

SINCE the Great War two new religions have been born into the world. They are the Nazi creed and the Communist creed. Do not let us blind our eyes to the power which these new religions exert. They have been adopted by most powerful and most heavily armed nations. They have at their disposal vast armies equipped with every agency of destruction, fleets of growing size and, above all, the new and dangerous weapon of the air. They have degraded the good gifts of science to the most insidious forms of propaganda. The press, the broadcast and the cinema have placed the mass of the people entirely in the hands of their rulers, who are also the high priests of these religions. Such creeds do not lack champions, preachers, devotees, nor even martyrs. Today they seek to divide the world between them, to range the men and women in every land under their garish standards and outlandish symbols; and with strange shouts and ugly gestures they wish to pervert or subvert the ancient nations of Christendom and hurl them at one another in ferocious conflict.

We can see them at this moment both ranged against each other in deadly conflict in Spain. What a strange monstrous spectacle is presented there! A horrible explosion of animal hatred has torn the Spanish people asunder. Half the nation wishes to slay the other half. They fight a war of extermination, a war of no quarter, an inexorable war. They imbrue their hands in fratricidal blood. They desecrate the soil of Spain with Spanish corpses, victims as often of cold-blooded execution as of battle.

A War That Is No Longer Spain's

But it is not only Spanish hatreds which inflict these miseries on the Spanish people. Left to themselves the Spaniards would probably in time reach some national compromise. The mighty Nazi and Communist states are, however, each pumping petrol on the flames, each backing its own partisan color and lashing the Spanish people with renewed frenzies. The governments of Germany and Italy on the one hand, and of Russia on the other, pour weapons, munitions, airplanes and technical experts to the side each favors. Nay, they have even sent large numbers of their regular soldiers. Germans and Italians fire their rifles or cannon at Russians or at German and Italian exiles in a quarrel which has nothing to do with territory, trade or dynastic disputes.

Spain has become the arena where a conflict of ideas is being fought out with all the brutal savagery of the religious wars of the 15th century. To this strange welter large numbers of French, English, Irish and some American volunteers have proceeded, some going to join one side and some the other. Sometimes they travel out together to where their roads divide. Nothing like this has ever been seen since the Thirty Years War tore all Europe to pieces. If it spreads it may indeed lay the whole world in ruins, dividing not only nation from nation, but family from family, and brother from brother.

There are two strange facts about these non-God religions. The first is their extraordinary resemblance to one another. Nazi-ism and Communism imagine themselves as exact opposites. They are at each other's throats wherever they exist all over the world. They actually breed each other; for the reaction of Communism is Nazi-ism, and beneath Nazi-ism or Fascism Communism stirs convulsively. Yet they are similar in all essentials. First of all, their simplicity is remarkable. You leave out God and put in the Devil; you leave out love and put in hate; and everything thereafter works quite straightforwardly

The Infernal Twins

By Winston Churchill

What makes the Spanish civil war so inhumanly bitter? Not the Spaniards. Behind this quarrel stand two opposed and godless religions—Fascism and Communism. Both are enemies of democracy. Strip them of their externals and you can't tell them apart. Mr. Churchill reveals the essential character of these unlovely twins



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Three Russians died when this armored car, made and equipped in Russia, was wrecked by shellfire from the Spanish rebel battleship Almirante Cervera. At the right are three Italian army officers captured by Loyalists during the fighting on the Guadalajara front



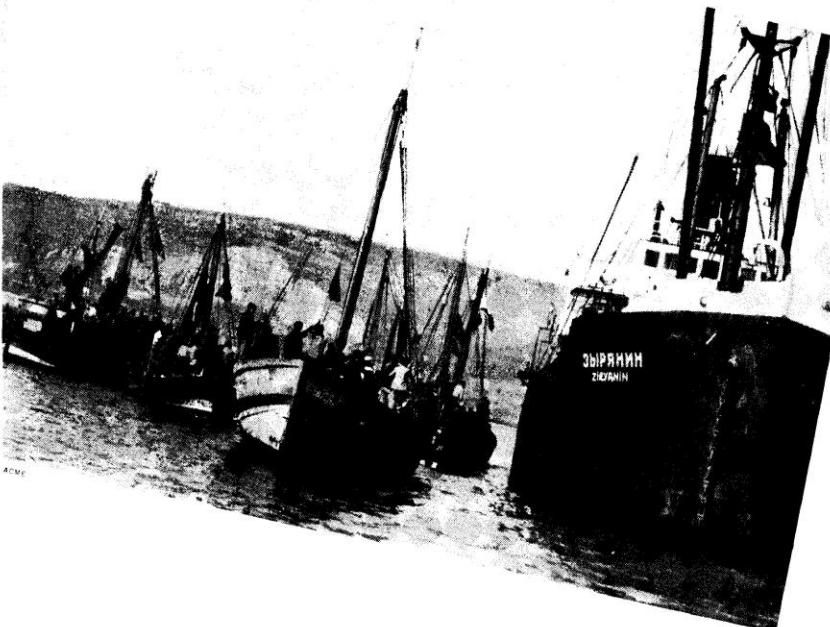
and logically. They are, in fact, as alike as two peas. Tweedledum and Tweedledee are two quite distinctive personalities compared to these two rival religions.

I am reminded of the North Pole and the South Pole. They are at opposite ends of the earth, but if you woke up at either pole tomorrow morning you could not tell which one it was. Perhaps there might be penguins at one, or perhaps polar bears at the other; but all around would be ice and snow and the blast of a biting wind. I have made up my mind, however far I may travel, whatever countries I may see, I will not go to the Arctic or to the Antarctic regions. Give me London, give me Paris, give me New York, give me some of the beautiful capitals of the British dominions. Let



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Three members of the International Brigade fighting in Spain illustrate its cosmopolitan character. In this group are a Russian, a Mongol and an Irishman. Below, Loyalist boats surround a Russian freighter in Barcelona harbor to unload food and supplies for the government troops



us go somewhere where our breath is not frozen on our lips because of the secret police. Let us go somewhere where there are green pastures and the shade of venerable trees. Let us not wander away from the broad fertile field; of freedom into these gaunt, grim, dim, gloomy abstractions of sterile thought.

There are, of course, differences between the dictatorships. Yet they are largely discounted by one significant fact. It is easy to imagine Mussolini or Hitler as head of a Communist state, or Stalin as Fascist Duce or Fuehrer. Nothing in Communism or Fascism, as we know them, or in the characters and records of these three men, makes such a situation incredible.

Mussolini was the son of a Socialist

and at one time himself an apostle of the class war. When, in 1902, he was arrested as a vagrant for sleeping under a bridge at Lausanne, his one possession of value was a medallion bearing the portrait of Karl Marx. Before the war he was editor of Italy's leading Socialist newspaper. He had been the associate of Lenin and Trotsky.

"I know Mussolini," Lenin once told a deputation of Socialist exiles from Italy. "He is a strong and a hard man. It was a great pity to have let him go out of the Socialist party." To which Trotsky added: "It was, indeed, a great pity. He was the only man who could have brought about the revolution of the proletariat in Italy."

But Socialism was a weapon which

broke in Mussolini's hand. Therefore he threw it away and looked for another. To this student of Machiavelli and Nietzsche, of Sorel and William James, no creed or principle is of value except as the instrument of his will. He is both daydreamer and opportunist. There was a time when, doubtless, the background of his waking fancies was a Socialist Italy. But he himself occupied the foreground as the Sword of the Revolution, an Italian Lenin. When that dream became impracticable a new one replaced it. But what he saw this time was not so much Italy repeating in the modern world the glories of ancient Rome as himself as architect of a new empire of the Mediterranean.

To say that is not to deny or belittle his extraordinary qualities of statesmanship, his magnificent courage and audacity, his untiring energy, his resolute will, his sure grasp of the possible.

be artist, who was refused admission to the Viennese art school because his test drawing was "below standard," had to hate someone to preserve his self-respect. Yet, even while his followers brawled with the Marxists in Berlin streets, the future Nazi dictator was making speeches which might almost have been delivered in the Red Square in Moscow.

The third of the dictators, Stalin, is, in some ways, a more enigmatic figure than either of the others. He has shunned the limelight in which both Mussolini and Hitler have gloried. He has come to power by hidden ways. But it is now possible to assess this mysterious figure, molded by the Siberian silences, more accurately than would have been the case a few years ago. He has brought to the Kremlin the shrewdness, the craft and the long memory of the peasant stock from which he sprang. He has brought also the infinite patience which he learned, on the fringes of the Arctic Circle, when he was dependent for food entirely on his own prowess as hunter and fisherman. Lenin, on his deathbed, believed that Stalin and Trotsky, even while hating each other, could work in double harness. He reckoned without Trotsky's arrogant self-confidence and Stalin's profound purpose. Now the Georgian ruler alone—and behind the facade of a Socialist state builds a nationalist Russia, a great military power, self-contained and self-sufficient.

In all Stalin's work there has been little of the Socialist theorist. He is essentially an organizer—an efficiency expert with power of life and death over millions. Who shall say that this man would not be equally at home—and equally formidable—as chief of a Fascist or a Nazi state?

Things Intolerable in Democracies

The conditions of life under Russian Communism or German Nazi-ism present the same features even when viewed in detail. They would certainly be intolerable to the British, American or French democracies. Our peoples would be miserable in the last degree if they were suddenly put under Nazi or Communist rule. How could we bear, nursed as we have been in a free atmosphere, to be gagged and muzzled; to have spies, eavesdroppers and delators at every corner; to have even private conversation caught up and used against us by the secret police and all their agents and creatures; to be arrested and interned without trial? How could we bear to be treated like schoolboys when we are grown-up men; to be turned out on parade by tens of thousands to march and cheer for this slogan or for that; to see philosophers, teachers and authors bullied and toiled to death in concentration camps; to be forced every hour to conceal the natural normal workings of the human intellect and the pulsations of the human heart? Rather than submit to such oppression there is no length to which we would not go.

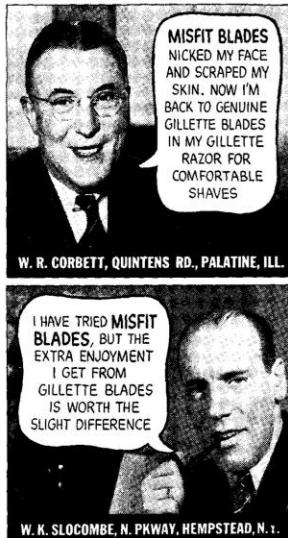
Let me recapitulate the great resemblances of Nazi-ism and Bolshevism. First, there is the worship of the one-man power. All the wisdom of our common ancestors, the main theme which made the parliamentary system in Britain and framed the Constitution of the United States, was dominated by the conviction that one-man power was a thing odious, pernicious and degrading to the nature and stature of men. This miserable fetish worship and the setting up of a single individual, investing him with superhuman, almost Godlike, power, has always been temptation to the weak and ignorant. It has always been obnoxious to the architects of English and American institutions.

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"Misfit Blades Nicked My Face Scraped My Skin

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Always they have sought checks and counterchecks to the despot, or even to the concentration of power. Indeed, the division of power has been carried to the logical extreme in the American Constitution, often beyond the point of convenience, and broad gulfs have been deliberately created between the Executive, the Legislature and the Judiciary.

The next resemblance is the conception of a totalitarian state where no one is allowed to differ from or criticize the bosses who have collared the machine guns and the radio. Think of it! No one in Germany, in Russia or in Italy is allowed to say: "This is unfair. This is untrue. That is not right. This is cruel. That is evidently stupid." To utter such comments, even in your own home, is to run the risk of betrayal and severe punishment.

Betrayal opens up a new field. The child betrays its parent; the wife's lover betrays the husband, adding civic injury to sexual insult. The genial and engaging acquaintance turns out to be a police spy drawing you out and writing it all down afterward to your undoing. The business rival, the other local grocer or garage owner has the pull with the powers that be, is very punctual at the parades, and gradually lets it be known that he is doubtful whether you really think that Hitler or Mussolini or Stalin, as the case may be, is the finest thing ever seen on earth. Not only the police, but overgrown, hobbled-behoy schoolboys will beat up the man of learning and letters, flog the professor or the philosopher, drag the suspect—and very often his family too—to the concentration camp and crush the life out of him with cold, hunger, toil and a hateful kind of drill-sergeantism.

And all merely for criticizing the government! There is no freedom where governments cannot be criticized, and no government that is not criticized is ever healthy or clean or capable of progress. Even with the most fierce criticism governments tend to imagine themselves the masters instead of the servants of the people.

Criticism Makes Good Government

Imagine the state of Society which emerges from this eavesdropping, spying and private treachery! Every word has to be calculated, every thought is guarded at its inception. No one dare confide even in his most trusted friend.

What a contrast when we turn to the great democracies! In Britain, as I write this article, Parliament is discussing a proposal, embodied in a Government Bill, to pay to the Leader of the Opposition an annual salary of two thousand pounds—nearly ten thousand dollars. It is being supported, from the Ministerial side of the House of Commons, on the ground that the Leader of the Opposition has important and exacting duties to perform, and that he should be placed in a position of financial independence, so that he can devote his whole time to them. And what are these duties? Primarily to criticize every measure which the Government brings forward, every administrative act which appears open to question, and, all the time, to work to bring about the defeat of the Ministry at the polls when the next General Election takes place.

It is not only in Fascist and Communist states that this may seem Gilbertian fantasy. But the most serious doubt expressed regarding the proposal is that it may in some way limit or curtail the freedom and independence of the gentleman who is thus to be paid

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from public funds. In both sides of this discussion we may see the high value that is placed on criticism and reasoned opposition as elements in government. In dictator countries words are feared.

Such contrasts may be multiplied endlessly from the records of the despotisms and democracies. One will suffice for the moment. In the United States we see the Supreme Court guarding the edifice of the Constitution, interpreting the fundamental law of the Great Republic according to the conscience of its members, without regard to the convenience, the exhortations, or



"And I think your hair
is lovely, too, Pierre!"

GEORGE WOLFE

no Judges, independent of the Government, doing equal justice between man and man, or between the State and the citizen. There are only Agents of the Executive, decked with comical juristic trappings.

These new religions and new principles of statecraft are, indeed, but old barbarism writ large and armed with high explosives and poison gas.

The great theories of government which the British race devised and which the English-speaking peoples have adopted, closely associated as they are with the system of Christian ethics, are the foundation upon which civilization stands and without which it will fall. The British and French democracies, standing together in these days of danger, have nothing in common with either Nazi-ism or Bolshevism. The people of the United States have nothing in common with them either. For good or for ill we dwell in a different atmosphere. We have been reared in it. We are habituated to the parliamentary system. We believe in government by assemblies freely elected and by public opinion freely formed and freely expressed. We believe that it is the duty of the State to guard the rights of individuals. We hold that the State exists to give full expression to the family and the cottage home. We are the opponents of totalitarian tyranny in all its forms.

Treasures That Should Be Valued

With all the many shortcomings, evils, abuses and shams in our present policy, we can claim first that it has produced a greater measure of material well-being for the people, man for man, household for household, than can be shown elsewhere. As the families gather round the fireside they see not only the glow of comfort but the gleams of freedom and hope. Secondly, with all its faults, our capitalist parliamentary system carries within itself the faculty for almost unlimited self-improvement. We should value these treasures, true glories I call them, as we do our lives, and there should be no sacrifice we would not make, and no lengths to which we would not go, conformable with honor and justice, to hand them on unmarred, unsmirched to our children.

Is not our cause, "The Better Way," worthy to be defended? Does not our system of free democracy embodying the law, the wit and wisdom of a thousand years, claim allegiance as faithful, a service as punctual, an ardor as valiant as Nazi-ism and Bolshevism? And ought we not to take all the measures necessary for the preservation of our way of life? Why should our faith, the result of so many centuries of patient building, not also be confident and capable of defending itself? Why should we, who are marching on the true path of progress, even though the road be stony, halt abashed and humbled while error, oppression and scientific villainy are blatant and armed? Must the good cause always lack hearts as resolute, swords as sharp, as those who champion evil? Is it not time that the free nations, the liberal and parliamentary democracies, great and small, on whichever side of the Atlantic Ocean they may dwell, should not only take all the necessary measures to place themselves in a state of security but also ought they not to become "cause conscious" and from a hundred angles, and upon a thousand occasions, endeavor to build up a broad security for those treasures of peace and freedom our ancestors rescued for us from the long confusions of the past?