich settlement, signed in the early hours of 30 September 1938, resembled pre-1914 European diplomacy with four major powers forcing a small nation, without the power to resist, to concede territory to a major power. The agreement deprived Czechoslovakia of its heavily fortified border defences, its rail communications were cut, and a great deal of economic power was lost. The fate of the remainder of Czechoslovakia now lay at the discretion of the Nazi regime. It was justified on the principle that national self determination had been denied to the Sudeten Germans in the first place. The terms of the agreement provided for the German occupation of the Sudetenland by 10 October 1938, an International Commission composed of two German Generals and one official each from Britain, Italy and Czechoslovakia, to supervise the operation, and a Four Power guarantee of the remainder of Czechoslovakia. In reality, the actual territory gained by Nazi pressure on the International mission was even more favourable than the Godesburg memorandum.

But Chamberlain wanted Munich to be viewed by British public opinion as something more fundamental than a bloodless victory for Hitler. With this in mind, Chamberlain met the Nazi leader in private to gain his autograph on a very famous piece of paper, which Hitler hardly looked at and signed, and which Chamberlain famously read out to reporters, and waved enthusiastically above his head at Heston Airport on his triumphant return. The famous 'piece of paper in my pocket' was grandly dubbed the 'Anglo-German declaration'. It promised that Britain and Germany would adopt 'the method of consultation' in any future disputes, and would 'never go to war with one another again' Crowds cheered, in relief, more than exultation, all along Chamberlain's route from the airport back to Buckingham Palace where he was to brief King George VI on the Munich settlement. He was greeted by more cheering crowds outside 10 Downing Street as he arrived home. A few minutes later, Chamberlain was persuaded to step forward and peer out of the first floor window. He leaned forward, waved an arm above his head and said: 'My good friends: this is the second time in our history that there has come back to Downing Street from Germany peace with honour. I believe it is peace for our time.'²⁴

What made the Czech crisis so important was the dramatic and direct intervention of Neville Chamberlain into the murky world of Hitler's grievances in eastern Europe. Chamberlain gave Hitler the opportunity to settle his grievances within a negotiated framework sanctioned by Britain and France. Yet this was an extremely flawed framework because it not only excluded the Soviet Union, the major eastern European power, but also cast the British and French governments in the role of persuading, even bullying, small powers to accede to the demands of the Nazi Dictator.

The Munich agreement was really the last chance for European peace because it was clear that British and French public opinion could not endure any further aggression on the part of Adolf Hitler. Any breach of Munich was certain to kill Chamberlain's policy of appeasement. Yet we know that Hitler was deeply unhappy with the Munich agreement, and determined to rip it up at the earliest opportunity. Before Munich, European peace depended on Hitler's actions being accepted by his opponents without resort to force. After Munich, peace depended on Hitler accepting his grievances should be solved by negotiation. It was Hitler who rejected this framework for peace, and destroyed the Munich agreement when his troops occupied Czechoslovakia in March 1939. Henceforth, Britain and France viewed stopping Hitler as vital to their own national interests, and it was they who rejected Hitler's offer to settle the Danzig issue in 1939 by negotiation. Munich was a crucial turning point on the road to war, therefore, because it was the limit of Anglo-French tolerance of Hitler's onward march in Europe.

NOTES

- 1 J.W.Bruegal, *Czechoslovakia Before Munich: The German Minority Problem and German and British appeasement*, (Cambridge, 1973), pp. 215-16
- 2 Chamberlain Diary, 20 March 1938, Quoted in K.Feiling, *The Life of Neville Chamberlain*, (London, 1946), pp. 347-348.
- 3 CAB 27 'Military Implications of German Aggression Against Czechoslovakia' Report by Chiefs of Staff Sub-Committee, March 1938, Public Record Office, Kew, London (hereafter PRO)
- 4 I. Colvin, *Chamberlain Cabinet*, (London, 1971), p.112.
- 5 DBFP, vol 2, no. 872
- 6 A.Adamthwaite, *The Making of The Second World War*, (London, 1977), p.77
- 7 R.A.C. Parker, *Chamberlain*, p. 149
- 8 DBFP II, no. 665.
- 9 See R.Lamb, *The Ghosts of Peace, 1935-1945*, (London, 1987), pp. 2-5.
- 10 CAB 23 Cabinet Meeting, 30 August 1938 (PRO)
- 11 *The Times*, 7 September 1937.
- 12 T.Taylor, *Munich, The Price of Peace*, (London, 1979), p.740.
- 13 R.A.C. Parker, *Chamberlain*, p.162.
- 14 CAB 23 Cabinet Meeting, 17 September 1938 (PRO)
- 15 J.Wheeler-Bennet, *Munich; Prologue to Tragedy*, (London, 1948), pp. 105-6, p.127, p. 143.
- 16 P.Schmidt, *Hitler's Interpreter*, (London, 1952), pp 95-97
- 17 CAB 23 Cabinet Meeting, 24 September 1938 (PRO)
- 18 Ibid, 25 September 1939
- 19 Ibid.
- 20 A.Roberts, *The Holy Fox. A Biography of Lord Halifax*, (London, 1991), p.119.
- 21 Ibid.
- 22 See M.Gilbert, 'Horace Wilson; Man of Munich', *History Today*, (October 1982).
- 23 A. Bryant, *In Search of Peace*, (London, 1939), pp.135-36.
- 24 Wheeler Bennet, *Munich*, p.478.

From Munich to War

DR R.A.C. PARKER

What did Chamberlain hope to gain at Munich? What military and foreign policy did he try to pursue after Munich? How far did the entry of German troops into Bohemia and Moravia and the military occupation of Prague in March 1939 change his policies? These are critical issues. There is much more evidence than historians can usually find. The records of Cabinet meetings in 1938 and 1939 (when Edward Bridges was secretary) are fuller than at any other time. Moreover Chamberlain, in what now seems an old-fashioned way, wrote once a week to his two sisters, alternately to Hilda and Ida. They were long letters – a little family gossip, observations of blossoms and birds and then the substance, made up in the 1930s of accounts of cabinets and government and how Chamberlain contrived fortunately, as he felt, to get his own way. The sisters kept them and they are now all in the special collections room in Birmingham University library, an agreeable place to work, not least because of the amiable helpfulness of the staff. There are other fundamental questions. Would war in September 1938 have been worse than when it happened in September 1939? Much has been written, but like many historical questions, hypothetical statements of what might have happened often assume too many variable contingencies – in any case it is not relevant to what the British did: their object was to avoid war altogether not to decide when to make it. Those two essential characters, Stalin and Hitler, raise still more fundamental questions: would Stalin have behaved differently if British governments had acted differently? Sometime we may have more evidence from the Kremlin. Then Hitler: could he have been stopped without war? On this central question we shall probably not get more evidence and disagreement will continue.

The argument of this paper is that Chamberlain really was a “Chamberlainite appeaser”, that he stuck to it up to the evening of 2nd September 1939 until just before the British declaration of war at 11 am the next morning. The contrary view is that Chamberlain out-manoeuvred Hitler and effectively defended British interests by postponing Anglo-German confrontation until, in March 1939, the Germans occupied Prague and made it clear that Munich had not converted Hitler to rational negotiation. Then Chamberlain assembled a formidable peace front which would have deterred any sane person from setting off the second world war. There is one scholar of the highest distinction, David Dilks, expert on Chamberlain and on international history in 1930s who, though with due caution and respectable reservations, appears to take the view that Chamberlain did not believe in Munich. He attributes to Chamberlain the idea that we must hope for the best but prepare for the worst. This essay suggests that Chamberlain did more hoping than preparing. Then there is, to argue for Chamberlain's disbelief in Munich, a contemporary witness, later himself prime minister, who went with Chamberlain to Munich and with whom Chamberlain stayed immediately after the parliamentary debate on Munich, the (then) Alec Douglas-Home, Lord Dunglass. He even suggests that Chamberlain waved his celebrated piece of paper (the document signed by Hitler at Munich in which they agreed that the ‘method of consultation’ would be employed to solve any future Anglo-German difficulties), not out of satisfaction and triumphant pleasure, but to publicise the document to demonstrate the wickedness of future possible betrayals. A decisive argument against Lord Home is that Chamberlain himself never made this claim. Chamberlain's first, and capable, biographer, Keith Feiling, noted that Chamberlain had remarked to Halifax as they drove through cheering crowds after Munich: ‘all this will soon be over’. Halifax himself wrote to the *Times* newspaper denying that Chamberlain's defence of Munich was humbug and deception and explaining that Chamberlain was talking about prospects for the next general election.

Films and sound recordings suggest that Chamberlain was pleased by Munich and really thought he had won. At the first Cabinet meeting after Munich, however, some of his ministers were restless. One pointed to the strongly held view that we must ‘intensify our rearmament programme’ and Lord Halifax, Chamberlain's closest ministerial associate, thought speeches should not be made which would block ‘consideration of the need for such intensification’. Chamberlain claimed that we might

be able to reach some agreement with the dictators 'which would stop the armament race'. Deficiencies in British armaments must be made good, but that was not 'to say that as a thank-offering for the present détente, we should at once embark on a great increase in our armaments programme'. Duff Cooper in his resignation speech in the Commons, marking his departure from the government, asked how the government could justify rearmament if we are told that 'in the opinion of the Prime Minister, this settlement means peace in our time'. In consequence, Chamberlain, at the end of the four-day debate in the Commons, partially disavowed his own words 'used in a moment of some emotion after a long and exhausting day . . . I do indeed believe that we may yet secure peace for our time, but I never meant to suggest that we should do that by disarmament, until we can induce others to disarm too'. Even so, Chamberlain, early in October, tried to advance towards an agreement to abolish bombing aircraft – aerial disarmament interested the British as much as naval limitation. If Britain was secure at sea and in the air then whatever went on elsewhere, Britain was safe and could concentrate on trade and the Empire. In January 1939, having gone to Rome to meet Mussolini, whom Chamberlain took far too seriously after what he imagined to be his decisive help at Munich, Chamberlain persuaded himself that a plan for general disarmament might usefully be drawn up.

All this, though wrong, was perfectly rational. There was ample evidence that the German economy was so strained by armament manufacture that the imports necessary to make it possible could no longer be paid for. Either Germany must risk wars to conquer resources or limit armaments production. Since Chamberlain had shown at Munich how peaceful change could revise the post-1918 treaties in Germany's favour, surely no ruler, concerned for the welfare of his people, could reject peaceful change. Indeed Hitler remains a phenomenon nearly impossible to explain. Ian Kershaw, who is half-way through a superb biographical study, suggests 'hubris' based on easy success in the early years of his dictatorship. Many years ago, a brilliant scholar, sadly lost to us, Tim Mason, argued that Hitler and the Nazis relied on continuous crisis to justify their existence. However, Chamberlain assumed that Hitler could not possibly be as appalling as he turned out to be. A remarkable fact about Hitler is that he deployed, if convenient, considerable charm. He expertly laid on flattery, often effective with successful politicians who, after all, seek power often because they believe that their power is to everyone's benefit. He was good, too, at suggesting that he did not really believe everything he had to pretend to believe: a tactic well suited to the twentieth century democratic politicians among his auditors. Then he had that talent possessed to a high degree, for instance, by Franklin Roosevelt, for suggesting that he really and truly agreed with his interlocutor for the time being, whatever he might be compelled to tell others. And, after all, Hitler admired the British and the British Empire. British rule in India impressed him. A recent TV series, advised by Ian Kershaw, showed that Hitler was partial to a 1930s film 'Lives of a Bengal Lancer'. It is true that Neville Chamberlain did not quite belong – still he was part of a 'master race', which could be cooperated with provided the 'international Jewish conspiracy' did not foil such hopes.

In fact what foiled those hopes was British refusal, and there were few in Britain who disagreed, to accept the German dominance in Europe which would follow from allowing Germany a free hand in eastern and south-eastern Europe. As Hitler put it, they behaved like 'governesses', interfering, supervising and controlling. What Chamberlain thought he had done at Munich was to win Hitler's agreement to discuss and negotiate future grievances. In fact, Hitler was annoyed by the partial retreat he made at Munich; when he agreed to consult over future Anglo-German differences we may be sure that he did not mean matters like the future of Prague. The Munich 'agreement' represented a misunderstanding between Hitler and Chamberlain. Chamberlain, however, thought that Hitler's subsequent tiresomenesses might only be transient displays.

A sensational utterance in the Commons debate on Munich caused surprise at the time, in October 1938 and had not been forgotten when there happened what Churchill had predicted. 'I venture to declare that in future the Czechoslovak state cannot be maintained as an independent entity. You will find that in a period of time which may be measured in years, but may be measured only in months, Czechoslovakia will be engulfed in the Nazi regime.' Chamberlain, by contrast, thought Czechoslovakia had now gained a secure national existence 'comparable to that which we see in Switzerland to-day'.

Chamberlain found disappointment after Munich. He had won peace! Yet Parliament and his Cabinet seemed to think that Britain must accelerate and increase British preparations for war. Chamberlain

had shown the way to Hitler to secure peaceful settlement of legitimate German grievances. Yet Hitler showed no signs of gratitude nor did he show himself ready to disarm. He spoke soon after Munich. Mussolini was Germany's 'one true friend'. Chamberlain might be overthrown and his successors would set off a world war. So Germany must be powerful. One month later the night of broken glass, *Krystallnacht*, meant a riot of murder, assault, theft and looting against Jews in towns throughout Germany. What Chamberlain needed was some response from Hitler to show that he was beginning to be 'appeased'. In London the Conservative party central office meditated about the prospects of a general election but at the end of 1938 reported that a decisive victory could not be counted on.

At the end of January 1939 Chamberlain found, as he imagined, the German 'response' he sought. This was helped by the return to Berlin of the British ambassador, Neville Henderson, who had been in London for serious surgery. Henderson believed that German dominance in the east need not be resisted. The outcome of the 'war scare' of January 1939, whose origins are still uncertain, also provided reassurance, when there were no signs of the feared German armed attack on the Netherlands; Chamberlain had not believed in the rumours. Then Hitler spoke proclaiming the need for increased German exports; finance of imports raised problems. Hence, the notion of 'economic appeasement' reached its fullest expression. The view of the British military attaché in Berlin that economic assistance to Germany would only help German production of weapons was countered by Neville Henderson. Chamberlain wrote to his sister on 19 February 'All the information I get seems to point in the direction of peace'. On 10 March 1939 he spoke, off the record, to journalists. Soon a conference would meet to discuss disarmament. The prediction coincided with the final days of Hitler's demolition of Czechoslovakia. On 14 March, its president, Hacha, arrived in Berlin apparently to find the terms on which his country might remain independent. He was told that German troops were already invading; Hacha must ask for German 'protection' for his country. Any resistance would precipitate the immediate bombing of Prague. German troops arrived there early on 15 March, at once seizing the national bank and the presidential palace.

This was Wednesday. The Cabinet which met that morning and parliament in the afternoon had rapidly to improvise their reaction. The Cabinet agreed that Britain should not use force to try to reverse the new German advance. It was true that Britain had promised to join in a guarantee of the post-Munich frontiers of Czechoslovakia and Inskip had said in October 1938 that that was already binding. Chamberlain, however, told the Cabinet 'It might, no doubt, be true that the disruption of Czechoslovakia had been largely engineered by Germany, but our guarantee was not a guarantee against the exercise of moral pressure' and later he told the Cabinet that he 'thought the military occupation was symbolic, more than perhaps appeared on the surface'. In other words the promise given at Munich to guarantee the new frontiers to Czechoslovakia did not apply. To the Commons that afternoon, Chamberlain claimed that the government had as its aim 'to substitute the method of discussion for the method of force in the settlement of differences. Though we may have to suffer checks and disappointments, from time to time, the object that we have in mind is of too great significance to the happiness of mankind for us lightly to give it up or set it on one side.'

Two days later Chamberlain spoke differently to a meeting of the Birmingham Conservative Association, arranged, of course, before the German seizure of Prague. Some ministers, notably Halifax, foreign secretary, had spoken to him and told him that he could not simply make out that nothing had changed. Once again he found he could not openly declare his conviction that rational, peaceful solutions could be, and must be, agreed with the dictators. At Birmingham, Chamberlain reminded his audience of a speech in which 'I pointed out that any demand to dominate the world by force was one which the democracies must resist'. Now to the overwhelming applause of those present 'I feel bound to repeat that while I am not prepared to engage this country by new unspecified commitments, operating under conditions which cannot now be foreseen, yet no greater mistake could be made than to suppose that, because it believes war to be a senseless and cruel thing, this nation has so lost its fibre that it will not take part to the utmost of its power in resisting such a challenge if it ever were made.' The reservation intruded into this statement – it ruled out any alliance – was soon illustrated by Chamberlain's 'bold and startling' proposal – those are his own words. The British, French, Soviet and Polish governments would promise 'immediately to consult together in the event of any action being taken which appears to constitute a threat to the security or independence'

of a European state. On 20 March this was put to the French ambassador in London. He protested at once that the pledge merely to talk about future aggression would in fact encourage such aggression. As a result the proposal was changed. Now the powers would 'consult together as to what steps should be taken to offer joint resistance to any such action'.

The background to this plan was the fear of German designs on Rumania, with whom a German-Rumanian trade treaty was being negotiated (between unequal partners!) Hence the desire to include the USSR and Poland. There was another, ominous piece of background, neglected in London, partly because Hitler put in distractingly dramatic action, partly because within the Foreign Office, the central department which dealt with Germany had higher prestige and influence at the time than the department which dealt with the Soviet Union. On 10 March 1939 Stalin addressed the Communist Party Congress in Moscow. 'England and France' (foreigners often referred to 'Britain' as 'England' rather in the way that in Britain, the Netherlands are referred to as 'Holland'). 'England and France, have rejected the policy of collective security, the policy of collective resistance to the aggressors, and have taken up a position of non-intervention, a position of neutrality'. This 'reveals an eagerness . . . not to hinder Germany, say, from enmeshing herself in European affairs, from embroiling herself in a war with the Soviet Union'. Stalin declared that the Soviet Union will not be 'drawn into conflicts by warmongers who are accustomed to have others pull their chestnuts out of the fire for them'. This was a reaction to Munich, but it suggested that the western allies would have to make special efforts to prevent the USSR from taking up a position of neutrality. On the contrary Chamberlain, and Halifax, and many in the Foreign Office took for granted that the Soviet Union and Hitler's Germany could be counted on to be mutually hostile. Thus the thought of a possible bargain between Hitler and Stalin they thought of as a remote, near-impossible event, let alone that Stalin should actually help Germany with supplies in a conflict with the western powers. When Poland refused to be associated with the Soviet Union in the proposed Declaration, Chamberlain did not worry and understood the Polish objection that it might provoke German hostility to Poland.

About a week after the occupation of Prague Hitler seized the Memel region from Lithuania. Of course Hitler did not 'consult' the British. It added to the feeling in London that something must be done to restrain Hitler. Then the threat shifted to Poland in the last week of March 1939. There might be a sudden German attack; in Germany newspapers were complaining of the ill-treatment of Germans in Poland. Almost as bad, there might be a Polish-German agreement, with concessions to Germany. Either way, Britain would be brushed aside and Chamberlain's Munich 'triumph' of winning Hitler's promise to adopt the 'method of consultation' would look embarrassingly hollow, and since Chamberlain's reputation was built on Munich, something had to be done.

One of the most important announcements of the century followed in the house of commons on a Friday afternoon, usually a relaxed moment at Westminster, when Neville Chamberlain rose. Consultations were going on with other governments but in the meantime 'in the event of any action which clearly threatened Polish independence and which the Polish Government accordingly considered it vital to resist with their national forces, His Majesty's Government would feel themselves bound to lend the Polish Government all support in their power.' Chamberlain felt 'well satisfied'. His statement stressed 'the important point (perceived alone by the *Times*) that what we are concerned with is not the boundaries of states but their independence. And it is we who will judge whether their independence is threatened or not'. The *Times* explained that the guarantee to Poland was not a challenge to Germany. Chamberlain, it declared, 'thinks that there are problems in which adjustments are still necessary'. So it was, for the Germans, 'an appeal to their better nature and an invitation to enter into closer relations if they will conform to more normal patterns in their intercourse with foreign nations'. Halifax thought these remarks 'just right'. What Chamberlain was trying to do was to suggest another Munich-type conference. Now, on the other hand, if the Germans went on bullying and invading, they would have the British Empire to reckon with! The Polish government protested against these comments and Chamberlain was forced to accept that Poland would decide whether its independence were threatened. Just before Easter 1939 Mussolini, Italian dictator, behaved in Chamberlain's words 'like a sneak and a cad. He has not made the least effort to preserve my friendly feelings.' To show that he, too, could launch invasions as well as Hitler, Mussolini invaded Albania. Once more something had to be done, especially since control of the Mediterranean might be at stake with the main route to the

British empire in the East and to the oil fields then controlled by the British. Greece must be guaranteed. The French, who mattered in the Mediterranean, would do the same only if the British joined in with another guarantee – to Rumania.

What about Russia? If Britain was pledged to defend Poland and Rumania against Germany surely the Soviet Union, or Russia as contemporaries usually referred to the USSR, must somehow be involved. On 3 April, MPs from all parties raised the question. Chamberlain put the point to Beck, the Polish foreign minister who was then visiting London. The British would not 'make an agreement with the Soviet Government' but would try to establish such relations as would enable them to expect help from Soviet Russia in case of war'. Beck did not like it. He thought a 'decision to open a war against Poland would be a very difficult one for Germany to take. Any association between Poland and Russia would bring that decision nearer.' Chamberlain commented 'I very much agree with him'. In other words both Chamberlain, and Beck (surprisingly), thought negotiation with Germany could lead to a satisfactory result. On 13 April, with Rumania now guaranteed, even more voices were raised, with questions about Russia.

The next day the British ambassador in Moscow was told to suggest that the Soviet government should declare that if aggression took place against any European neighbour of the USSR which, of course, included Poland and Rumania, 'the assistance of the Soviet Union would be available, if desired, and would be afforded in such manner as convenient'. In other words, the USSR would be ready to do anything its neighbours, if Germany attacked them, would care to request. On 18 April the Soviet government instead proposed a full-scale triple military alliance. France, Britain and the USSR would help each other or any European state bordering on the Soviet Union which found itself attacked. A military agreement would be signed simultaneously. The three powers, once at war, would not make peace separately. After careful consideration the British refused on 8 May. They repeated their proposal of 14 April for a unilateral declaration on the part of the Soviet Union.

It is clear that Chamberlain did not want a Soviet alliance. He thought it would be irretrievably provocative to Germany and make impossible the rational solution of German-Polish difficulties, a Munich over Danzig (Gdansk – then a 'free city' under the League of Nations, mostly then inhabited by Germans) and the 'Polish Corridor' which then separated Germany from East Prussia. He was forced by his ministers, clearly backed by overwhelming public opinion, into the search for alliance. Later in May 1939, the British government took up the idea of alliance. Chamberlain worked out a scheme to avoid seeming to do so. The British would propose the application of the Covenant of the League of Nations. Within a few days Molotov, now Soviet foreign minister, turned it down. At this stage serious issues were raised by Molotov. What about Soviet guarantees to states which did not wish to be 'helped' by Stalin? Poland was at issue but also the Baltic states, Finland, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania. To the Soviet government the British and French promises of support for Poland and Rumania could be regarded as an invitation to the Germans to attack the Soviet Union by way of the Baltic states. After a few weeks, Molotov added the question of 'indirect aggression'. What was to happen if a state bordering on the USSR cooperated with Germany as the result of 'an internal coup d'état or a reversal of policy in the interests of the aggressor'? After all, Czechoslovakia had, on paper, invited German 'protection' on 15 March 1939. The USSR demanded, in effect, the right to intervene in neighbouring states without the prior agreement of Britain and France.

At the end of June 1939 an article appeared in Moscow in *Pravda*. Zhdanov, one of the inner group around Stalin, argued that the British and French did not want an alliance at all: 'the only thing they really want is to talk about an agreement and, by making play with the obstinacy of the Soviet Union, to prepare their own public opinion for an eventual deal with the aggressors'. We do not know when Stalin decided to make his own bargain with the aggressors in the 'Nazi-Soviet pact' of 23 August. He had no need to worry about 'public opinion' but to negotiate with Britain and France about combined resistance to Germany was evidently the best way of persuading Hitler to offer generous terms for Soviet isolation from the western powers and for Soviet help in possible conflicts between Germany on the one side and Britain and France on the other.

It can confidently be asserted that the only chance of persuading Stalin to cooperate with Britain and France against Germany was that there should be a British government which could absolutely be

counted on not to make further concessions to Hitler. On the contrary, there was evidence that Chamberlain hoped for, and even expected, a new Munich. Some of it was public knowledge, some supposedly secret but Soviet access to British 'secrets' seems to have been quite effective. Contacts between Helmuth Wohlthat, an official close to Goering, who had easy access to Hitler, and Horace Wilson, the closest confidant of Chamberlain, took place at least four times in June and July 1939. At the end of July two unofficial emissaries went over to Germany after briefings from Horace Wilson. Ernest Tennant visited Ribbentrop, German foreign minister, and Lord Kemsley, the press lord, even talked to Hitler himself.

Hitler wanted from Britain the free hand in the east of Europe and evidently thought he might get it from Chamberlain. In return he would guarantee the British empire. In fact Chamberlain wanted a settlement which would not bring German dominance in Europe. Hitler and Chamberlain did not understand each other's aims. Nor did Stalin and Chamberlain. Chamberlain thought Stalin's cooperation would make impossible a new Munich; in fact it was the only chance of securing it.

Chamberlain took the news of the Nazi-Soviet pact calmly. Now Anglo-German relations could be simplified and the provocation of an Anglo-Soviet treaty avoided. An Anglo-Polish alliance was signed. That would show Hitler that a free hand against Poland was not available. Then rational discussion could go forward. Hitler called off an attack on Poland planned for dawn on 26 August. Chamberlain's hopefulness grew even further. Hitler was behaving as he expected.

So it was a disappointment when the German attack on Poland began early on 1 September 1939. Chamberlain told the Cabinet that there could now be no question where our duty lay. But his hopes revived when Mussolini (who had certainly no desire for a full-scale war) proposed a conference. Munich again! For Chamberlain, Mussolini's influence over Hitler had secured the Munich conference and contributed to its success. On the afternoon of 2 September Chamberlain explained to the Commons, not that war would soon begin, to fulfil the guarantee to Poland, but that a conference was being considered. The Commons exploded. Chamberlain believed the government might fall. Cabinet ministers protested and a late-night Cabinet insisted on war.

Next morning, 3 September, Chamberlain told Britain 'We are now at war'. He ended his speech with these words. 'It is evil things that we shall be fighting against, brute force, bad faith, injustice, oppression and persecution and against them I am certain that the right will prevail.' Many were the intense sufferings before, in part, right did prevail.

This essay is based on unpublished material in the Public Record Office, especially CAB 23 (Cabinet conclusions, CAB 27/624-5 (foreign policy committee) and from Neville Chamberlain's papers in Birmingham, especially NC18, letters to sisters; BBC sound recordings; printed material, especially House of Commons debates series 5, Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-39, series 3, Documents Diplomatiques Français, 1932-39, series 2. Acknowledgements are due to the Controller of HM Stationery Office and to Birmingham University Library.

April Theses and April Crises: Lenin and the Leadership of the Russian Revolution

DR PATRICIA COLLINS

During April 1917 the Bolsheviks, like other Russian revolutionary parties, were in crisis. The revolution which they had spent their lives debating, theorising and idealising, caught the revolutionaries unawares. In the rapidly changing circumstances, leaders had to be quick to respond or risk alienating the masses. As socialist leaders returned from exile or abroad, they faced challenges to their leadership and ideological framework. Lenin was no different. He returned to a party riven by an ideological split between left and right. The manner in which Lenin responded to the challenges of April 1917 was a turning point which defined the course of the revolution.

Lenin disbelieved early accounts of the February Revolution discounting them as German propaganda.¹ However, he swiftly responded in a telegram on 4th March for Bolsheviks returning to Russia from Scandinavia: no support for the Provisional Government; suspicion of the role of Kerensky; arming of the proletariat; elections for the Petrograd Municipal Duma; and no rapprochement with other socialist parties. Service has argued that February provided Lenin with a “window of opportunity” to reassert his leadership of the party after his long exile: in March 1917 Lenin had spent only six months out of the past seventeen years in Russia.² The Great War had further weakened Lenin’s links with the party.³ His last visit was during the 1905-06 revolution, and those memories shaped his views on the February Days. He believed the bourgeoisie would not be strong enough to forge its own revolution. Kadets would move to the right, becoming the “Party of Order”, while the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries could not be trusted to retain their revolutionary zeal, instead becoming the bourgeois state’s “loyal” opposition. In 1905 it had taken Lenin nine months to reach Russia and he was obsessed with getting back earlier in 1917, even if he had to rely on the German authorities. All other possibilities involved the British or French Governments already impeding the return of anyone likely to threaten the war effort.⁴ Martov proposed that the Provisional Government exchange German POWs for passage of Russian revolutionaries through Germany. However, Milyukov, even less enthusiastic than the Allies about the return of socialist revolutionaries, procrastinated.

In the interim, Lenin communicated his thoughts to the party in his “Letters from Afar”. He challenged traditional Marxist theories of revolution, arguing that the democratic revolution had been achieved and that the socialist revolution was imminent. He demanded that Bolsheviks refuse to accept the Provisional Government and call instead for a Republic of Soviets or a workers’ militia, and reviled the Russian cabinet as “agents of English capital”. However, as Lenin learned more about events in Russia, largely through foreign newspapers, his arguments altered, emphasising the transitional nature of the proposed new soviet government. Only time would tell if his proposed revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the workers and poorest peasants could develop the “consciousness” necessary to establish the socialist revolution. Service argued that Lenin was not yet trying to impose his views on the Bolshevik Party. Aware of the second- hand nature of his knowledge, he was prepared to wait till he reached Russia to present his theories in person. This, though, did not imply that Lenin was anything other than confident about his beliefs. On March 14th and 16th, he put forward his views to socialist émigrés in Zurich. At best they criticised him as too “utopian” or of inverting Marxism by refusing to allow the bourgeois revolution to complete its course. At worst, he had to defend himself against charges of Blanquism, of willingness to use revolutionary violence.⁵

Impatient with the failure of the Provisional Government to respond to Martov, even after intervention from the Petrograd Soviet, Lenin personally agreed to accept German aid. However, the Mensheviks waited, fearing arrest on arrival in Russia. Aware of the dangers attached to accepting German aid, Lenin obtained a letter signed by leading European socialists that he returned to Russia “to serve there the cause of the revolution, to help us to arouse the proletariat of other countries, especially of Germany and Austria, against their Governments.”⁶

Lenin returned to a plea for unity between Russian socialists. He was officially greeted by Chkheidze:

Comrade Lenin, in the name of the Petersburg Soviet and of the whole revolution we welcome you to Russia... But - we think that the principal task of the revolutionary democracy is now the defence of the revolution from any encroachments either from within or without. We consider that what this goal requires is not disunion, but the closing of democratic ranks. We hope that you will pursue these goals with us.⁷

Lenin, however, would not listen. He rushed to the Bolshevik Party headquarters where he stunned his listeners with a two hour speech declaring the imminence of the international revolution and the folly of recognising the Provisional Government. The sailor deputy, Raskolnikov, recalled, "He assailed the tactics pursued before he arrived by the ruling party groups and by individual comrades. The most responsible party workers were here. But for them too the words of Ilych were a veritable revelation. They laid down a Rubicon between the tactics of yesterday and today."⁸

Lenin presented his "April Theses" twice the following day, once at the final session of the Bolshevik Party Conference and almost immediately again at a joint meeting with Mensheviks and SRs. His words were "belligerent, uncompromising... Scarcely pausing to acknowledge the achievements of February, Lenin was already looking forward to the second stage".⁹ His key demands were the transfer of power to the Soviets, no support for the Provisional Government whose members were now the opponents in the class war, and no support for "revolutionary defensism". The Bolsheviks should be leading the masses into new institutions. They should use the fact that Russia was now "the freest country... of the belligerent countries" to achieve their ends. Lenin berated Stalin's resolution agreed at the party conference two days previously, 'I hear that in Russia there is a movement towards unity with the defencists. This is a betrayal of Socialism. I think that it is better to stand alone, like Liebknecht, one against one hundred and ten.'¹⁰

The message scandalised the moderate socialists. Dan declared he was witnessing the "party's end", unless Lenin accepted that the bourgeois revolution was incomplete. Bogdanov became incensed, 'Why that is raving, that is the raving of a lunatic ... You should be ashamed to applaud such spouting. You disgrace yourselves, Marxists!' The Socialist Revolutionary Zenzinov summed up the mood, "Lenin's programme at that time was met not so much with indignation as with ridicule. It seemed to everybody so absurd and fantastic." Plekhanov entitled his rejoinder, "On the Theses of Lenin, Or Why Delirium is Sometimes Interesting". The most reasoned criticism was provided by Tseretelli of the Petrograd Soviet who argued that Lenin had distorted Marxism, that not all of the bourgeoisie shared rightist aspirations. He castigated Lenin for providing only "naked slogans" compared to the Mensheviks' practical programme and echoed Engels' warning about the dangers of beginning the socialist revolution prematurely. However, even Tseretelli was rendered speechless. Having concluded that, "However irreconcilable Vladimir Ilych may be, I am convinced we'll be reconciled", Lenin cried, "Never!"¹¹

The Menshevik onslaught continued in the journal *Rabochaya gazeta* of April 6th:

The developing revolution is always menaced by danger not only from the right but from the left as well ... After his speech, we can say that each significant success of Lenin will be a success of reaction, and all the struggle against counter- revolutionary aspirations and intrigues will be hopeless until we secure our left flank, until we render politically harmless, by a decisive rebuff, the current which Lenin heads. The principal danger ... was on the Left.¹²

Lenin was criticised by Bolshevik delegates too. Goldenburg, an ex- member of the Central Committee declared that not only had Lenin "plant[ed] the banner of civil war in the midst of revolutionary democracy", he was now filling "the place left vacant by Bakunin... Lenin the Marxist, Lenin the leader of our fighting Social Democratic Party is no more. A new Lenin is born, Lenin the Anarchist."¹³ Voitinsky and Skobolev accused him of syndicalist deviation. There was a general feeling that Lenin had lost touch with the events and mood of the country. Not even Zinoviev publicly backed Lenin. Only Aleksandra Kollontai spoke out in support which "called forth nothing but mockery, laughter and commotion".¹⁴ Kanotchikov, a Urals worker deputy, expressed his disappointment, "the unrealistic nature of his ideas, seemed to all of us so far beyond the realms of what was possible to achieve."¹⁵

Worse was to follow. At a meeting of the Russian Bureau on April 6th, Lenin's strategy was

condemned by Kamenev and Stalin. The Petersburg Committee roundly rejected the theses on April 8th by thirteen votes to two with one abstention, quickly followed by the Moscow and Kiev Committees.¹⁶ Kamenev published the theses in *Pravda* with the proviso that they represented Lenin's personal views only, cautioning that the scheme "appears to us unacceptable since it starts from the assumption that the bourgeois revolution is *finished*, and counts on the immediate transformation of this revolution into a socialist revolution."¹⁷

The wave of hostility which greeted Lenin's return had one benefit: it allowed his opponents to underestimate his influence. Not only were the "April Theses" deeply unpopular, so was his acceptance of German aid. Having declared that this was better than not to have returned at all, Sukhanov gleefully recounts the initial criticism even among the soviets, such as the resolution of the 2nd Baltic Fleet.¹⁸ Such reactions quelled government fears about Lenin's return. Milyukov told the French Ambassador Paléologue, "that Lenin had completely failed in the soviets yesterday... He went to such an extreme, so insolently and clumsily defended his theses on immediate peace, that the hissing forced him to step down and leave. From this he will never recover."¹⁹ On April 8th the American Ambassador reported government tactics to Washington: "Extreme socialist or anarchist named Lenin making violent speeches and thereby strengthening government; designedly giving him leeway and will deport opportunely."²⁰ Only Kerensky retained his doubts: also on April 8th he told Zenzinov, "This man will destroy the revolution."²¹

Lenin returned to Russia prepared to fight to reassert his leadership of the Party and to ensure that there would be no repeat of the failures of 1905-06. Socialist revolution in Russia would be the catalyst for the imminent European revolution. Failure in Russia might presage failure in Europe. Here was his inversion of Marxism. However, he returned to a party already in crisis, riven by deep divisions and seemingly incapable of leading the socialist revolution. During February, the Bolsheviks had been led by two left-wing factions, the militant workers of the Vyborg District Committee and the Russian Bureau of the Central Committee founded by Shlyapnikov on the orders of Lenin. These groups had come to the fore after the arrest of the Petersburg Committee on February 26th, one of the last acts of the Okhrana. They had been responsible for the Bolshevik Manifesto of February 28th which had called for the creation of a provisional revolutionary government and appealed to workers of all belligerent countries to end the war. Interestingly the manifesto did not claim any leadership role for the Bolsheviks during the February Days, rightly viewing it as the people's revolution. In contrast, some Provisional Government members had claimed they led the soldiers and workers, and later Soviet histories glorified Bolshevik leadership.²² Shlyapnikov was contemptuous of the "defencist elements and radical petty-bourgeois intellectuals" who "sped off to the Duma in the hope of acquiring historical roles."²³

Trotsky's claim that Shlyapnikov, Molotov and Zalutsky were "not up to the job" of leadership was unfair.²⁴ While they were young and inexperienced, they were constant in their opposition to the Provisional Government and genuine in their attempts to support the rights of the workers, soldiers and poor peasants. Having re-established *Pravda* under Molotov's editorship, they reached a readership of some 100,000. Although believing that the overthrow of capitalism was not imminent, they were still closer to Lenin's position than other Bolsheviks.

Party policy changed direction with the return from exile of Kamenev, Stalin and Muranov, on March 12th. Assuming power by dint of past party responsibilities, the new triumvirate adopted more moderate policies: conditional support for the Provisional Government and the support of the war effort to safeguard the revolution. Their policies were upheld at the March Party Conference which nominated Stalin to lead possible merger talks. Stalin had reduced the disputes between the socialist to "petty disagreements" which could be smoothed over.²⁵ Attending merger talks, Stalin missed Lenin's return.²⁶ Service is splitting hairs in arguing that Stalin and Kamenev were not as pro-Menshevik as is "universally" believed by traditional and revisionist scholars alike.²⁷ Certainly, they remained Bolsheviks, having more in common with Lenin than Martov or Akselrod. On March 23rd, in an article in *Pravda*, Stalin called for Milyukov's resignation after he had appeared to endorse expansionist foreign policy aims in a foretaste of the April crisis.²⁸

Kamenev and Stalin, however, suppressed Lenin's views when counter to their own. When Kollontai personally delivered Lenin's first two "Letters", only the first was published in *Pravda*, with the more

critical references to the Provisional Government edited out. The last four letters remained unpublished until Lenin's death. Nor did they reveal the existence of Lenin's letters at the March Party Conference. Their editorial policy of *Pravda* was condemned by the left factions, with the Vyborg Committee forcing them to publish a humiliating criticism: "If the paper does not want to lose the confidence of the workers, it must and will bring the light of revolutionary consciousness, no matter how painful it may be, to the bourgeois owls."²⁹ Such criticism is understandable when the SR leadership praised the new editorial line.³⁰ However, as le Blanc has argued, the problem for the left was that while Kamenev and Stalin were clearly not following a Leninist line, they offered "a coherence and internal consistency that, before the return of Lenin, was difficult to challenge."³¹

It is often maintained that Lenin's return created a rift in the Bolshevik Party, yet it appears that initially he actually united the Petrograd factions in opposition to himself. A broad spectrum of the party was hostile to the "April Theses", often echoing the criticisms of the moderate socialists. While most Bolsheviks could accept some elements, few could initially accept the complete package. Of crucial concern was the proclamation of the second stage when many believed that the bourgeois revolution had not been completed and the possible impact on the peasants of land nationalisation. Harding has criticised Lenin's opponents of "bucking the arguments", by failing to challenge his theoretical justifications for ditching traditional Bolshevik concepts.³² However, in April 1917 Lenin was not yet offering any justification. The "April Theses" were simple statements of intent, with no actual programme of action to realise Lenin's goals. Tseretelli had made this point on April 4th and Kamenev was to hammer it home, in secret sessions and in public.³³ Later Lenin would argue that the socialist revolution could start in Russia since the objective conditions had been fulfilled elsewhere in Europe.

Looking back to April 1917, Trotsky posed the question, how could a party in such crisis be able to survive and seize power only six months later? Lenin's actions in April revealed his political talents. He knew that to reimpose his leadership, his theses would have to be accepted at the Party Congress in late April. Having criticised Lenin in private on April 6th, Stalin changed sides. Kamenev, becoming the focus for moderate opposition, would have to be isolated and his ideas neutralised. Many on the right of the party, such as Goldenburg and Voitinsky, left to join the Mensheviks or Gorky's group. To facilitate such an exodus, Lenin deliberately increased the tempo of his criticisms of the Provisional Government in his article "On Dual Power", while he borrowed Rosa Luxemburg's phrase to harangue the Soviet leaders as "stinking corpses".³⁴ Kamenev, however, continued to stay and fight his corner. Therefore, Lenin began to moderate his speeches to win over the centrists. He seemed to backtrack: there was to be no immediate overthrow of the government and it might take "some time" for the workers to develop sufficient consciousness for the Bolsheviks to achieve a majority in the soviets. This calmed some of fears that he had aroused.³⁵

There were limits, though, on how far Lenin could moderate his views, since they echoed that of the masses. Tens of thousands of radical workers, soldiers and peasants rushed to join the party, attracted by Lenin's message. Party membership doubled during April.³⁶ The new recruits, less bound to Marxist rhetoric, failed to see the logic of strengthening the Provisional Government if the goal was its removal. There was also a counter flow of Mensheviks into the party, attracted to the forcefulness of Lenin compared to the vacillations of the Menshevik leadership. Lenin's opponents believed that he had made a fatal error in announcing the "April Theses". Instead it was Lenin who had wrong-footed his opponents. The theses turned the Bolsheviks into the principal socialist opposition to the new regime. In contrast, Mensheviks and SRs were forced to set limits on the people's revolution. Fears that "uncontrollable" desires by the proletariat would alienate the bourgeoisie, pushed moderate socialists into supporting unpopular strategies: continuing the war effort; opposing the peasant seizure of land; demanding the reinforcement of factory and army discipline. The Provisional Government relied for its survival upon the support of the moderate socialists, but in providing this support, the Mensheviks and SRs discounted policies which they had espoused for decades. Baron argued that Plekhanov spent 1917 opposing the revolution to which he had devoted his whole life.³⁷

Some of the most interesting and challenging work recently has been on the provinces. In the 1970s, Pethybridge posed a sophisticated version of the orthodox view declaring that the Bolsheviks were certainly popular in Petrograd, but the city was hardly representative of the general population.³⁸

Case studies suggest that in provincial cities dual power witnessed a more genuine co-operation than in Petrograd through the formation of Public Executive Committees with wide political and social representation. However, the publication of the "April Theses" shattered this co-operation. As Bolsheviks withdrew from the committees, dual power collapsed giving way to the single authority of the soviet. By late spring from the Volga to Siberia the slogan "All power to the Soviets" became a reality.³⁹

Outwith Petrograd the general population seems to have been much more radical. The National Congress of Soviets of Peasant Deputies in May, a body that was predominantly SR, agreed the resolution, "The right of private property in land is abolished forever ... Hired labour is not permitted", a clear condemnation of the SR leadership's support of government policy. Getzler has argued that the slogan soviet power was not anti-government: even Bolsheviks in the provinces campaigned simultaneously for soviet power and convocation of the Constituent Assembly. However, since the regional soviet deputies believed that they would control both the Assembly and a future socialist government, it is clear that the slogan was indeed a powerful rallying cry against the composition of the Provisional Government even after the inclusion of moderate socialists, who were perceived as more conservative than the Soviets.⁴⁰

By mid-April Lenin was winning over the rank and file of the party, having toured as many of the district committees as possible. The tide turned when the Petersburg City Committee adopted the theses on April 14th by 33 votes to 6 with 2 abstentions. The widening of the party membership was benefiting Lenin. Only 15% of the deputies which had accepted Kamenev's and Stalin's moderate policies in March were re-elected to the April congress. The general economic situation, also, was playing into his hands: peasant land seizures; continued food distribution problems; wages failing to keep pace with inflation. It was difficult for Kamenev to drum up even conditional support for the government when its failings were all too visible. The possibility of such support evaporated after the publication of Milyukov's note. People were fed up waiting for February to bring some gains more tangible than political and civil freedoms.

However, Lenin had not yet convinced all the party leadership, particularly since the April Conference also would debate his controversial views on freedom for the national minorities. Lenin, about to present the report on the current situation, was challenged by Dzerzhinsky "in the name of the many who did not agree in principle with the theses of the spokesman" who demanded a dissenting report for "the comrades who have along with us experienced the revolution in a practical way." With Dzerzhinsky's amendment carried, Kamenev presented the dissenting report, arguing that with an incomplete bourgeois revolution, it was premature to advance to the second stage. He was supported by Rykov, Tomsky, Kalinin and Dzerzhinsky. Faced with this last minute revolt, Lenin needed an ally. To the surprise of many, he was seconded by Stalin. His tough combative speech was accepted as was his presentation of Lenin's policy on national minorities the following day, despite another challenge by Dzerzhinsky. The elections to the Central Committee which followed gave witness to Lenin's new authority. Stalin now came second only to Lenin, while Kamenev trailed fourth. Now that his challenge had been neutralised, Lenin could afford to offer Kamenev patronage and spoke in his favour.⁴¹ Trotsky believed that a crisis in Bolshevism was inevitable in April with leaders returning with competing theories, but the astuteness of Lenin assured that the crisis was not prolonged, allowing the Bolsheviks to seize the revolutionary moment in October.⁴² While the party was not a monolithic bloc with all accepting his theses, most now accepted Lenin's leadership. The return of Lenin was the catalyst which turned the Bolshevik Party into an organisation capable of assuming power.

The resolution of the Bolshevik Party's April crisis, then, became a turning point not only for Lenin and the course of the Russian Revolution, but also for Kamenev and Stalin. Lenin had proved his leadership qualities, while Kamenev knew that his continued membership of the ruling echelons was only through Lenin's patronage. However, his difficulties in winning the leadership battle in April had forced Lenin to look for another fighter to support his cause, someone who was not necessarily a great thinker, but a protégé he could guide. Lenin found his ally in Stalin, and changed the course of Stalin's career in the party. However, in choosing Stalin, Lenin set in train events which not only would bring about the October Revolution, but would ensure that the legacy of October would not be Leninism but Stalinism.

NOTES

- 1 All dates are in the Julian calendar which was 13 days behind the Western calendar.
- 2 R. Service, *Lenin. A Political Life. Vol. 2: Worlds in Collision* (London, Macmillan, 1991), p. 145.
- 3 Lines of communication largely were limited to what could be smuggled into Russia in the heels of Shlyapnikov's shoes.
- 4 Chernov was already being denied an exit visa by the French, while Trotsky would be picked up by the CID unit in Canada which had been formed to watch Sikhs in San Francisco whom the British believed were being armed by the Germans for a possible revolt in wartime India.
- 5 Apparently his newspapers of choice were *Frankfurter Zeitung*, *The Times* and the *Manchester Guardian*. Service, *Political Life*, pp. 148- 149.
- 6 Quoted in L. Trotsky, *The History of the Russian Revolution* (New York, Pathfinder Press, 1986 edition), p. 294. Milyukov never did reply and Martov, Akselrod and fellow Mensheviks had to accept the offer of a second sealed train one month later.
- 7 N. N. Sukhanov, *The Russian Revolution of 1917. A Personal Record* (Princeton University Press, 1984), p. 173. He particularly appreciated "the delicious 'but!'"
- 8 Trotsky, *Russian Revolution*, p. 299.
- 9 S. Fitzpatrick, *The Russian Revolution* (Oxford University Press, 1994, 2nd edition), pp. 56- 57.
- 10 R. Slusser, *Stalin in October: The Man who missed the Revolution* (Baltimore, the Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), p. 57.
- 11 Trotsky, *Russian Revolution*, pp. 310 -311; Service, *Political Life*, pp. 165- 166.
- 12 R. P. Browder & A. F. Kerensky, *The Russian Provisional Government, 1917: Documents* (Stanford, 1961), vol. 3, p. 1208.
- 13 V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works* (Moscow, 1964), xxiv, pp. 25- 26.
- 14 Sukhanov, *Personal Record*, p. 288.
- 15 O. Figes, *A People's Tragedy. The Russian Revolution, 1891 -1924* (London, Pimlico, 1998), p. 388.
- 16 P. le Blanc, *Lenin and the Revolutionary Party* (New Jersey, Humanities Press International, 1990), p. 261.
- 17 N. Harding, *Lenin's Political Thought. Vol. 2. Theory and Practice in the Socialist Revolution* (London, Macmillan, 1981), p. 289.
- 18 Sukhanov, *Personal Record*, pp. 298- 299.
- 19 D. Shub, *Lenin* (New York, Mentor Books, 1948), p. 110.
- 20 R. Tucker, *Stalin as Revolutionary, 1879- 1929* (New York and London, Norton, 1973), p. 167.
- 21 Shub, *Lenin*, p. 110.
- 22 See, for instance, proclamation of the first cabinet, *Izvestia*, No. 4, 3rd March 1917; CPSU, *Short History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks)*, (Moscow, 1939), pp. 175 ff.
- 23 A. G. Shlyapnikov, *Nineteen Seventeen*, (Moscow, 1924), Vol. 1, p. 110.
- 24 Trotsky, *Russian Revolution*, pp. 144-5.
- 25 Tucker, *Stalin as Revolutionary*, p. 164; Slusser, *Stalin in October*, pp. 46- 47
- 26 Slusser, *Stalin in October*, p. 52. Slusser suggests that Stalin set out to "purge" any Bolshevik who remembered his failure, while Soviet accounts of the Stalinist era rewrite history with Stalin greeting Lenin.
- 27 Service, *Political Life*, pp. 163- 164.
- 28 Slusser, *Stalin in October*, pp. 40- 41.
- 29 Trotsky, *Russian Revolution*, p. 291.
- 30 V. Chernov, *The Great Russian Revolution* (New York, 1966), p. 143.
- 31 Le Blanc, *Revolutionary Party*, p. 237.
- 32 Harding, *Political Thought*, p. 150.
- 33 See Kamenev's comments from his article in *Pravda* on April 8th to his speech at the Seventh Party Congress, April 27th in Trotsky, Service, Slusser and Tucker.

- 34 Fitzpatrick, *Russian Revolution*, p. 57.
- 35 Figs, *People's Tragedy*, p. 393.
- 36 Service, *Political Life*, p. 234.
- 37 S. Baron, *Plekhanov. The Father of Russian Marxism* (London, 1963), p. 347.
- 38 R. Pethybridge, *The Spread of the Russian Revolution. Essays on 1917* (London, 1972), p. 179.
- 39 D. Raleigh, "Political Power in the Russian Revolution: A Case Study of Saratov", in E.R. Frankel, J. Frankel and B. Knei-Paz, *Revolution in Russia. Reassessments of 1917* (Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 40- 43.
- 40 I. Getzler, "Soviets as Agents of Democratization", in Frankels and Knei-Paz, *Reassessments*, p. 26.
- 41 Trotsky, *Russian Revolution*, p. 319; Slusser, *Stalin in October*, pp. 76- 79 & 84- 90; Service, *Political Life*, p. 171; Tucker, *Stalin as Revolutionary*, p. 168.
- 42 Trotsky, *Russian Revolution*, p. 330.

Reviews

Modern Historiography, An Introduction

Michael Bentley

Routledge

£9.99

182pp

Pbk

1998

ISBN 0 415 20267 1

Ignore the dull title, do the quiz. Which historian was murdered by Nazis in a field near Lyon in June 1944? Who began to write his enormous seventeen volume *Universal History* when he was 83 years old? Who resigned his chair at Columbia University in support of faculty colleagues who had been persecuted for opposing America's entry into the First World War? Which Polish-Russian historian was a refugee from Galicia and became an English knight and gentleman? Who spent the Second World War in a German prison camp and emerged after five years with a Mediterranean masterpiece? Who predicted the end of History after the Wall came down? And one more for Higher History markers: Who in 1961 denied that Adolf Hitler had had 'a blue-print for war' in 1939?

The answers to these and many other fascinating questions about history, historians and historiography can be found in this marvellous book. This is no dry treatise on the various competing schools of past historical fashion and method. Bentley knows his stuff but he also knows his historians and he manages to mesh great ideas with the lives of those who thought them in an enlightening and entertaining mix. Not only is this book immensely enjoyable, it will also make you think. Almost every page has something insightful or provocative which stops you short and makes you reflect and engage in a silent debate with the author.

For once the back page blurb is right. This is the essential introduction to the history of historical writing. Each stage in the development of the discipline is firmly rooted in its wider philosophical and historical context. From Spinoza, Kant and Hume through to Barthes, Derrida and Foucault, we get to see the links and get a sense of why historians of a given period thought and wrote the way they did. National characteristics and historical events themselves have played their part as well and so they are used to help explain why differing schools of historical writing emerged in different countries. Nor does Bentley overlook the all-important sub-plot whereby the occupation of historian was professionalised first in Bismarckian Germany then in the Princetonian USA of Woodrow Wilson.

If I have a complaint with this book, it would be that it is too short. You are left suspecting that Bentley has a tantalising fund of interesting tales still to tell and engaging ideas still to relate. I was also disappointed that he took the early eighteenth century Neapolitan rhetorician Giambattista Vico as his starting point when perhaps Lodovico Muratori or even Francesco Guicciardini have stronger claims to the title of 'father of modern historiography'. But this is not a criticism, rather a lament as I would have liked to read Bentley's views on these personal historiographical heroes. Yet there's nothing much about the Russian dimension of the profession, riven by Westerner-Easterner disputes? Or Soviet historiography? Or the insights which have developed in recent decades outwith the Euro-American world? Maybe in the next, vastly expanded, edition?

This book is a great read. It will fascinate, irritate and educate anyone who is interested in History and has opinions about what it should be and what it should do. I hope it becomes a standard text on History degree courses throughout the universe. Dripping with erudition yet lightly and skilfully written, this is one of those books that will be consulted time and again until the pages are dog-eared and start falling away from the spine.....

[P.S. As if you didn't know, the answers are: Marc Bloch: Leopold von Ranke: Charles Beard: Sir Lewis Namier: Fernand Braudel: Francis Fukuyama: and finally that veteran of a thousand Extended Essays, Alan John Percivale Taylor.]

RICHARD LC DARGIE

The Stalin Years: The Soviet Union 1929-1953

Evan Mawdsley

Manchester University Press

£11.99

162pp

Pbk

1998

ISBN 0 7190 4600 9

This book in MUP's *New Frontiers in History* series has all the right characteristics to be added into any reading list for Advanced Higher pupils doing the Stalinism part of the Soviet Russia topic. However, it needs to be treated with care.. especially in the *Introduction*. This does ask all the right questions.. How do we place Stalinism in history?, Can we see continuity from Lenin to Stalin?, Should Stalinism be seen as a distortion, a discontinuity or a negation ? How has Stalinism been successively viewed by Russians? (ie. Trotsky, Khrushchev, Gorbachev etc). Now, it may be that these are all relevant issues in 'a rich area of debate', but to attempt even the beginnings of answers to these complexities within 13 sides means that intentionalist v. structuralist, 'conflict school' v. 'bottom up school' plus revisionist schools.. are thrown at you with bewildering speed. It really is enough to deter any but the most determined reader.

BUT.. once past the *Introduction*, this is a different book. We are taken through important issues at a much more careful and instructive pace. We have been reminded that '*it is impossible to understand the actions of Stalin without paying serious attention to Marxist-Leninism*' and we see how this argument is valid. Stalin's conflict-orientated approach, the non-rural ideology of Marxism, the 'top down' relationship between party and society, ideological assumptions about the fall of capitalism etc: all these were factors shaping the nature of the Stalinist state. The argument here.. **is not**, as Gill says, that nothing was inevitable about Stalinism and that it was not a continuity with the past. Mawdsley's argument is more along the lines that it is difficult to imagine any Marxist coming to power in the later 1920's **not** following at least some of the paths Stalin took. They were a sort of ideological prescription that was unavoidable. Thus, '*Stalinism inherited many of the fundamentals from Leninism*' (p25).

It is interesting to speculate, when exactly Stalin started inheriting these ideas. He seemed to have moved very quickly from disciple to leader. As Mawdsley puts it, '*When the Civil War began he was a non-entity, when it ended he was one of the top half dozen leaders in the largest country in the world*'. He could have added, that five years later, that top half dozen was effectively reduced to one!

However, this is maybe off the point. The author does date the start of his analysis of *The Stalin Years*, at 1929. Chapter 2 is therefore straight into industrialisation. A chapter with a clear structure and very impressive use of statistics (with a focus on the end-achievement of the level of industrial strength by World War Two.. which is the author's most recent area of research). There is a not ungrudging admiration for this achievement, considering that ... '*only the most pessimistic planning could have assumed that so much territory would be lost..*' (p33). It may be that, in the 1930's Russia '*stumbled into its policies due to inexperience*' but the creation of '*a war economy in peacetime*' led to Russia's ultimate survival in 1942. What we in fact see in chapter after chapter, is the author's belief that a study of Russia at War is essential in any judgement of Stalinism. The war was the pivot around which Stalinism revolved. I personally feel that, the author's sub-text really is 'How can we see Stalinism as preparing for a war to come.. and how did Stalinism cope with, and emerge from that war?' The chapters veer towards asking these sorts of questions although the main headings seem to be the usual ones of industrialisation, collectivisation, purges, or whatever.

Chapter 3 discusses the impact of Stalin's policies on the Russian people. This is the issue of '*The Great Breakthrough or the Great Retreat*'. He starts off with the terrible population tragedy which hit the Russian people: the effects of collectivisation. Again, the analysis drifts towards the effects of the war.. '*the later 1940's were when the back of the old village was finally broken*', takes the analysis of the impact of collectivisation outside its traditional area.

Chapter 4 on social realism discusses Stalinist culture.. and decides that it fits into the 'Great Retreat'. Chapter 5 is on nationalities. This gives a good history of the nationalities problem and Stalin's changing approach to it. Stalin's policy of Russification in the 1930's seemed focussed on use of a single language and then the mass deportation of ethnic groups. This had, in some cases, something of the same geo-political impulse as under Tsarism, (to guarantee the safety of the border areas), although the Tsars had never gone in for such wholesale resettlement.

Stalin's policy was little short of ethnic cleansing and had as little successful long term effect as the Tsars had achieved. By the time Stalin died '*Russia was seething with ethnic discontent.*' But who suffered most by it? During the war.. '*the three pivotal battles were fought on ethnic Russian soil*' .. yet two thirds of the land which the Germans occupied was in the republics peopled by non-Russians.

In Chapter 6, on foreign policy, there is a speedy resumé of key events.. then a deeper discussion of the legitimacy of the 'two camps' view. Chapter 7 discusses the Terror with good coverage of the key issues of debate: Did the NKVD get out of hand?, Have the figures been over-exaggerated?, Was terror a defining feature of Stalinism? etc.

The chapter called *Conclusion* is quickly reached.. with some very apposite comments but much too brief. It has barely 4 sides where the author shows his mixed feeling towards his topic. Stalin supervised '*an awesome achievement*' but it also had awesome failings. Mawdsley is happy to put Stalinism into its wider historical context; he sees the roots of the failure of the Soviet Union in 1991 as emerging under Stalin.. '*The Stalinist programme was corrosive to the system.*' [p116]

There were a couple of early typographical errors which I hoped would be it.. but it became quite irritating by the later part of the book to see so many. (A *t* missed off instrument [p32] then [p34] had *the the*, but there were also a whole lot of later mistakes.. *there* for their [p72], meaningless grammar such as *Russian nationalism stemmed from followed a range of real factors*.. [p75], *in* missed out [p82], pre-emptive missing an *e* and a *the* missed out [p86], *its its* [p87], commands for commanders [p93] and *in in* [p105] This sort of carelessness should be able to be taken out of the equation by now: even my home computer puts a little red squiggle under such pieces of grammatical nonsense.

This is a relatively short text.. but it has a lot of useful additions. The 116 pages of the analysis are followed by 30 pages of relevant documents.. which are clearly but not over-conspicuously flagged up in the text. There is then a 10 side bibliographical essay with good comment on the reading materials referred to. This is **far** superior to a book list.

This then, is an attractive and readable book. It is a review of knowledge and thoughts 'to date', on the major aspects of Stalinism, without trying to push out any new 'ground-breaking' theory on how Stalinism should be analysed. Chapters do stand alone (and are quite brief!), the sources are both helpfully annotated and relevant, and the writing style is fluent. All these factors make it pretty suitable for use at Advanced Higher

ANDREW HUNT

Young Wilhelm – The Kaiser's Early Life 1859-1888

John C.G. Röhl

Cambridge University Press

£45

979pp

Hbk

1998

ISBN 0 521 49752 3

This blockbuster of a book by the Anglo-German author of *The Kaiser and his Court* and other works on modern German history is a translation of the highly acclaimed German original published in 1993 which has sold about 20,000 copies in Germany. It is only the first volume of what seems likely to be a three volume work and this first volume is more useful as background reading for the Higher/Intermediate 2 Germany/Bismarck topic than for Standard Grade Unit 2B – although it would be an understatement to say that it contains a lot more than you'll ever need to know for anything you're ever likely to find yourself teaching!

Its main strength lies in its detailed reconstruction from their correspondence (or lack of it in the case of Wilhelm) of the relationship between Wilhelm and his parents, the Crown Prince Frederick, eldest son of Kaiser Wilhelm I, and Crown Princess Vicky, eldest daughter of Queen Victoria. Röhl is the first historian to get access to a number of important collections of correspondence including some 10,000 letters between the Crown Prince and Princess, which they had hidden from their son. In particular it examines the effects of his difficult birth and upbringing and his problematic relationship with his mother on the development of his "*egotistical, narcissistic and cold*" personality as well as

on his political views and his attitude to 'England' (the author's tendency to use 'England' rather than 'Britain' seems to reflect the royal family's own preference for the term in their correspondence).

Wilhelm's accession to the throne in 1888 had almost everyone worried, including some of those whose hopes for the skipping of a generation and the bypassing of his liberal father had been realised by the latter's death from throat cancer only 99 days after becoming Kaiser. Even some of Wilhelm's reactionary militaristic cronies such as Waldersee who welcomed his accession, do not seem to have been too happy with aspects of his arrogant and unpredictable personality.

The book is to a large extent about who or what was responsible for this unfortunate outcome. How far was it the doctors who presided at his botched birth and/or the hair-raising attempts to treat his disabled arm? How far was it the mother who could not hide her disappointment with the physical and intellectual development of her first-born? How far was it the legacy of a stern and opinionated tutor? How far was it the self-centred, macho-militaristic milieu of the Imperial/Prussian court? And how far, at the end of the day, was it 'just William'?

The book opens with an incredibly detailed and quite gripping piece of historical detective work using letters and documents to establish the exact circumstances of Wilhelm's birth, including the citation of both contemporary and modern medical opinion. It was a breech birth and it would seem that the presiding doctor caused the injuries to the left arm by using it to twist Wilhelm round prior to delivery, thus severing the nerve connections at the base of the neck and resulting in paralysis and retarded growth. There is also inconclusive speculation that the excessive use of chloroform as well as ergot on his mother during labour may have caused brain damage. It was some time before the extent of the injuries became apparent, leading to a series of cruel and largely ineffective attempts at treatment including an iron neck-brace, tying the right arm down to force him to use the left one as well as wrapping the left arm in a freshly slaughtered hare! The young Wilhelm seems to have stood up to all this surprisingly well but it must have given rise to feelings of inadequacy and parental disappointment – especially in one destined to become the All-Highest War Lord of Prussia and the Reich – feelings which Wilhelm seems later to have compensated for and sublimated through unfeeling arrogance and the cultivation of military prowess.

It is difficult to escape the impression that anything that could be done wrong was done wrong. The situation seems to have been made worse by the appointment as tutor to the seven year old prince of the rigid and unsympathetic, Hinzpeter, with his belief in the beneficial effects of "humiliation" and that fear, deprivation and worry provide the strongest motivation for doing good! And, if teachers think they have a workload problem, they should try the regime imposed upon Wilhelm when he went to the gymnasium at Kassel at the age of 15. He got up at 5 a.m. and had an hour of work with Hinzpeter at 6 a.m. before attending lessons at school between 7 a.m. and 12 noon (with breakfast between 8.50 and 9.10 a.m.). The last hour before lunch was set aside for riding, fencing and English. Between 2 and 4 p.m. there were two further lessons; between 4 and 5 p.m. a walk and after supper (5 to 6 p.m.) two further hours of study or private tuition. But, in view of his limited academic ability and lack of intellectual inclination, all this was probably counter-productive and, as with his physical disability, only served to give rise to further maternal disappointment. She was later to complain that he hardly ever wrote to her but this seems to have been largely her own fault as she seemed to regard his youthful letters as an extension of his already excessive school work. She criticised his grammar and hand-writing, and even returned some of them with the spelling corrected (and it will be of some consolation to Higher pupils to note that she herself consistently miss-spells Bismarck as 'Bismark'!). Wilhelm's apparent inability to live up to his mother's ideals must have contributed significantly to his later ignoring or intolerance of criticism.

These early years were not only crucial to the development of his character but also, in view of his strained relationship with his mother, in predisposing him to reject the liberal anglophile political views she had been hoping to cultivate in him. Thus, on going to university in Bonn, he fell in with the Corps Borussia, an aristocratic duelling fraternity (although he himself was not allowed to duel) and from there went to live in Potsdam where, as a First Guards lieutenant, he soaked up the militaristic atmosphere and attitudes. Even his arranged marriage backfired on his parents as his wife, Dona, turned out to be narrow-minded and piously orthodox in religion. By this time Wilhelm had also

developed into a hypocrite. Rohl's painstaking and detailed detective work reveals that, while Wilhelm was denouncing immorality in others, including his uncle, the Prince of Wales, he was conducting a series of sexual liaisons including a long-standing association with Miss Love, a prostitute, as well as three-in-bed and bondage sessions. Despite the later exposure of his close friend, Eulenberg, as a homosexual, there does not appear to be any evidence of it in Wilhelm.

By this time his estrangement from his parents was more or less complete. He continually offended them by dealing directly with his grandfather, Kaiser Wilhelm I, cultivating the Bismarcks and doing nothing to discourage those hoping to keep his liberal father from the throne by securing his own succession on the death of his grandfather. More dangerously his political views became irreversibly reactionary, militaristic and anti-Semitic (despite the fact that his best friend at school was Jewish – the father of the historian Geoffrey Elton and grandfather of the comedian, Ben Elton). He also took an increasing interest in foreign affairs, fancying himself first as a great diplomat in his dealings with the Russian Tsar but later associating more and more closely with those advocating a preventive war against Germany's supposed enemies. Rather like those politicians who later tried to use Hitler, the Bismarcks found to their cost that Wilhelm was not their creature and, as with Hitler, even his cronies could not rely on his loyalty or goodwill. His uncritical and mystical belief in divine right and his own destiny went beyond anything even the most toadying politicians could seriously entertain and, at the end of the day, played into the hands of the Prussian military leadership.

But if Wilhelm is the 'heart of darkness' at the centre of the book, he is only one villain among a cast of hundreds. The self-important pettiness and political meddling of the European royal families and their aristocratic hangers-on is painful to behold, providing the hot-house atmosphere in which Wilhelm's inflated sense of himself came to fruition. His mother's obvious belief in English/British superiority and her and Queen Victoria's clumsy attempts at influencing events were often undiplomatic to say the least and played into the hands of the Anglophobe opponents of liberalism.

Röhl is very good on health matters. As well as the circumstances and consequences of Wilhelm's birth, he deals in some detail with the 'royal diseases' transmitted by Victoria to a number of her grandchildren. Wilhelm's eldest sister, Charlotte, (and possibly his mother) suffered from porphyria, the disease responsible for the madness of King George III, while fear of haemophilia was possibly the reason for the abandonment of plans to marry Wilhelm to his cousin Princess Victoria of Hesse-Darmstadt, daughter of Queen Victoria's daughter Alice.

A recurring and potentially very serious ear infection suffered by Wilhelm himself also gets detailed treatment as does the progress of the throat cancer which finally killed his father. The fact that Wilhelm's parents put their trust in a British doctor who disagreed with the German doctors' correct diagnosis and the fact that another British doctor had been present at his own birth (although it was a German doctor who actually delivered him) later led Wilhelm to the conclusion that "*An English doctor killed my father, and an English doctor crippled my arm – and this we owe to my mother, who would not have Germans about her!*". In fact both doctors, Sir James Clark and Morell Mackenzie, appear to have been Scottish, but, while this distinction is important to Scots, it is not one of those mistakes of Wilhelm which, it could be argued, significantly affected the course of world history.

At times the details of the physical and emotional health of the various members of the royal family and the sometimes repetitive extracts from their letters becomes almost over-powering and one feels the need for a bit of fresh air in the way of editing and the inclusion of more of the occasional glimpses into what was going on outside this claustrophobic and incestuous circle. At the same time it undoubtedly helps the reader to get the feel of the subject through the primary source material, while the wider context can be studied elsewhere.

Röhl also provides some analysis of a significant recurring dream that Wilhelm had in his late teens which he confided in his mother, involving a good and a bad mother and wishing to kiss the left hand of the good mother. As well as being interesting in itself this serves to remind us that we are dealing with the pre-Freudian era when the psychological implications of such dreams and all sorts of other behaviour would be nothing like as apparent as it is to us now. The same goes for Wilhelm's parents' doomed attempts to shape his development. Rohl observes sardonically that things might have turned out better if they had followed the example of previous royals and neglected him.

The overall picture of the royal family's life-style and attitudes is so awful and unattractive, particularly the rigid protocols and petty jealousies which governed their lives, that one has to make a conscious effort not to be too judgmental and harsh on the individuals involved, bearing in mind the atmosphere in which they were brought up and the social and political attitudes which were widespread at the time. But it is sometimes difficult to believe that it was all happening only a hundred years ago – almost within living memory. The big question arising from the book is, of course, how significant a factor was Wilhelm's flawed personality in the subsequent development of German and world history, and the related counter-factual question of what might have happened if his liberal anglophile father had survived. Was Wilhelm, in the memorable phrase of the conservative Friedrich von Holstein, "*the nemesis of world history*"? In terms of Rohl's work, we should perhaps await the appearance of the second volume before passing judgement but a biography will almost inevitably exaggerate the role and importance of its subject.

There were many weaknesses in the German political system as established in 1871 – a young, retarded and not yet self-assured political culture with no proper mechanism for central direction except the person of the Kaiser himself surrounded by a series of competing cliques, in some ways like an embryonic version of the later Third Reich. Bismarck was largely but by no means solely to blame for this but, given the importance of the position of the Kaiser, it is difficult not to conclude that, if they had been allowed to (and that is quite a big 'if'), Wilhelm's parents could have moved Germany in a more positive direction, while the accession of their son, even if not itself the major factor in subsequent events, at the very least precluded Germany from taking the path away from reaction and war.

DUNCAN TOMS

James VI and I

Roger Lockyer

Longman	£11.99	234pp	Pbk	1998	ISBN 0 582 27961 5
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James VI and I was a unique monarch. He was the first to hold jointly the triple thrones of Scotland, England and Ireland; he took active (though unsuccessful) steps to create his ideal of 'Britain'; and he wrote extensively on topics as diverse as witchcraft and the theory of monarchy. His reign was notable for its lack of serious conflict between Scotland and England, and the union of the crowns in 1603 was a momentous event in the history of Scotland, England, Ireland and, ultimately, Britain. James VI and I has been the subject of a good deal of academic endeavour over the years, but this most recent volume proves that there is always room for another angle or a new interpretation. As part of the Longman *Profiles in Power* series, Roger Lockyer has produced a concise, but detailed account of James's reign, with the aim of adding to the more recent revisionist perspectives on his successes and failures. The book starts with one of the most famous descriptions of the king: '*James I slobbered at the mouth and had favourites; he was thus a bad king*' (p1). It goes on to examine all aspects of the reign in detail, in order to show that James was not wholly 'a bad king', but that his actions were influenced by many factors. The author provides a summary of the historiography of James, from the early, generally derogatory, assessments by Scott and Macaulay, to more recent, rather better balanced assessments of the reign, by historians such as Peck and Wormald. The current general view is that James was neither an abject failure nor a spectacular success. He was a complex individual, ruling in entirely new circumstances after 1603, and subjected to a variety of influences, both domestic and foreign.

The major chapters in the book cover: the main events during the reign of James VI before 1603, including the problems of his minority and actions on taking control from about 1585; James's philosophy of kingship, in particular his publications on concepts and application of monarchy; his relations with parliament, including the thorny areas of royal prerogative and the role of parliament *vis à vis* kingly power; James's rather extravagant lifestyle and financial problems, and the role and influences of the court favourites such as Carr and Buckingham; his actions towards the church; his role as a European monarch; and his relationships with each of his three kingdoms. The short, final

chapter has as its title perhaps the most quoted remark about James: *'The wisest fool in Christendom?'* There is a very useful, thematic bibliographical essay to conclude the work.

The book highlights James's initial enthusiasm for fuller union and the creation of Great Britain, and his genuine surprise at the opposition he encountered on all sides, and the author's comment that *'the failure of James's attempt to reshape the way in which his people thought of themselves was a reminder of the limits on what even a divinely appointed and ordained monarch could achieve'* (p60) could well be applied to most of the other areas considered. The hallmark of the reign was the difficulty James experienced in putting his well-articulated ideas of kingship into practice. This is seen in his relations with parliament, where he did not always achieve what he set out to do, particularly in terms of supply. On a number of occasions parliament granted less than James had requested, and he never achieved the sort of rapport with, or control over parliament that he had hoped, despite his careful choice of members of the Privy Council. Even in 1624, the year before his death, James remarked that *'never a man in a dry and sandy wilderness ... did thirst more in hot weather for a drink than I do now for a happy conclusion of this Parliament'* (p75). James fared equally badly in his attempts to influence the course of events on the wider stage of Europe, both by diplomatic means and also in the highly influential marriage market. Criticism may be levelled at James for being less active in Europe than he might have been, but his reputation as a fence-sitter (he would describe himself as a peacemaker) perhaps owed more to the fact that *'the early Stuart state was not designed for war'* (p157). The author covers this aspect well, and in more detail than in some other works.

The book traces, mostly successfully, the ongoing conflict between James's image of himself and the powers he thought should be his, and various groups or institutions which took a rather different view. The most substantial chapter deals, not surprisingly, with James and his relations with the church, outlining well the problems he faced with Puritans and Roman Catholics in England and tracing his manipulation of all sides of the religious debate in order to pursue his aims as a 'godly prince'. It might have been better to include the problems with the Scottish church in this chapter rather than as part of the general chapter on the government of the three kingdoms. The role and actions of courtiers and court favourites are well described. The court was of considerable importance in terms of the complex pattern of influences on the king, and the rise and fall of men such as Buckingham are covered efficiently. The important point is made that although the court at times seemed like a prison for the king because of its formalities and barriers to access, James still retained considerable power. He reminded Robert Carr, for example, that *'all your being, except your breathing and soul, is from me'* (p170).

Given the relatively compact proportions of the book, the author manages to cover a great deal of ground. A particular feature is the extensive use of primary sources, which help greatly in placing James in context, both in terms of analysing his own writings and opinions, and those of others who influenced him. This is, perhaps, the main 'new' feature. Lockyer does not offer any radically different or completely new assessment of James; rather he supports the revisionist view by means of extensive analysis of primary sources rather than a reassessment of the very recent secondary literature on the topic.

This last point also, though, highlights a somewhat curious feature. Whereas the bibliographical essay covers recent works extensively, the relatively sparse secondary references within the individual chapters are often drawn from earlier works., giving a somewhat puzzling air to the book. Apart from the short historiographical survey at the start, the author does not engage extensively with the historiographical debates within the main sections of the book. The other, perhaps inevitable, criticism which may be levelled at the book by a Scottish reviewer is the relatively peripheral status given to the peripheral nations in James's triumvirate of kingdoms. It is undeniable that England was the largest nation; England was James's home and centre of power; England was where national and international politics operated. However, the complexities of James's problems with Scotland and Ireland perhaps do not receive the detailed analysis which they deserve (though this is, admittedly, difficult in a book of this size and the author does attempt to cover these aspects). The religious issues in Scotland could have been explored rather more deeply, in the context of the problems they caused for James in 'Britain' as well as in Scotland, as could the void created in Scotland by the removal of monarch and court to London, and the role of Dunbar and Dunfermline as crown agents in the immediate post-union period.

These criticisms apart, this is a well-written, modestly-priced book, which does add a further dimension to a much-debated reign. This would be a useful addition to school libraries and to the teaching of Scottish and British history in the period. Its major asset is that it manages to trace through a complex reign the continuing dichotomy between abstract theory of kingship and real kingship, and the final sentence of the book is rather different from its first – *'James's subjects were lucky to have him as their king'*.

HELEN DINGWALL

The Early Feminists; Radical Unitarians and the Emergence of the Women's Rights Movement, 1831-51

Kathryn Gleadle

Macmillan

£16.99

266pp

Pbk

1998

ISBN 0 333 73502 1

This book sets out to trace the origins of the women's rights movement to a specific group of radical reformers, the 'radical unitarians' as the author describes them. In particular it focuses on intellectual and literary women, and their output in a variety of radical journals and as novelists. Gleadle argues that by the late 1840s, the 'radical unitarians' *"had developed a powerful, social, political and cultural critique of modern society, and women's role within it"*.

According to Gleadle, their vision led them to engage in campaigning on women's legal position, attempting to secure female suffrage on the Chartist programme, tackling the problem of prostitution, and experimenting in adult education for women. She claims that these women were *"the pioneers of the Victorian women's rights movement"*. A particularly attractive facet of this group's vision for the author appears to be the emphasis they placed on the contribution women might play as mothers and their encouragement of men to *"embrace the caring values of the home and to reconsider their role within it"*.

The author has clearly done sterling work in consulting and studying sources, identifying new sources or approaching known sources with a different eye in order to reveal their gendered content. This includes articles in journals, correspondence, and novels written by the protagonists with whom author is concerned. Yet, despite the richness and value of the sources, there are a number of limitations to the way the author handles the material. The book suffers from a lack of either a clear narrative or a clear analytical framework. There is insufficient context in which to situate the material examined. For example, the location of the Unitarians in relation to other dissenting or radical traditions is only partially explored. The issue of geographical location of Unitarian groups, and their relative influence within different cities or towns is not discussed in any detail. Gleadle indicates that there were active groups in London, Birmingham, Liverpool and Manchester, and also makes reference to occasional events in Glasgow and Edinburgh. She also makes clear that the treatment of women and views expressed about women's position were not uniformly radical in these different areas. But she gives no real sense of the radical unitarians' position and influence within these particular communities, or of how regional and local differences might have affected both attitudes to women and how the women's rights movement might have developed in different areas. This matters in the context of claims to be writing about the women's rights movement in Britain, or about Victorian feminism in general. Indeed the case might be made that such general claims are premature and yet to be proved, given, for example, the paucity of research on feminism in nineteenth century Scotland.

An adequate account of the class position and social networks of radical unitarians is also lacking, and there is only a very belated recognition in the concluding chapter that their ideas had very little appeal to the working class. Indeed, Gleadle seems to lament the passing from the radical unitarians' small, mixed groups of intellectuals, by her own account male dominated, debating how to live perfect relationships, to women's self organisation with the aim of effecting changes in the law and women's status.

For this reader, the most serious limitation of the book is, however, Gleadle's persistent sniping at feminist historians for failing to notice the unitarians' importance. This is largely unfair in that the writers she is attacking, such as Jane Rendall and Olive Banks, would not have claimed to have written definitive histories of the nineteenth century women's movement. And even if she has a point she does herself no favours by her carping tone. Women's history is at too early a stage of development for all sources to have been mined and all aspects been explored, contrary to Gleadle's claim in her introductory sentence that nineteenth century woman has been looked at exhaustively.

Furthermore, despite the continual assertion of the significance of the unitarians' influence, she does not in fact provide the evidence that might allow us to weigh up this claim. What Gleadle can point to is that certain types of debates took place about the nature of women's position in society and how it ought to change, for example, on women's role as wives; on marital relationships; on attitudes to Chartism and female suffrage; on comparisons of women's position to slavery; on the marriage contract; and on women's participation in unitarian cultural and educational clubs. She can also point to who was advocating these ideas, and to some of the responses they provoked. But she does not provide information on the circulation of the journals referred to, who was reading them, or the social composition of this readership, thus a full assessment of the extent of their influence or effective comparison with other movements or other strands of thought is not possible.

At best, it would seem that Gleadle might claim the 'radical unitarians' to have been amongst the pioneers of Victorian feminism. But it would seem likely that similar ideas, or other ideas challenging conventional views of women's position, were the topic of debate in other social and religious circles, or in other strata of society. The notion of a 'vanguard' group leading the way and being precursor of all other developments may be questioned as an appropriate model for feminism, and other similar types of social movement, both in the Victorian period and in the present day. Ultimately, despite Gleadle's protestations of their significant role, doubts persist as to whether the 'radical unitarians', distant as they were from the reality of many women's lives, occupied the central place claimed for them.

ESTHERBREITENBACH

The Second World War: A Short History

R.A.C. Parker

Oxford University Press

£9.99

330pp

Pbk

1998

ISBN 0 19 289285 1

Is the Second World War a national obsession? Certainly, there must be other History teachers of my generation who find it difficult to gain a reliable perspective on this subject. The war dominated the comics, TV and films that I remember. Stories of bravery and endurance were passed on first hand. Maybe one of the reasons why this is the first academic text of this type that I have read is because I already feel I know so much about it. Or perhaps I didn't want my illusions shattered.

Dr Parker lets me down gently. The great stories are here; the hunt for the Bismarck, the breaking of Enigma, Operation Sea lion are enthralling when placed clearly in their historical context. I have read elsewhere that Hitler regarded the Battle of Britain as of little significance and that Britain's leaders would have been wiser to make peace with Germany at the time of the Hess mission. However, the chapter on 'Britain Alone' gives some legitimacy to teachers who may have tried to capture pupils' interest in this struggle by attaching importance – even some heroic qualities – to Britain's actions during the months in which she fought alone. It still appears that Britain went to war for honourable reasons and that the British people made a vital contribution to the defeat of Nazism.

Some received wisdom is exposed as myth. He provides clear evidence to refute Harris's claims for the effectiveness of area bombing and argues convincingly that strategic bombing only worked in Japan. In Germany it served to increase Hitler's popularity.

Churchill's role is not singled out for special treatment, although the power and effectiveness of his rhetoric is acknowledged. The treatment of what is left of Montgomery's reputation is as cutting as it

is well documented. He is described as a man who *"excelled in conceit, complacency and arrogance of demeanour"* and it becomes quite clear that Eisenhower's veto on Montgomery's plan to hasten the end of the war with a *"forty division thrust"* was not an American bid to steal the glory. Rather, it is evidence of the American's clearer strategic thinking.

Indeed the author's treatment of the role of the U.S.A. provides a new perspective for those who were taught at an early age to mock John Wayne's swaggering self-confidence. It is a recurring theme of the book that the war marked the emergence of a new superpower. After July 1944 Britain's role was that of a junior partner. However, whilst Parker lays bare the many disagreements between the western allies he judges them to be the *"quarrels of intimacy"*.

Even in such a wide-ranging study the true horror of war is never obscured. As always, the true horror lies in the detail. The description even of an uncelebrated skirmish is given shattering impact by the inclusion of detailed casualty figures. The photograph showing a Rumanian Jew being taunted by his captors is harrowing both for the facial expressions and for the footnote saying that the victim was beaten to death shortly afterwards.

For the teacher who wants pupils to learn about the holocaust but finds the topic difficult to teach well, Parker's chapter contains great clarity and wisdom. He contends that the enormity of the crime defies comparison with mass bombing, Hiroshima and Nagasaki or even Stalin's death-camps. He deals incisively with the prickly issue of guilt observing that the holocaust was a result of the actions of a few Nazi fanatics and the indifference of the rest. He points to the complicity of other nations but contends that few that were involved could have grasped the full savagery. The conduct of Italians and Danes compares well with people further to the east but for western Europeans relative freedom for guilt rests on *"historical accident, not moral superiority"*. He cites recent research, which lays blame on Britain and U.S.A. for not doing more. For example, Auschwitz could have been bombed by June 1944 but he defends the allies saying, *"improbability caused incredulity"*. He concludes, *"In this disaster few were heroic and few completely villainous"*.

Parker also shows some of the lasting effects of the war and examines the origins of the Cold War. He observes that both sides were to blame for the failure to bring about a friendly partition of Europe and argues that the relative stability bequeathed to Europe was not matched in Africa and Asia. The way in which the war contributed to America's economic hegemony is clearly demonstrated. He observes that no one treaty marked the transformation to a post-war era but that the new world was brought into being step by step.

The chapter on Economies at war examines the varying experiences of the combatant nations. The Germans had a comparatively comfortable war due mainly to the use of slave labour and efficiency of organisation. The USSR relied on planning, adaptation and sacrifice and like Britain, there was increasing reliance on economic aid from the USA.

The chapter on the impact of war considers the many ways in which war affected ordinary people. The suffering of occupied populations is given sharp focus by the description of the experience of the Netherlands. 150,000 Dutch civilian casualties were a result of allied bombing, forced labour, illness, starvation, the tragic effects of the rail strike and racial persecution.

An interesting conclusion is made on the effect of war on women. In both Britain and USA emancipation was *"unwelcome to almost everyone concerned"* and war has actually interrupted the progress of female emancipation in the twentieth century.

This study aims to cover all the decisive episodes in world history during a six-year period. The detailed treatment given to these events is impressive. Explanations of the great campaigns are illustrated with statistical and geographical detail, which at times boggled the mind of this reader. The explanation of the development of the atomic bomb includes references to a level of nuclear physics that may be beyond the grasp of the average History teacher.

The opening chapter gives a clear and concise analysis of the reasons for the outbreak of the European war, which would assist the revision of an able Higher student. The view is that Hitler's leanings towards armed aggression and belief in national and racial struggle made war inevitable but that how and when it came was mainly the result of British policy. Appeasers were working towards

two incompatible objects – to change the map of Europe to make it acceptable to Hitler whilst at the same time preventing the unchallengeable domination of Europe by German military power.

Chamberlain's lack of flexibility is illustrated by the fact that even after March 1939 he still believed that he could secure peace by agreement when most British citizens believed that rearmament and alliances were the best way of avoiding war.

The book has freed me from some of my misconceptions about the war without making me too cynical. As such, it provides an antidote to those who may be suffering the worst effects of a national obsession. It is indeed a "*miracle of compression*" and would provide an excellent reference book for teachers and senior pupils studying the causes and consequences of the war and how it was won and lost.

JERRY TEALE

Neville Chamberlain, Appeasement and the British Road to War Frank McDonough

Manchester University Press £13.99 196pp Pbk 1998 ISBN 0 7190 4832 X

"Perhaps a poster outside a cinema in the days after Munich summed up the state of British public opinion quite well. It read. 'Chamberlain the Peacemaker: For One Week Only'" (p130)

This pithy observation itself sums up well the strengths of this book, one of MUP's *New Frontiers in History* series written by leading historians in their fields and aimed mainly at students and sixth formers. But this title will also be very useful background reading for those teaching *Appeasement and the Road to War* at Higher and Intermediate and for candidates doing their extended essays or responses on the topic. McDonough explains both the current state of historiography and the main issues involved in a clear and succinct manner. He sets out to put appeasement in its wider social and economic context and is particularly good on the mass media and public opinion where he develops a telling critique of the notion that appeasement as practised by Chamberlain ever enjoyed the levels of popular support which are often claimed in its defence.

His introduction provides a summary of the development of the historiography of appeasement to date, very similar to that made by Professor Peden at SATH's autumn 1998 Conference at Stirling University. Starting with the initial 'Guilty Men' approach of the immediate post-Chamberlain reaction which tended to portray him and his policy as stupid, cowardly and even criminal, McDonough moves on through the 'revisionism' of the 1960s and 70s when the release of documents under the 30 year rule led to a fundamental reappraisal of appeasement and a marked tendency to justify it as the most realistic policy in the circumstances. This brings us to the latest more balanced 'post-revisionist' school including McDonough himself and R.A.C. Parker who, while accepting that Chamberlain was well intentioned and that there were understandable reasons for appeasement, nevertheless consider the way he pursued the policy to have been fundamentally flawed – in particular his dogmatic and blinkered belief in his personal ability to secure lasting peace and his intolerance of dissenting views which led him to engage in the misleading 'news management' of press, radio and cinema newsreel – what would nowadays be called 'spin doctoring' – which still colours our images of appeasement and public opinion.

The book is then divided into two parts – *Appeasement and British government 1918-1939*, looking at the 'official mind', and *Appeasement and British society 1918-1939*, looking at the 'public mind'. The first part, divided into five chapters is a chronological treatment of the political, diplomatic and military history of appeasement, focussing in particular on how the 'passive' appeasement prior to 1937 became 'active' under Chamberlain's premiership and, at the same time, if anything, more purely defensive in military terms. Even after Munich, Chamberlain continued to use economic arguments to restrain increases in defence spending and had to be pressured into stepping up

rearmament. It was the anti-appeasers rather than the appeasers who tried to ensure that the extra year was put to good use in terms of military preparation and it was only later that the defenders of appeasement made out that Munich was actually designed to buy that extra time.

He also dragged his feet over negotiations with the USSR. In contrast to his own three dramatic flights to meet Hitler personally in September 1938, he sent the delightfully named but obscure Admiral Sir Reginald Aylmer Ranfurly Plunkett-Erle-Drax on a six day journey by sea to meet with the Russians.

The extent to which he relied on his own judgements and personal contacts, and his contempt not just for opponents but also for Cabinet colleagues, the Foreign Office, the German opposition, and allies or potential allies like France, Russia and even the USA is well brought out. In fact Hitler and Mussolini seem to be about the only people, apart from his own relatives, for whom he had any kind of respect. The grim reality behind this arrogance and wishful thinking was that Chamberlain had as much chance of appeasing Hitler as "*Little Lord Fauntleroy would have of concluding a satisfactory deal with Al Capone*" – as Duff Cooper so trenchantly put it.

But the first part of the book is in many ways simply setting the scene for the second part *on Appeasement and British Society 1918-1939* which is made up of three chapters of less familiar but very significant information and analysis on the wider social and economic aspects of appeasement. The first is a very useful and fairly detailed description of the various political and social groupings, as well as the leading individuals making up the pro and anti-appeasement 'camps' – although, as McDonough's description makes clear, they were by no means monolithic blocs. The supporters of appeasement seem to have been largely found among upper class 'networks', the Conservative party, the Church of England (the attitude of the then right-wing leadership of the Church of Scotland is not mentioned), right wing extremists, and pacifists. The leadership of the Peace Pledge Union and *Peace News* took a very pro-German line and went on advocating appeasement right up to the outbreak of war and beyond, criticising Chamberlain for not trying harder for a second Munich over Poland, when most of the other appeasers, apart from the fascist sympathisers, had long since abandoned the policy.

The critics of appeasement who have generally received less attention consisted of the majority of the Labour and Liberal Parties, a minority of Conservatives and various left-wing groups (again it would be interesting to know where the SNP stood on the issue especially given its then rightist orientation). Many of these groups were in a dilemma in that they supported appeasement in principle but not Hitler, and were also reluctant to support rearmament. Their favoured alternative (and that of public opinion) – collective security and the League of Nations – appeared to be in tatters by the mid-1930s. A British-French-Soviet alliance only became the most popular option in 1939. McDonough stresses that the critics of appeasement were not against negotiation and compromise but wanted a firmer stand while rearmament continued, whereas the supporters of appeasement saw it as a possible solution to Europe's problems.

After identifying the appeasers and anti-appeasers, McDonough's next chapter dealing with the mass media and public opinion is in many ways the most revealing. He exposes the establishment culture of news management which Chamberlain was able to exploit – particularly the support of Dawson at the Times and the willingness of Reith to keep the BBC 'on side'. The difficulty the *Times*' chief correspondent in Germany, Norman Ebbut, had in getting his critical reports published contrasts markedly with the use Chamberlain made of the optimistic and sympathetic reports of Sir Neville Henderson, the British ambassador in Berlin. In fact it would seem that Chamberlain made use of modern concepts like 'sound bites' ('peace in our time'), 'photo opportunities' (waving the piece of paper at the aircraft door) and 'shuttle diplomacy' (his three flights to Munich) as well as the 'spin doctoring' already referred to, long before they were consciously formulated. His 'control freak' tendencies also extended to cinema newsreel where the American firm, Paramount, were prevailed upon to withdraw film containing interviews with critics of appeasement. Most of the press gave some degree of support to appeasement until the occupation of Prague in March 1939. Two exceptions were the *Daily Telegraph* and the *News Chronicle*, which were opposed to the appeasement of Hitler.

There is also some analysis of the local press and journals in which the Glasgow Herald gets an honourable mention for its condemnation of the Munich agreement as a 'dictat'.

But while the BBC reported the 5,000 supporters in Downing Street welcoming Chamberlain back from Munich and the tremendous fan mail, it failed to mention the 15,000 counter-demonstrators in Trafalgar Square and the 800 protest letters sent from one meeting alone. This brings McDonough on to the thorny question of 'public opinion' which, after the arrival of mass democracy in 1918, politicians increasingly had to take into account. He uses the results of the first Gallup polls and reports of Mass Observation as well as evidence of news management to counter the impression often given that appeasement enjoyed, and was indeed partly a response to, widespread popular support. At the end of 1937 and beginning of 1938, 71% supported the League and collective security and thought Eden right to resign with 58% actually expressing opposition to Chamberlain's foreign policy. 51% were satisfied with Munich, 39% were not satisfied, while 86% did not believe that Hitler could be trusted. 88% of the children attending the Odeon Cinema chain's 'Mickey Mouse Club' indicated a strong dislike of the dictators and 53% booed and hissed very loudly whenever they appeared on screen. Given the generally optimistic and positive treatment of appeasement in the media and the extent to which the public were kept in ignorance of the details of what was actually going on, McDonough concludes that *"It seems very likely that if the government had opposed concessions to Hitler and chose to portray his designs as aggressive then public opinion would have supported a policy designed to 'stop Hitler' well before Prague"*.

The last chapter deals with the generally neglected area of economic appeasement and here McDonough shows that, despite concerted pressure by various financial and business interests, Chamberlain was far more sceptical and cautious. While the main concern of the proponents of economic appeasement was their own gain, they also argued that it would restrict and rein in Hitler by tying the German economy to Britain's. Its opponents, on the other hand, argued that it would serve more to provide grist to his aggressive mill. But economic appeasement seems to have withered on the stalk largely as a result of continued emphasis on protectionism and Chamberlain's belief that the appeasement of political grievances was the main priority and point at issue. The concluding chapter is a useful reprise of some of the issues raised in the introduction in the light of the book's findings and there is a fairly extensive annotated bibliography. There is also a collection of 22 short document extracts which are ideally suited to Higher Paper 2 and Intermediate source work both in terms of the issues they raise and their length and level of difficulty. The final extract is from Chamberlain's diary for 10th September 1939. In many ways it epitomises his attitudes, justifying the two-day delay before declaring war on the grounds of continuing secret communications with Goering and Hitler, Mussolini's conference proposal and France's need for time to prepare, "There was very little of this that we could say to the public, and meantime the House of Commons was out of hand, torn with suspicions... (some of them believing) the government of cowardice and treachery". Not a coward and a traitor, McDonough concludes, but *"simply the final and most potent symbol of all the errors and miscalculations made by those in charge of British policy during the whole period of 1918 to 1939"*.

DUNCAN TOMS

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