

Europe Before and After Munich

Random Notes on Recent Publications

By Sigmund Neumann

I.

MUNICH marks the end of an epoch, a "turning point in history," as Arnold J. Toynbee recently states in a most suggestive article.¹ In fact, these decisive events were foreshadowed long before September 1938, by actions almost necessarily leading the road to Munich. If one can speak of the end of a period, one might better say: Hitler's march into the Rhineland, March 7, 1936, was the real water-shed between two political continents. Indeed what had been said about the World War, that it merely precipitated a development of political and social forces which were moulding the twentieth century, could be repeated of this greatest diplomatic upset of our time too. It had its roots in the history of post-War Europe, and it may be that even the more we win distance from this "water-shed of Munich" the clearer it will become that the currents of history are running in the same old beds and in the same directions as before September, 1938.

A full understanding of what Munich really means, therefore, would have to start with an analysis of pre-Munich Europe. It may be too early to write an interpretation of the last twenty years' history which will endure. Most of the studies published suffice to report the factual development and even as far as that goes almost all of them can be regarded as preliminary attempts alone, strikingly reflecting all the difficulties of research in contemporary affairs. By their very nature those studies usually lack unity and color.

A very different and often more illuminating source of information are the works of active participants. They carry documentary value, even if events move on. Of course they are partisan, but their bias is obvious and can be easily discounted. Such a vivid and provocative view of an ardent partisan can be found in Churchill's recent collection

¹ Arnold Toynbee: A Turning Point in History. *Foreign Affairs*, Jan. 1939.

of speeches.² Out of the enormous flood of publications on contemporary Europe only a few books will survive. Churchill's six years' survey of world affairs will be one. It has already stood one great test. In an age where radio and news flashes outdate events at a pace unheard of in history, these comments—many of them made several years ago—are just as alive as they were when presented. It is the more amazing since these forty-odd articles were speeches in the midst of the controversial discussions of the House of Parliament and not treatises primarily meant for a reading public. The able introductory remarks of his son, Randolph S. Churchill, certainly succeed in reconstructing the atmosphere in which these speeches were delivered.

But it is above all the elder statesman's poignant style, detailed knowledge, and powerful argumentation which gives to his addresses enduring value. These Cassandra speeches delivered during the lifetime of the national government embody its sharpest criticism. Though like Lloyd George for a decade an emeritus, Churchill's words will be always listened to, and now since many of his warnings have come true they serve as a rallying force to a large part of British public opinion. First Lord of the Admiralty during the World War, his *ceterum censeo* still is: the German menace. The three parts of his book, "Germany Disarmed," "Germany Re-Arming," "Germany Re-Armed" indicate the rising danger. This change of the political scene since Hitler's rise to power has brought the isolationist's conversion to the principle of collective security. On first view this may seem contradictory, but it only means that the Pax Britannica is given in commission. From the biting criticism of the talkative disarmament conferences which only made nations more conscious of the necessity of rearming, (this point is put in a masterpiece of literary parable in his introductory "Disarmament Fable"), through his great warning on the "lagging program" (January, 1937) to his address on the annexation of Austria, praising the Geneva ideal, it is always the German danger which places friends and enemies. As the British title of his book, *Arms and the Covenant*, suggests, speeded up re-armament and a strong League became the only insurance for the safety of Great Britain and the world, because "Britain's hour of weakness is Europe's hour of danger." This stand brings

² Winston Churchill: *While England Slept*, Putnam's Sons, New York, 1938, XII, (404 pp., \$3.00)

him into a united front with British Labour, but it is more than a merely tactical alliance. It shows the essentially liberal credo of this great "Tory democrat" of the nineteenth century. An inclusion of his recent parliamentary speeches and his radio address to the United States a few days after the signing of the Munich Accord would even better illustrate his deep conviction that the European crisis of 1938 was not primarily a struggle over German minorities but over the political and ideological preponderance in the world.

Czechoslovakia was only the front of a much greater drama. Indeed it may be well to remember that "the organic inconsistency of the mosaic state"³ and its necessary dismemberment was not on the European agenda until 1938.^{3a} As late as March of that year Germany gave the explicit declaration that she would respect the Czechoslovak frontiers. Autarchy was the only claim made even by the most radical Henlein movement.

Czechoslovakia certainly was not just a caprice of the peacemakers. She had a specific function in the post-War world.⁴ Her significance was two-fold: to be sure, she was the bulwark of France's system of alliances, a part of her sanitary cordon around Germany. Prague was the key to that system. So was the Little Entente, organized above all to preserve the status quo of the succession states. In addition to that, however, Czechoslovakia stood for a synthetic state. It might have symbolized a synthetic process which in central Europe was the only alternative to German domination. Even if the principle of national self-determination had been applied in a more just and equitable manner, it could not have solved the intricate problem of national minorities so inextricably mingled in the Danubian basin. The atomization of the Hapsburg Monarchy of necessity led to the creation of several little Austrias.⁵ Czechoslovakia was one of them, called upon

³ Mussolini in his speech at Trieste—Sept. 18, 1938.

^{3a} Cf. *Survey of International Affairs*, 1936, pp. 486-501 (London, 1937), and *Survey of International Affairs*, 1937, Vol. I, pp. 448-459.

⁴ Cf. Stefan Osusky: Why Czechoslovakia? *Foreign Affairs*, April, 1937.

⁵ Cf. Charles Seymour: Czechoslovak Frontiers. *Yale Review*, Winter, 1939. This very timely article discusses Czechoslovakia at the Peace Conference, esp. the work of the Czechoslovak Commission. It also reports on the interesting American proposals. But even these rectifications which would have given the Grosse Schütt and the salients of Rumburg and Eger to Germany, could not have changed the basically multi-national structure of the new state.

to fulfill the task in which the Hapsburg Monarchy had failed. It might have served as a dam against the centrifugal forces of modern dynamic nationalism. It was not sheer tactical consideration of a small nation's possibilities which made Benes the champion of a democratic League of Nations calling for supernational cooperation.⁶

There was a strategic reason too for keeping Bohemia, the gateway to the South and Southeast, in the hands of a small nation. Bismarck had already said, "The master of Bohemia is veritably the master of Europe." It was this strategic importance of Bohemia—and not so much the Sudeten German issue—which decided the German drive to destroy the military and political "outpost of Bolshevism in Central Europe."^{6a} This has been definitely proved in the aftermath of Munich.

II.

What is the meaning of Munich? It is still, and probably will be for a long time, a matter of dispute. There are innumerable interpretations of this historical event, but they may be comprised in three formulas: "Peace in our time," "International intrigue," "Armistice." The first theory has been propounded by Neville Chamberlain himself, who

⁶ Cf. C. J. Friedrich's excellent portrait of Eduard Benes, *Atlantic Monthly*, September, 1938. Even his pre-War writings prove how much thought Benes had given to the crucial problem of minorities. Cf. Benes: *Gedanke und Tat. Aus den Schriften und Reden* (Prag, 1937), and his first book: *Le problème autrichien et la question Tchèque* (1908).

For a discussion of the national minorities, esp. the Sudeten-German grievances see Karl Falk, *Strife in Czechoslovakia. The German Minority Question. Foreign Policy Reports*. Mar. 15, 1938., and the comprehensive study of Elizabeth Wiskemann: *Czechs and Germans* (New York, 1938); for the post-Munich development cf. her article: *Czechs and Germans after Munich. Foreign Affairs*, January, 1939; see also H. M. Görden: *Tschechen und Deutsche, Mass und Wert* (Zürich, 1938, pp. 215-226) and Konrad Henlein: *Rede in Karlsbad, April 24, 1938; Memorandum der Sudeten-deutschen Partei Juni 7, 1938* (Berlin, 1938).

^{6a} For a factual evaluation of Czechoslovak foreign policy cf. Felix John Vondracek: *The Foreign Policy of Czechoslovakia, 1918-1935* (New York, 1937). Jaroslav Papousek: *Czechoslovakia, Soviet Russia and Germany* (Prague, 1936); Emmanuel Morawu: *Die strategische Bedeutung der tschechoslovakischen Republik für Westeuropa* (Prague, 1936); Pierre de Quirielle: *La politique extérieure de la Tchécoslovaquie et sa position dans l'Europe centrale, L'esprit international*, Paris, 1937, pp. 506-523.

That the Czechoslovak Republic was far from being an "outpost of Bolshevism" can be seen in the influential part which the Catholic Populist Party under the leadership of Jan Sramek played in Czechoslovak politics.

A conflict between the Holy See and Czechoslovak Republic which had been broken out late in 1925 was successfully settled by 1927, under the prudent direction of Benes; see J. Papousek: *Dr. Eduard Benes* (Prag. 1937), pp. 131, 138, 180, 266-67.

even claims to have brought home a "peace with honor."⁷ Not only has war been avoided but also a prelude to a larger settlement, the foundation of a new and better European order has been laid. True, the peace made by another Big Four twenty years ago is gone, but herewith also the bad conscience of the democracies is now appeased.

Above all, a more promising peace seems in sight since it is made by representatives of a new realism free from the subterfuge of an older diplomacy and from the League romanticism of early post-War idealists. It was Chamberlain who on June 10, 1936 declared the "midsummer madness" of sanctions dead; and at the very outset of the crisis of 1938 (February 22) he stated, "The League is unable to provide collective security." A European concert of powers—a renewal of Mussolini's still-born Four-Power Pact of 1933—had to take its place. Certainly this does not leave much independence to the small nations, but this is only the frank acknowledgement of the same, though never admitted, practice of the League's Council. The semi-official *Deutsche Diplomatische Korrespondenz* went even one step further in its subtle attempt to show the actual conformity of the new policy to League conceptions by praising the Munich accord as the first application of a peaceful revision following Article 19 of the Covenant, based upon the core of Wilson's fourteen points: the principle of national self-determination. It is the irony of history that the Versailles system was destroyed by its very own principle. The Sudeten-German issue certainly would have been a bad justification for a world war in a post-Versailles era.

The "shame of Versailles" finally destroyed, equality restored, ideological wars discounted, grievances from now on can be settled in direct contacts of willing and undogmatic leaders. An appeasement—after the liquidation of still pending cases (such as the Spanish Civil War, the redistribution of colonies, etc.)—can well be expected.

The very opposite picture presents itself in the second interpretation; one might call it the Leftist analysis of Munich. It is a bitter denunciation of the ruling elite. It often speaks in terms of intrigues and plotters in midst of the democratic governments such as the pun

⁷ A collection of the most important official documents on the Czech crisis can be found in *International Conciliation*, November, 1938. German texts in *Kurzbericht. Dokumente und Berichte zur Deutschen Zeitgeschichte*. (Berlin, Oct. 20, 1938.)

formulated after Munich, "Methinks France has a Fascist bee in her Bonnet." The "Cliveden set" plays a prominent part as such a conspiratory circle. Frederick L. Schuman has given a more general and therefore more powerful testimony for this position.⁸ To him Tory Britain lives under the shadow of a great fear: social revolution from below. U.S.S.R. and the Comintern represent the most menacing of all threats to its values and to its way of life. Therefore Soviet Russia must be isolated. Her European advance guard in Czechoslovakia and at the same time the ties between France and her Eastern allies must be broken. The anti-comintern crusaders must be strengthened to be made ready for a final attack against the U.S.S.R.—a conflict in which the Western Powers must remain neutral. Incidentally, the diversion of dynamic nationalism toward Southeast and Eastern Europe may best serve the status quo of the colonial empires.⁹ This hope to find in the Fascist triplice the militant check against threatening world revolution makes the preservation of such a protective power essential for the survival of Western democracies. The breakdown of Fascism, especially since it is identified with communist succession, must be prevented at any price. Such a consideration stopped oil sanctions in the Ethiopian war. The Munich Accord, a valve to an otherwise threatening explosion of the bottled-up Germany, was meant as such a rescue party. The price is still paid out of a margin of safety by concessions from a third party.

It is not difficult to show—and more and more obvious in post-Munich Europe—that there are very real risks connected with such a

⁸ Frederick L. Schuman: *The Tory Dialectic*. *The New Republic*, Dec. 28, 1938 and Jan. 4, 1939; see also his regular contributions to *Events*, a monthly review of World Affairs and his forthcoming book: *Europe on the Eve* (A. A. Knopf, New York, 1939.); for a similar interpretation by a Czech authority cf. Charles Pergler: *Czechoslovakia: A Symbol and a Lesson*. *The Virginia Quarterly Review*, Winter, 1939. Also the great German novelist and exile Thomas Mann stresses such a view in his forthright booklet: *This Peace* (New York, 1938). The earnestness and full meaning of his arguments will only be felt when placed against the background of his weighty contributions on the crisis of contemporary Europe, published during recent years. For a good collection see his: *Achtung Europa, Aufsätze zur Zeit* (New York, 1938). The same view has been upheld and powerfully represented in the moving story of G. E. R. Gedyé, *Betrayed in Central Europe*, New York, 1939. This first-hand account of the Austrian and Czech crises, by one of the most astute observers of the European scene, certainly deserves a comprehensive evaluation.

⁹ Within the conservative camp such ideas were, indeed, openly propounded by the Daily Mail's Continental Correspondent, G. Ward Price: *I Knew These Dictators* (New York, 1938) and similarly by the Marquis of Londonderry: *Ourselves and Germany* (New York, 1938.)

policy. Moscow might win in the conflict and thus inevitably spread communism over the world. Victorious fascism might achieve invincibility and then turn against the Empire. National Socialism may not utilize its power to attack U.S.S.R. altogether, but to turn against the West. Even a German-Russian rapprochement after some ideological adjustments is not at all inconceivable. All this may prove fatal to the game of the capitalist oligarchy, but it is unable and unwilling to adopt any alternative course.

The third interpretation, less spectacular than the other two, but perhaps more inclusive and more closely following a factual analysis of the crisis, sees in its outcome no finality, no definite decision, but an armistice, maybe only a postponement of a hardly avoidable clash between two worlds. A few years ago Hamilton Fish Armstrong's provocative study, *We or They*,¹⁰ showed the deep gulf between democracy and dictatorship. International affairs today reflect not only a clash between imperialisms but a new religious war of conflicting ideologies. Their concepts of life are different. Even if they use the same vocabulary it has a different meaning. How is any real (not only tactical) understanding possible between such uncompromising doctrines? Can their clashing interests and concepts be reconciled? The critical year 1938 may serve as a case study. The answer will depend on one's interpretation of the crisis. Undoubtedly the first prerequisite for such a responsible decision is a careful review of the events and—insofar as it is possible today—an explanation of the motives behind the diplomatic moves. Even, and especially, the well informed layman has been at a loss, overwhelmed by the abundant and controversial facts. To sift and evaluate them it needed all the expert knowledge, historical discipline, and critical scrutiny of a Hamilton Fish Armstrong,¹¹ the very same qualities which made him the out-

¹⁰ Hamilton Fish Armstrong: *We or They*, Two Worlds in Conflict (N.Y... 1937).

¹¹ Hamilton Fish Armstrong: *When There Is No Peace* (Macmillan Co., N.Y., 1939, 236 pp., \$1.75). "Armistice at Munich" is the significant title of a pre-print of this study, published in *Foreign Affairs*, Jan. 1939. The book adds—apart from a more detailed analysis—some general observations and conclusions as well as a most valuable day-by-day chronology of 73 pages. An Appendix gives the hitherto unpublished note of the Czechoslovak Government of Sept. 20, commenting on the Anglo-French demands of Sept. 19—a pathetic document significantly omitted from the British "White Paper."

For a similar interpretation see numerous articles in *The Economist* (London) cf. After Rome (Jan. 21, 1939); and the arresting sketch by G. P. Gooch: Twenty Years of Europe, *The Contemporary Review*, London, Feb., 1939 pp. 129-139.

standing editor of the most representative rostrum of "Foreign Affairs" in this country. His book is undoubtedly the best record of the crisis year. Beginning with the Hitler speech of February 20 (which opened the national socialist claim for the protection of "those fellow Germans who live beyond our frontiers") through the May crisis, Nuremberg, Berchtesgaden, Godesberg to Munich and its repercussions, Armstrong's fascinating narrative reconstructs the drama of the Czechoslovak dismemberment. Its restraint and moderate style makes it the more effective. Carefully evaluating all the essential moves and conflicting statements, it shows the complexity of motives, avoids simplifying formulas, yet does not at all refrain from taking an out-spoken position. Where he does that he always bases it on an abundance of facts. One of the most interesting examples (of what is perhaps the dramatic climax of the whole crisis) is his interpretation of the Franco-British demarche in the Hradcany interview of September 21, 2:15 a.m. Here on the basis of "information from high authoritative sources" Armstrong backs the much disputed thesis of Seton-Watson that an unconditional acceptance of the Anglo-French plan was enforced by a threat to Czechoslovakia to being left alone in a war crisis as the sole responsible agent of such a war.¹²

There are more facts mentioned by Armstrong which might indicate deliberate planning on the part of the Western powers to "sell out Czechoslovakia": the dispatches of Joseph Driscoll, London correspondent of the *Herald Tribune* (as early as May 5 indicating on the basis of statements by highest authority British unwillingness to fight and already hinting at partition as the solution); the strange role of Bonnet throughout the crisis; the whole Runciman mission including its report and far reaching proposals; and finally the historical London *Times* editorial of September 7 suggesting secession of Sudetenland. All these facts give color to such an analysis.

On the whole, however, Armstrong accepts a far more complex explanation. Universal distrust of war as a useful instrument of

¹² Cf. R. W. Seton-Watson: *Munich and After*, *Fortnightly*, November, 1938; see also Hubert Beuve-Méry: *La Vérité sur la pression franco-britannique exercée a Prague le 20 Septembre*. *L'Europe Nouvelle*, Oct. 29, 1938; compare the different interpretation by Alfred Fabre-Luce: *Histoire Secrète de la conciliation de Munich* (Paris, 1938).

policy,¹³ military unpreparedness, fear on the part of the property group that a conflict would result in final economic disintegration and communist chaos, and last but not least, physical fear—these were the main factors in the Anglo-French capitulation.

Armstrong, though eager to avoid moralizing throughout his whole presentation finally questions whether the Munich agreement (by September 29 probably the only alternative to open hostilities) seemed to have been the sole solution at the beginning of the crisis in February or even as late as Godesberg. In a post-Munich Europe where the sanctity of international contracts have been so deeply disturbed, Armstrong can see not so much peace as an armistice.

Even more disquieting may seem the analysis of another American expert in international affairs. Dr. Dean,¹⁴ research director of the Foreign Policy Association, puts the Munich Accord in the broader background of the diplomatic post-War history, and even more in the flux of the political and social dynamics going back to pre-War times. Thus viewed, Hitler's foreign policy becomes a new edition of pre-War pan-Germanism, MEIN KAMPF, a simplified formula of the "alluvial deposits left by many streams of German thought." The new imperialism of the "Have-Nots," the proletarians between the nations against the economic royalists of Versailles is paralleled by the revolt of the dispossessed classes against industrial capitalism and by a general trend away from economic individualism toward some form of collectivism. Nazism and communism—outwardly different in their national set-up, starting points and objectives—cannot therefore be regarded as disconnected phenomena. Nor is it longer valid to divide the nations in

¹³ Armstrong is right in discounting the widely used and confusing phrase that "in war there are no winners." More serious, however, is the actual dilemma of a peace settlement felt in a World which had gone through the disheartening experiences of twenty years' armistice. "The Peace settlement is the acid test of a War," as A. J. Toynbee clearly states. "The moral impasse with which the British and French peoples were confronted when they had to face the prospect of War with Germany comes to light in the question of the peace settlement."

In the light of the prevailing criticism of the Paris Treaty System it is of special interest to recall the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, the forerunner of Versailles. Fortunately, such a timely study has just been published by John W. Wheeler-Bennett. *The Forgotten Peace*. Brest-Litovsk, March 1918 (New York 1939)—a masterpiece of contemporary history.

¹⁴ Vera Micheles Dean: *Europe in Retreat*, (A. A. Knopf, New York 1939, 254 pp. \$2.00).

terms of moral right and wrong. Their fight in these years is not simply a struggle between vice and virtue but between power imperialisms. Democracies have forfeited the right to hold dictatorships solely responsible for European tensions by their treatment of the Weimar Republic. "Might makes right" also formed part of the consciousness of democracies. Collective security meant to them "merely security for the victors against the insurgence of the vanquished." If there is any exhortation in Mrs. Dean's sober and disillusioned study, it is that "not protestations of faith, but only constant practice can preserve Western democracy against the inroads of fascism." The problem to her is, "whether piecemeal barter of backward territories or a fundamental transformation of the existing economic order alone can bring genuine appeasement."

Against such a background, Mrs. Dean gives a lucid analysis of the principal factors leading the way to and from Munich. The author's precision in observation and soundness of judgment can be especially seen in her exposition of the "questions not answered at Munich." Often one might have wished that the very pointed aperçus could have been enlarged into a more elaborate study, especially on implications and repercussions in the post-Munich world. It may be too early for such an attempt. Especially the responsible publicist will be hesitant to press his wandering thoughts into the definite form of a book. Undoubtedly public addresses and periodical articles will be a better medium for carrying such preliminary discussions and evaluations.

Perhaps the most balanced and equally challenging analysis on Europe after Munich can be found in Toynbee's December address before the Royal Institute of International Affairs at London, showing that even the presumably factual question of Germany's prospects in Central Europe finds divided opinions. He gives a careful evaluation of all the "pros" and "cons" for German domination in the Danubian basin.¹⁵

¹⁵ Arnold J. Toynbee: After Munich: The World Outlook. *International Affairs*, Jan.-Feb. 1939. As "pros" for German domination he enumerates the following facts: First, the Rome-Berlin axis now insulates France and England from everything on the continent as far as Vladivostok. Second, the only chance of security for the small states is to keep on good terms with Germany. Third, Germany can set her

Even more important are Toynbee's additional remarks on the breakdown of the Balance of Powers and on the future of the British Empire. Here he takes up a theme which he attacked in a memorable address the day before Hitler's march into Austria.¹⁶ In this—one might say prophetic—speech he showed the alternative confronting the British Empire: defence of the Pax Britannica or abdication. Nine months later he even raises the question (following St. Augustine's *De Civitate Dei*) whether the English, if now really thinking of giving up the British attempt to establish the earthly city—that constructive, orderly, earthly commonwealth which the Romans did establish in their day—are missing the heavenly city, too.

III

No analysis of Munich can overlook the most significant *strategy of conquest* on the part of Hitler. There was shrewd timing, an astute estimate of political and social forces at work in modern Europe, able camouflage of the issues at stake, censorship at home and black-mail

neighbors against one another through her championship of the principle of national self-determination. Fourth, there are common causes between Germany and the ruling classes of the Danubian nations. Anti-semitism is a useful article of exportation in these areas and Germany can guarantee to the rulers security from civilian movements. Finally, Germany will make use of all technical facilities in these countries. A German railway system and propaganda machinery will control them.

Against these bright prospects, however, Toynbee points at important elements of resistance: First, the superiority in numbers of the German nation is dwindling in Central Europe. The high birth rate in eastern countries and in a similar way their social and economic development will change the German preponderance in time. Second, the rising political maturity in the small nations is a factor not to be overlooked. Nationalism has been a demonic force in the resurrection of Germany, the small nations are just awakening to their nationalism. Third, there is still a possibility of a counter-group headed by Italy and Poland (even if Colonel Beck's idea of a "Third Europe" has not met with success during the last years). The Carpatho conflict already showed such an alignment, though Germany finally was successful in the re-drawing of the Czech-Hungarian frontier. Fourth, the governing elements in some countries, unpopular not least because they are inclined to play the German game, may lose. There is even the possibility of a re-appearance of Russia in European affairs. Toynbee rightly reminds us of the important role Soviet Russia played in the resurrection of Kemalist Turkey. Finally, there is common dislike and fear of Germany. German-Prussian temperament and national tradition are not reputed to be tactful and moderate—the most important elements in an appeasement of the European powder keg. This psychological factor indeed is the chief "con" against Germany's prospect. In spite of that, Toynbee believes that Germany will succeed in building up a Mitteleuropa and that the Rome-Berlin axis will not break.

¹⁶ Arnold J. Toynbee: *The Issues in British Foreign Policy. International Affairs* May-June 1938.

abroad each time raising the ante. But the success was due to even more systematic methods which national socialism had developed in international affairs since its rise to power. It is the same "insurrectionary technique" which had been so successfully applied in domestic politics and which—just as the "parallel diplomacy" of convenient distinction between responsible government and irresponsible party—had been borrowed from the Bolshevik arsenal. Long before any frontal attack on the class or national enemy is tried (if it is ever necessary then), his position is undermined by "underground activities" and "boring from within." The disciple certainly proved to be more successful than the Third International. National socialism applied these techniques in the conquest of Austria, the Spanish Civil War, and the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia. For years the political penetration of the Danubian countries has been pushed along the same lines. Utilizing national minorities and ideological allies, the attempt has been made to bring the internal governments of the different states under German influence either directly or by encouraging and even financing friendly movements. The possibilities of those strategies are not at all exhausted in the post-Munich world. They may even be transplanted into world-wide areas.

This triumph of national socialism of necessity strikes the larger issue of *democracy and foreign affairs*. No doubt, throughout the crisis the strategic inferiority of the democratic powers was obvious. These difficulties are not at all new, but the clash with dictatorships makes them a primary concern. They may even endanger the very existence of modern democracy. The more amazing it is that those vital problems have been only sporadically discussed in political science.¹⁷

Carl Joachim Friedrich's new book¹⁸ therefore will be regarded as a pioneering attempt to attack this badly neglected field of research. It certainly deserves a very careful evaluation. Here only a few salient

17 Cf. Harold Nicolson's Trilogy: *Lord Carnock: A Study in Old Diplomacy; Peacemaking 1919*; and *Lord Curzon*, esp. his terminal essay: "Some Remarks on the Practice of Diplomacy," furthermore his illuminating article on "British Public Opinion and Foreign Policy," *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, Jan. 1937.

18 Carl Joachim Friedrich: *Foreign Policy in the Making*. The Search for a New Balance of Power (W. W. Norton, New York 1938, 296 pp. \$3.00).

points which lend color to the phenomenon of Munich can be mentioned. His stimulating study is an attempt to outline the patterns of Democratic foreign policy in post-war Europe. It incidentally gives a thought-provoking account of the international entanglements from Versailles and the League of Nations (conceived as an alternative to a pre-War balance of power diplomacy) through the reappearance of a balance of power, the Locarno period and its aftermath, to the international civil war of to-day. Friedrich is above all interested in the changes which have been brought about in the three time-honored principles of international conduct: the balance of power, preponderance of foreign affairs over domestic politics, and the continuity of foreign affairs. He rightly shows that, originally formulated in an internal struggle to fight the sovereigns and to establish the rule of the people, democracy still follows the patterns and methods of monarchial and aristocratic statesmanship in foreign politics. In fact, democracy meets with definite handicaps in the field of international affairs which it has not yet overcome. Efficient foreign policy presupposes national unity and continuity. The very essence of democratic government, open discussion, necessarily leads to divided loyalties, which weaken any united front against the other nations. Thus, the partisan struggle may produce a dangerous split on the brink of war—easily played up by shrewd dictatorial diplomacy. This has been, no doubt, influential in the final outcome of the Czech crisis.

Dictatorships are more cunning than democracies in the game of bluffing. Not that "they have the stronger nerves"¹⁹ but they can discount peace sentiment though it is undoubtedly as strong within their own nation as anywhere. Indeed totalitarian dictatorships prosper in war-like situations. War is a dictatorship's beginning, its demand, its justification. If, however, war really comes, then dictatorships' enforced unity is put to a test. History certainly proves that they cannot stand defeat. Democracies, on the other hand, always understating their own strength on account of their internal partisan struggle, rally to united action in emergencies.

¹⁹ A slogan often used by "Die Schwarze Front," organ of the National Socialist S. S. (Schutzstaffel: the special black guard troop of National-socialism)—a newspaper which takes the lead in the anti-religious agitation in National-Socialist Germany.

There is a close interaction between foreign and domestic affairs, Friedrich states, and the last European crisis gave full proof of that. Just as "the threat to national existence" can be used as a weapon in shaping internal policies, so are domestic issues, popular prejudices, special pressure groups instrumental in determining international affairs. The specific difficulty and fatal incapacity of democracies in foreign affairs arises from "the role of the people who want peace and at the same time many things which cause war." Reckless mass emotionalism becomes the greatest danger of democratic foreign policy, especially since the mass of the people are unfamiliar with the difficulties confronting government in international affairs. The khaki elections of 1918 serve as exhibit No. 1.

In spite of all these disappointments and difficulties met by the infant giant, the people, Friedrich does not share in the now prevalent despair for the establishment of a reign of law. "Democracy will march toward international organization," which, however, will not be based on an empty super-structure, but on common folkways and a democratic union of nations.

IV.

Munich opens up another problem almost completely overlooked in political science, the *problem of generations*. In Hitler and Chamberlain, the main actors of the crisis, two men met who belong not only to different nations, adhering to different traditions and philosophies, but also two men of different generations. The two recently published biographies of Chamberlain by Hodgson and Sir Charles Petrie well illustrate the late Victorian features of the British statesman.²⁰ Both biographers rightly point at the fact that for seven years at the most impressionable period of his career Neville was in the West Indies super-

²⁰ Stuart Hodgson: *The Man Who Made the Peace: Neville Chamberlain* (New York 1938) Sir Charles Petrie: *The Chamberlain Tradition* (New York 1938).

Hodgson's slim volume is a fair appraisal of life and character of Neville Chamberlain. Short and factual—not all laurels, even criticizing his hero,—it stresses the "Lincoln-like simplicity" of Chamberlain. So far as his role at Munich is concerned, Hodgson sees in the British Premier the mouthpiece of the horror with which millions all over the world regard modern warfare. Even if one may argue with the author that numerous other motives may have influenced Chamberlain, there is no doubt that the European crisis in the Fall of 1938 brought out the enormous peace sentiment of the

vising one of his father's unsuccessful business ventures. Not only had he thus really experienced the Empire, ("He has lived among people to whom the Rhine, the Danube and the Mediterranean are but geographical terms," an observation that may serve as a key toward an understanding of the Premier Neville Chamberlain's European policy), but what seems to be even more important, such experiences and his later business career in Birmingham, his thorough training in local government and his further activities in public life developed in Chamberlain the typical qualities of "the first real businessman to hold the position of a premier."²¹ Indeed such a career is very different from the life of the man, twenty years younger, whose awakening experiences had been the world war. Chamberlain and Hitler speak a different language—one raised in the civic virtues of the Victorian era, the other in a militant way of life.

world. As a bringer of peace, the head of each government in Europe could be sure of a warmer welcome than if he brought victory to mourners.

More doubtful, however, is Hodgson's analysis of the lasting effects of Munich. "The real victory which Chamberlain won at Munich was the definite assertion of the form of international laws as against the claims of any nation to assert its rights by naked force. . . . The criticism of Nazi foreign policy ever since Hitler took office has not been that its aims were wrong, but that its methods were inconsistent with the mere existence of international law." Here again Hodgson points at a very important feature of international relations in post-War times. Perhaps the basic problem and decisive difference between nations has been the question of means, not ends. Force and threats of violence have prevailed over the orderly processes of justice, such as the policy started by Japan at Manchukuo, taken up by Italy in Ethiopia, and developed in an even more spectacular way by Germany in Central Europe. Such a policy is contagious. It is comically imitated by the smaller nations. Poland always followed in the big brother's footsteps, after Germany's march into Austria—with her ultimatum and mobilization against Lithuania, and after Munich—in her "conquest" of Teschen.

The more ambitious attempt of Petrie is a very informative study of the three Chamberlains, but its main thesis of the basic similarity between father and sons will be doubted, especially so far as Neville Chamberlain is concerned. What runs through their careers, according to Petrie, and justifies one in speaking of a "Chamberlain tradition" are their basically democratic conceptions, their championship of a united Empire, in international affairs, their fight for the preservation of peace of the world as a leading object of British policy, and finally, courage and willingness to face facts, however unpleasant. Petrie admits that there are basic differences between the three which he ascribes to contrasted up-bringing and circumstances. It may be doubted, however, whether Joseph Chamberlain was not a totally different character. The "directness of purpose and freshness of outlook" characteristic of this resolute fighter certainly differs from the vacillating and uncertain attitude, half-monitory, half-defeatist which Neville Chamberlain showed throughout the on-coming crisis of 1938.

²¹ Even as a business man he was characterized by a colleague as "a fellow with a retail mind in a wholesale line," quoted from H. F. Armstrong, p. 22.

Chamberlain certainly stands for a long tradition, not only the tradition of his own family, but of a middle class civilization of late Victorianism. He is characteristic of the prevailing type of British statesmen. Neither the neurotic nor the demagogue has room in a political England which soon after the war dismissed the dynamic Lloyd George and never recalled him. Great Britain is still ruled by a pre-War generation of trustworthy businessmen who believe that a contract is a contract and that money speaks.

But the dynamics of post-War politics speak a different language. Germany's ruling class today is directed by young men almost exclusively born between 1890 and 1900. It is most characteristic that they followed the dictatorial call. An analysis of the complex psychological changes which this War-and post-War generation went through undoubtedly could throw some light on the human driving forces of national socialism. It is with these expectations that one may take up Theodore Abel's recent publication.²²

The well versed Columbia sociologist of international outlook who knows Germany of pre-Hitler time and spent a longer period in Nazi Germany, certainly approaches the problem in a new and promising manner. Following the sociological classic of Florian Znaniecki, he bases his study on the life histories of 600 national socialists. These autobiographical sketches were obtained by a prize contest launched in Germany early in June 1934. Six of these biographies are published in full (the stories of a Worker, an Anti-Semite, a Soldier, a Middle Class Youth, a Bank Clerk, a Farmer). In addition to that, the author presents a brief history of the Nazi movement and a study of the factors which made it grow. An unforeseen delay in the publication of this study may be partly responsible for the fact that it does not add much to a by now enormous and most specific literature. In view of such abundant supplies available, it will be regretted that Abel carefully refrained in his analysis from using any other sources than his first-hand material. The biographies still make interesting reading, if only for the

²² Theodore Abel: *Why Hitler Came into Power*. (Prentice-Hall, N. Y. 1938, 322 pp., \$2.75.)

adamant ignorance they often show of simple facts and essential motives.²³

The main question is less the trustworthiness of these autobiographies (on which Abel himself makes some salient comments) but much more their value as a source of information on the psychology of the "fictitious average type of Nazi followers." May be it is altogether impossible to attack this problem. In any case, the autobiographies of the political lieutenants (past and present) of national socialism such as Goebbels, Roehm, Killinger, the numerous biographies of the starlets—eulogies though they may be,—and especially novels such as Ernst von Salomon's books certainly tell more about the psychology of the Nazi partisans.²⁴

The still unwritten comprehensive analysis of the momentous war generation would give an important key toward an understanding of the spirit of Munich. Because Munich means not only the liquidation of a peace treaty but even more, the result of a war which had transformed the people living through this experience and which above all had killed off ten millions of young soldiers who were betrayed in their share of making a new world. It is this loss of a war generation which explains many of the great ills of post-War society. The survival of western democracies will not the least depend on their ability to fill the gap of a war generation by young and courageous leaders who can take the responsibility from the shoulders of the elder statesmen. Only then will democracy be able to "re-define in equally dynamic terms the ideas it offers as an alternative to dictatorship and correct those grievances against democracy which in the past proved to be Hitler's most effective allies."²⁵

[This Article was written before the recent events in Prague.]

23 Cf. the inaccurate statements on: Walter Rathenau (p. 159), the origin of the inflation (p. 209), Tirpitz and the submarine warfare (p. 232), etc.

The biographies transmit almost nothing of the spiritual conflicts and disputes of the young war and post-war generation. How much they fall short of a real feel of the atmosphere can be seen for instance in a comparison of the meaningless "story of a soldier" with war books like Ernst Jünger's, Renn's, Schauwecker's, Dwinger's and even Remarque's novels (so much defamed by nationalistic Germany) or Curt Hotzel's *Deutscher Aufstand, die Revolution des Nachkriegs*. (Stuttgart 1934) and Bodo Uhse's *Söldner und Soldat* (Paris 1935).

24 Ernst von Salomon: *Die Geächteten* (Berlin 1930) and *Die Stadt* (Berlin 1932).

25 Vera M. Dean: *Europe in Retreat*, p. 254.