

THE TEHERAN THREE.

I do not know if the conclusion that was reached at Teheran, now after three months¹ still holds good: 'We come here with hope and determination. We have been friends in fact, in spirit and in purpose.' Nor do I know whether the British and American columnists who so solemnly proclaimed that the Moscow, Cairo and Teheran Conferences, had laid the foundations for the perpetual and peaceable direction by the Big Three or Four (leaving out of count all the other countries) of a future world order are to-day of the same mind. What has happened in these months is so significant and entails so many hypotheses as to the future of the world, that it challenges all the over-simple formulæ which have nourished a superficial press.

Stalin is in the foreground. He has an active, volitive policy which starts from Moscow and arrives at Moscow. Without stressing historical comparisons too much, he can be considered as a Russian Napoleon, who is as much a Muscovite (a Muscovite of Georgia) as the Corsican was a Parisian. Such types bring to capital cities a certain provincial originality, which cuts them off from tradition, thus facilitating the developments of their inventive spirit. Just as Napoleon transformed the semi-anarchic democracy of the French Revolution, (already at its third phase), into a Directory and then into an Empire, while maintaining the symbols of Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, so Stalin has transformed the Leninist Soviet regime into a politico-military dictatorship, while preserving the name and certain structures of Communism.

Stalin has dropped the Red International for a more concrete and profitable nationalism; he has passed from persecution of the Orthodox Church to benevolent toleration; he has restored a particularist trend to economic life, little by little bringing back private interest. Assuredly he will reach an understanding with the capitalistic nations over gold, currency and the banks, so as to improve international transactions, in such a way as to attenuate their political bearings without renouncing economic advantages.

The other side of this evolution, which brings Stalin still closer to Napoleon, is the conception of the new Russian Empire. Napoleon had the idea of his Empire after the wars of the Revolution, which were defensive wars, and after the blazing victories that led him

into offensive wars of expansion and conquest. Hence he had the idea of a series of vassal States, entrusted to his relatives (the dynastic tradition of the XVIIth and XVIIIth centuries was still alive), forming a political and economic coalition that would keep the Englishman and the Russian at a distance. Without his adventures in Spain and Russia, and without the anti-English blockade, Napoleon would have been able to consolidate himself. But thunderbolt conquests—or *blitzkriege*—are the most unsuitable means of constituting an empire (as has been the case with Hitler) and Napoleon failed.

Stalin seems warier and calmer; the international circumstances, which to-day favour his plans, have been very different. He is pursuing the dream of a new Russian Empire, which perhaps will embrace Koenigsberg-Trieste-Constantinople in Europe and reach the Indian Ocean and the Pacific in Asia. If Stalin is in too much of a hurry to arrive, counting on taking up his position before the United States and Great Britain realise the whole bearings of his plans, and before the final victory of the Allies, he may fail or be forced to stop short. But if he has the patience to wait and look ahead, as he has done in the past, he will give his Empire a firmer basis.

Naturally, with such a prospect the Advisory Committee set up at Moscow for Europe, will have a role inferior even to that of the famous Non-Intervention Committee for Spain, and will disappear in the London fogs.

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Will America and Britain be able to make a stand against so ambitious a plan? Will they, at least, have a policy that will lessen its effects and neutralise its importance?

I feel sorry for those who to-day shudder over the communism that will be spread from Moscow, just like those who shuddered over the Liberty that the French of Napoleon were carrying, on the points of their bayonets, throughout Europe. Such people do not realise that communism as a partial economic experiment and as a working-class dream or ideal, is the other side of the balance-sheet for an industrialised society, or, if they prefer, an endemic disease inherent in the system. But, as a political experiment, it is already discounted in part (and will be further discounted after the war) through the fact that politically the Soviets have had to transform themselves into a totalitarian dictatorship like that of the Fascists and Nazis. The conclusive test will be when political Communism decides to adopt the method of liberty, without restrictions, for a political regime without liberty cannot be other than authoritarian-

ism and dictatorship. Even if, for the consolation of us have-nots, it is called a *dictatorship of the proletariat*, it will be made of the same paste as any other dictatorship.

Returning to our theme, Moscow has no interest in transplanting communism, either as a political regime or as an economic structure of European or world range. It is to Moscow's interest, more or less like all the rest of the world, to have in Russia and in the countries surrounding her and bound to her, a healthy and prosperous economy, so as to repair all the war damage, consolidate her position and develop all her immense resources.

That is why Russia cannot and will not agree with those unthinking groups of Europeans and Americans who propose the economic destruction of Germany. It is understandable that the countries occupied and oppressed by the Germans should wish to reduce Germany to impotence, and that their fear of the future should make them see dangers even where they do not exist, but a sound and far-seeing policy should prevent hasty measures put forward under the impulses of victory.

Here is the central point, where the two great policies meet (for up till now, there have been two policies) and the efforts for a real and definitive understanding converge. If Russia and Britain (with the consent, however grudging, of America) divide Europe into spheres of influence, and therefore divide Germany too into two or three pieces, the future order will be compromised for ever—even if, at the same time, an assembly called a League of Nations or World Commonwealth or International Community or League of United Nations is set up at Geneva or the Hague or in the moon. It will be time wasted. Zones of influence with power politics as the substance of the Big Three and with the balance of power as a reciprocal measure for avoiding conflicts, will be the melancholy legacy of the Second World War. And in that case, we should even now be thinking of the massive maintenance of military forces in the victorious countries, for the Third World War would be on the threshold.

Europe cannot be divided into spheres of influence; Britain must renounce attempts to enlarge her Commonwealth in Europe and the idea of making of the States of Western Europe the counter-balance to Russian gains in the East. Europe must be reconstituted in the fullness of her independence and the development of her energies as soon as the first post-war period has passed—that of help for her economic and moral rehabilitation and of the political and national restoration of the separate States of which she is composed.

This point should be clarified. Just as Russia aspires to assure herself in Europe of a politico-territorial frontier, so she aspires to

have friendly governments prepared to accept her leadership or protection or even intervention, as the case may be. Russia will therefore not turn to the Kings or to the autocratic, capitalistic or bourgeois classes, but (it is clear) will count on the working populations and intermediate classes, no matter whether such kindred groups call themselves communists, socialists, or even Christian democrats, or again, even nationalists.

Britain and America till now have shown themselves afraid of the masses (believed to be revolutionary) and even of the groups asserting independence and a spirit of their own (as with de Gaulle and his Fighting French, and also the five or six anti-Fascist parties of Italy). They have gone in quest of Kings and Marshalls, Generals and Admirals, ex-Fascists and ex-Vichy men, capitalists and aristocrats, showing a continual uncertainty whether to turn to the right or to the left, whether to trust to the old groupings or to give way before the insistence of the new-comers.

There are among the Allies people who are always talking of having to revise their policy, and it is really painful to see how much incomprehension they show of the realities coming to fruition in Europe. If they go on this way, Europe will not only be divided into territorial spheres of influence between Russia and Britain, but will also be divided into politico-social zones, so that the popular classes even of the zones destined for British or Anglo-American influence will look towards Moscow as to their lighthouse, their hope, for a policy in their favour. On the other hand, the capitalists, the bourgeois, the industrialists, the military and the kings (those on their thrones and those who have lost them), even if in the zones of Russian influence, will look to London or Washington (like Otto of Hapsburg) for their salvation. But the outcome will be different; Moscow will intervene in favour of the masses 'betrayed by perfidious Albion,' whereas London will explore avenues, debate, make some statement in the House of Commons, but in the end will seek consolation in other parts of the world, since the world is still wide and there is room for a British Empire even without spheres of influence and without kings to be supported and political intrigues in Europe.

I say this without the least wish to show resentment towards Washington and London for their policy towards Italy, but only to make clear the absurdity towards which we are moving if the present system is continued. Spheres of influence in Europe, economic destruction and long military occupation of Germany, mistrust of the popular movements of the various countries, protection of the military or capitalistic cliques responsible for the present tragedy, would

be, or better are, catastrophic errors for the post-war future; they must be remedied at once, without losing more time. Another Teheran is necessary, for that of December 1st, 1943, is already effaced. The three should meet again or reach a fresh understanding on the following points :

(1) A League of the United Nations, with a deliberating Assembly to be formed at once. The Big Three should soon become the Big Four with China, the Big Five with France, and so on. But their power must not come either from the right of arms or from that of power; it must be borne of general consent and no longer as something imposed by themselves. The League of Nations that has been reduced to silence should be brought to life at once, to represent the aspirations of the peoples of the world. The Three, or Four or Five, or Seven, will then be the executive power of a collective will. Outside this there is no salvation.

(2) Political decisions as to Germany and the other defeated countries, clear, feasible, and, whatever their severity, humane, with no more talk of unconditional surrender in political matters (leaving it merely for the battlefield).

(3) The political revaluation of the States of Europe, according to their aspirations and wishes, favouring the elements which have been opposed to the Nazis, Fascists, Vichyists, or governments installed by Hitler, and which have formed the resistance, underground or open, within the various countries and abroad.

(4) A plan of economic reconstruction and federal policy for Europe, including in the federation Britain and those Soviet Republics that are or can be considered culturally European. We need not be afraid of the autonomy granted by Stalin to the various Soviet Republics. If together with diplomatic and military autonomy they obtain also political liberty, so much will have been gained for the future of Russia and of the world. If they do not have political liberty, their autonomy will be merely nominal and a screen. Events will tell us the real scope of such a move. The fact that Russia will take part with Britain in the European Federation will remove the just preoccupations of the various continental countries over the prospect of an excessive German influence or a new Franco-German jealousy. Germany after a period of purgation and reorganisation will have to belong to Europe on the same footing as every other State. This will correspond to a wise and far-seeing international policy.

(5) Italy, Hungary, Roumania, Bulgaria, Finland, too will have to be reorganised and readmitted into the European and international

family. A policy of vendetta and destruction would be merely barbarous and childish. Whatever the secret conditions imposed on Italy and accepted by Badoglio, if they impair the vitality of the country and its future welfare, they will have to be withdrawn by the Allies themselves in the name of civilisation, order and the future development of Europe and the world. Otherwise Italy and all the other defeated countries will fling themselves into the arms of Moscow, who will not be able to reject them without denying her past and the ideologies that she still stands for.

It will be said: all this is well thought-out, but if Stalin refuses a revision of the situation and leaves the other two in the dark as to his future policy, what can be done? Those who reason thus believe that it is Stalin alone who has taken a different path from Roosevelt and Churchill. I think that these two also have their responsibility towards Stalin, having played a policy of their own, or else refraining from speaking out frankly, in fear both of irritating their colleague and of having to revise their own ideas. I do not justify Stalin, but I am trying to understand him; in his moves there is not only the Polish question or that of the Baltic States, Darlan, Badoglio, AMG. and Germany, but above all the dissension over the Second Front, promised for two years and so long postponed.

So far it has not been possible to claim equality in war with the Power that has borne the tremendous weight of three years of continuous battles, involving more than twelve million combatants and over five million losses. Let America and Britain open the Second Front, let them double their forces in Italy, let them try also an attack in the Balkans and Southern France, and then Churchill and Roosevelt will have greater authority to speak not only in the name of their countries, but in that of the countries they will have freed and of those others, like Poland, to which they are morally and also diplomatically bound; it is their duty and their right.

There must be an end of the continual show of fear, excessive anxiety and arrogant hostility towards Russia. She is the ally of to-day; she will have, for the peace of the world, to be the ally of to-morrow. She has the right to be understood and at the same time it is her duty to understand the Western countries, and vice-versa, in a co-operation not of the Big Three alone but of all the United Nations.

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