

IV

Propaganda and the Terror

*PROPAGANDA AND THE MONOPOLY
OF MASS COMMUNICATIONS*

The psychic fluidum — that is, the peculiar atmosphere — of totalitarian dictatorship is created by two closely related phenomena, propaganda and the terror. Terror may be a rather strong word, but it focuses attention upon an objective reality, as contrasted with the subjective response to that reality. Terror may be crude or subtle; it may work with the threat of execution or with defamation and social shame. Its chief characteristic is the deliberate effort to intimidate. Governmental terror seeks to frighten those under its sway into conformity and obedience. It therefore may create a measure of consensus and willing cooperation. Any realistic account of prison life, like Brendan Behan's, provides ample illustrations for such "consensus" in response to intimidation. A pervasive atmosphere of anxiety and a general sense of insecurity are the subjective concomitants of such terror. Often the victims of such terror are quite unaware of their own psychic states. That is the reason why simple interviews, especially by casual travelers, rarely disclose its presence. (238d) Because the terror reinforces the monopoly of mass communication, and indeed a good part of all communication, totalitarian propaganda can be understood only within this context. And conversely the terror assumes its all-pervading quality because it is spread about through the continuous repetition of official propaganda lines. This linkage of propaganda and terror distinguishes them from all comparable phenomena in other systems of government.

The nearly complete monopoly of mass communication is generally agreed to be one of the most striking characteristics of totali-

tarian dictatorship. It is also one of the features which clearly differentiates it from earlier forms of autocratic rule, as we have noted. Modern mass-communication media, the press, radio and television, and the film, have been developing gradually and have, under competitive conditions, been looked upon as an essential condition of large-scale democracy. For, without the possibility of communicating a great deal of information that is beyond the reach of the immediate community, even the casual participation in policy determination which the citizen of the modern state is called upon to perform would be impossible.

In totalitarian dictatorships, all these means of communication are centrally controlled by the government, regardless of whether they are also actually owned by the government, as in the Soviet Union, or continue under "private" ownership, as in fascist countries. Hence they are not available for the expression of criticism or even adverse comment. This monopoly of the channels of mass communication is reinforced by the control of the means of private communication, the postal services and more especially the telephone and telegraph. Wire tapping is a common practice, and there is of course no such thing as "privacy" of the mails. In the interest of combatting counterrevolutionary plots, the government claims the right to open all mail. What this means is that only word-of-mouth communication remains for those who wish to carry opposition beyond the point permitted by the government—surely a rather inefficient method under the conditions of modern mass society. All effective control over the content of communications is vested in the state," which in fact means the top party functionaries who usually possess, as a result of previous revolutionary agitation, considerable know-how in the field of propaganda.

Propaganda as such is not a peculiarity of totalitarian dictatorship. It has become increasingly recognized as an integral part of all organizational activity in a highly literate society. (104k) Propaganda has been defined in different ways, depending in part upon what it was to be distinguished from. It should be pointed out here that the Soviets make a clear distinction between propaganda and agitation. Some of what we mean here by propaganda would, in Soviet terminology, more accurately be called agitation. To the Soviets, propaganda is restricted to a more refined, rational, documented appeal, designed to convince rather than to induce. Agita-

tion tends to be more vehement, striking, and generally aimed at the masses.

It has been said that "propaganda is the other fellow's opinion." In line with such a superficial notion, many people think of propaganda as essentially untruth. But no propagandist worth his mettle will prefer an untruth to a truth, if the truth will do the job. This is the vital test of all propaganda activity: does it do the job? and what is the job? The needs, interests, and requirements of the organization for which the propagandist works determine the answer to this question. If it is the Red Cross, the "job" may be to secure contributions; if the *Ladies' Home Journal*, it may be subscriptions. The latter example shows that propaganda, under competitive conditions, resembles advertising; both are often soft-pedaled as "public relations." In short, propaganda is essentially action-related; it aims to get people to do or not to do certain things. That action focus may be either very visible or hidden away. But it always is there and needs to be inquired into, if propaganda is to be understood. And since propaganda is carried on in behalf of an organization, it is equally important to inquire into who finances it. Many propagandists are reluctant, therefore, to reveal the source of their funds. (107a)

In totalitarian dictatorships, virtually all propaganda is directed ultimately to the maintenance in power of the party controlling it. This does not mean, however, that there are not many sharp conflicts between rival propagandists. As will be shown later, the maintenance of totalitarian dictatorship does not preclude the occurrence of many internecine struggles; on the contrary, it lends to these struggles a fierceness and violence which is rarely seen in freer societies. This issue of the rival component elements in the totalitarian society poses very difficult problems for the over-all direction of propaganda. The chief propagandist often has to opt between such rival groups. (In the National Socialist Ministry of Propaganda and Public Enlightenment, these rival claims to some extent found expression in the organization of the "desk," that is to say, of different bureaus which would report on different sections of the society and would thus mirror the conflicts.) (73a)

The documentary evidence that has become available since the war tends to support earlier views regarding the inner workings of Goebbels' propaganda organization. (331a) There is no need here

to go into details of the organization, but some outstanding features deserve brief comment. Perhaps the most important aspect of this "monopoly" control was the dualism of government and party. Each had its elaborate propaganda setup, both headed by Goebbels, who succeeded in maintaining a measure of effective coordination. But on the whole it would seem that the Ministry of Propaganda and Public Enlightenment and the party office of propaganda were in a coordinate position. However, key officials of the ministry who stood in sharpest antagonism to Goebbels, like Otto Dietrich, the press chief of the Hitler government, also occupied pre-eminent posts in the party's propaganda machine, and this "personal union" extended fairly far down the line. The relationship has been described as follows: "The task of the Propaganda Ministry in the whole machine for controlling and creating public opinion might be compared with a Ministry of War. It coordinates, plans, and is responsible for the smooth carrying out of the whole propaganda effort of the German government. The Party Propaganda Department, on the other hand, is comparable to the General Staff of an army which actually directs operations and musters and organizes the forces and their supplies and ammunition." (331b) It is seen from this and other evidence that the two organizations had different functions within the regime, comparable to the difference between party and government. The aggressive boldness of a leader of the National Socialist movement was as much a quality required of Goebbels as was the forceful caution of a leading government official. It is generally agreed that the most important instrument of Goebbels in planning and coordinating all the far-flung activities of his two organizations was the Coordination Division of the ministry. Here was centered the conflict between the rival requirements of the two organizations; here, if possible, such difficulties were solved by the key officials of the division or, if necessary, by Goebbels himself. But it was never an easy task to draw together the various divergent strands of the propaganda apparatus, and the difficulties experienced by the Ministry of Propaganda reflected the tensions of the moment. It is an ever present problem when total monopoly control exists.

The same problem, often in aggravated form, confronts the totalitarian propagandist in the field of foreign relations. While he gains the advantage of controlling all channels of information to other

countries, he suffers under the distinct disadvantage of having little chance to secure the confidence of people abroad, including the foreign governments themselves, about any information reaching them. Hitler showed considerable awareness of these difficulties. At one time, talking among intimates, he noted that a sharp distinction must be made between handling the domestic and the foreign press. Radio messages for foreign countries must similarly be differentiated. Such messages, if intended for Britain, should contain musical offerings, since they would appeal to English taste and accustom the British public to tune in to German broadcasts: "As regards news-bulletins to Britain, we should confine ourselves to plain statements of facts, without comment on their value or importance . . . As the old saying has it, little drops of water will gradually wear the stone away." (150d) Goebbels added that the opinion of people who have confidence in their leadership can be effectively swayed by pointed and unequivocal value judgments. He therefore recommended that, in messages to the German people, reference should be made again and again to "the drunkard Churchill" and to the "criminal Roosevelt."

This attempt to create stereotype images of the enemy has been developed to a fine point in Soviet propaganda. All discussions and pictorial representations of the enemy stress some specific feature suggesting the enemy's alleged criminal nature and evil intent. Operating on a huge scale and addressing its appeal to the great masses of the Soviet people, Soviet propaganda strives to present a simple, unrefined, and strikingly negative portrayal, so as to create the politically desirable conditioned reflex in those to whom it is directed. (For further comment on "enemies," see Chapter 14.) It is to some extent in terms of these negative symbols that the "consensus" develops. As a matter of common observation, shared hostilities are an effective source of political association. Indeed, some political analysts have gone so far as to assert that political parties essentially rest on these shared animosities. The totalitarian dictatorships have built upon such negativist positions a good part of the popular loyalty to the regime.

During the war, Soviet anti-Nazi propaganda usually associated "Hitlerite" with such terms as "vermin" or "beast," frequently with corresponding illustrations. The anti-American campaign has similarly employed certain words over and over, such as war-

mongering and imperialist, in speaking of American leadership. *Krokodil*, the humor magazine, has become a real rogues' gallery of various criminal types, with beast-like faces, dressed either in U.S. Army uniforms or in top hats and morning coats, their fingers dripping with blood and threateningly grasping an atomic bomb. In external propaganda, the Soviet Union never fails to draw a distinction between the people as such and the leaders, who are the ones who fit the stereotype.

The nearly complete control of all means of mass communication gives the totalitarian dictatorship the very great advantage of being able to shift its general line of propaganda rather radically over short periods of time. This is especially helpful in the field of foreign affairs. After the Hitler-Stalin Pact of 1939, Communist and Nazi propagandists were stressing all of a sudden the common features of these "popular" regimes and their contrast with the "Pluto-democracies" of the West. Various points were brought forward in this connection — such as that the Russians and Germans were both young and vigorous as contrasted with the decadence of the West. Even more striking is Russia's recent turn in regard to Communist China, as indeed has been the change in China itself. Such reversals in official propaganda lines are inconceivable under competitive conditions.

But while these shifts may work in the Soviet Union, they certainly tend to bring on a crisis in the Communist movement in other countries. Many Communist followers, including important men, have changed sides in the past and may do so again. After the Hitler-Stalin Pact twenty-one French Communist deputies out of a total of seventy-two abandoned the party. (28) Similarly, Nazi sympathizers in a number of countries, especially the United States, were deeply disturbed, and anti-Nazi activities were assisted by this change. Even deeper were the fissures caused by Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin. In fact, the repercussions of that move are still audible in the way Communist parties have been affected by the conflict between the USSR and China.

But even internally the alteration in an official line may have subcutaneous reactions, which the leadership fails to appreciate. When Hitler suddenly decided to invade the Soviet Union in the summer of 1941, he was much pleased with his success in accomplishing this *salto mortale*. "I am proud that it was possible with

these few men [himself, Goebbels, and a few aides] to shift course by 180 degrees. No other country could do the same." (152b; 150c) In this instance, we know from postwar documents that the effect on German public opinion was quite mixed. For, while some men who had previously stood aloof decided that in a life-and-death struggle with communism they must support Hitler, others concluded that the game was up and joined what became a dangerous and large-scale opposition movement. Detached analysis suggests that it was not so much the propaganda as the very facts themselves which had the greatest effect. (302a; 76a)

This instance serves to illustrate what is probably a very important aspect of all totalitarian propaganda. The fact of monopolistic control gradually causes in the general public a profound distrust of all news and other kinds of information. Since people do not have any other sources of information, there develops a vast amount of rumor mongering as well as general disillusionment. And since a man cannot think without having valid information upon which to focus his thought, the general public tends to become indifferent. This in turn leads to a phenomenon we may call the "vacuum," which increasingly surrounds the leadership. Comparable problems have beset autocracies in the past. Well known is the tale of Harun al-Rashid, who stalked Baghdad at night disguised as a commoner to find out what was going on. Harun al-Rashid, so the tale goes, was wise enough to realize that his subordinates were prone to abuse their great power and, instead of employing it for the good of the community and the commonwealth, would oppress and exploit the people. He had no reliable way of ascertaining the common man's views through regular channels, since all of these were controlled by the very subordinates he wished to check up on, so the great Caliph disguised himself from time to time and mingled, in the dark of night, with the people in taverns and streets to listen to their tales of woe. On the basis of what he had heard, he would bring those to trial who had been talked about as vicious and corrupt. This problem of checking up occurs, of course, in all human organizations, but under orderly constitutional government (and the corresponding patterns of responsibility in private organizations), such checking occurs readily and continuously as a result of the open criticism that is voiced by members not only in formal meetings, but informally through press, radio, and all the other

channels. Under the conditions of totalitarian dictatorship, the check-up becomes exceedingly difficult, if not impossible.

This failure to communicate effectively, both within the hierarchy and with the rest of the people and the world, we have called the "vacuum." There develops within the totalitarian regime a kind of empty space around the rulers, which becomes more and more difficult to penetrate. A slow disintegration affecting all human relations causes mutual distrust so that ordinary people are alienated from one another; all the bonds of confidence in social relationships are corroded by the terror and propaganda, the spying, and the denouncing and betraying, until the social fabric threatens to fall apart. The confidence which ordinarily binds the manager of a plant to his subordinates, the members of a university faculty to one another and to their students, lawyer to client, doctor to patient, and even parents to children as well as brothers to sisters is disrupted. The core of this process of disintegration is, it seems, the breakdown of the possibility of communication—the spread, that is, of the vacuum. Isolation and anxiety are the universal result. And the only answer the totalitarian dictatorship has for coping with this disintegration of human relationships is more organized coercion, more propaganda, more terror.

We know today that the SS of Himmler made extensive check-ups on the attitude of the German population during the war. Many of these reports show a remarkable candor about the faltering and eventually vanishing support for the regime. (371) But there is every reason to believe that these reports never reached Hitler, even in abbreviated form. It is not even clear how many of them became available to Himmler. The terror that permeates the party and secret-police cadres, no less than the general population, operates as an inhibition to truthful reporting. Block wardens falsify their reports, in the hope of currying favor with their superiors. We shall see later how this tendency to pretend that results are better and more favorable to the regime than the facts warrant and to make adjustments, not only in reports about attitudes, but also in those about production and maintenance of industrial plant, interferes with industrial planning (see Chapters 17, 18).

A similar situation arose in Italy. We learn from Leto's *Memoirs* that only Rocchini among Mussolini's lieutenants had the courage to tell him that the Italian people were bitterly opposed to entering

World War II; Starace even claimed that almost all Italians would unite behind the Duce. The Duce was similarly misinformed about the state of Italy's military preparedness; his subordinates preferred to flatter their chief by presenting rosy estimates, suggesting the prowess of his regime. (212)

In the Soviet Union, the vacuum became most pronounced at the height of the Stalin terror. It has now become greatly reduced as a consequence of the policies of "popular totalitarianism." But even under the current regime, there is a good deal of it—as shown by the recurrent efforts of stimulating "letters to the editor." It also is operative in the world Communist movement and thereby affects the USSR's intelligence work in its foreign relations. It appears that Soviet intelligence is also handicapped by the fact that, in some respects at least, it must work with and through local Communist parties. If it tried to do without them, it would soon find itself in difficulties, particularly with reference to the problem of recruiting agents and contacts, as well as penetrating the government institutions of foreign powers. (305) But when the intelligence service employs the local party organization, it is exposed to the effect of this process of falsification, rooted both in fear of the Moscow center and in ideological blindness. Local Communist leaders, fearful of Moscow disfavor and subsequent purges, easily develop a tendency toward overestimating their strength and the degree of inner disintegration in the capitalist order. Soviet miscalculations in France and Italy are among many examples, dating back to the days of the Comintern and the unsuccessful Soviet venture in China. Also at the time of the blockade of Berlin, undertaken by the USSR in June 1948 to counteract the currency reform that the Allies had instituted after lengthy Soviet obstruction (56; 404a), it became clear that the Soviet Union, on the basis of East German information, had confidently counted upon the Germans in Berlin to abandon the Allied cause and submit to the Soviet position; even elementary intelligence work could have informed them to the contrary. In fact, there is reason to believe that the entire Soviet policy in Germany was, to some extent, the result of such a failure of intelligence, because of excessive reliance upon German Communist information.

It would be a mistake, however, to conclude that the Soviet intelligence agency, both at home and abroad, operates like a man

wearing red-colored blinders. Soviet leadership makes special efforts to develop alternate channels of information and control in order to eliminate precisely this element of coloring and distortion. Soviet espionage, apart from collaborating with the local Communist parties, also operates independent networks, which report directly to Moscow. Espionage revelations show that there are normally at least five such networks in a country subjected to intensive Soviet espionage: one working through the local Communist party, another run by the MVD, a military intelligence network, a commercial espionage network, and finally the foreign-service intelligence network. Excessive discrepancies can thus be more easily detected when all such reports are processed in Moscow and submitted to the policymakers. Similarly, in their domestic surveillance, the Soviet rulers are careful not to make themselves dependent on only one source of information. Apart from the secret police and the ordinary channels of the party, there exist the Party Control Commissions, which investigate party activities in all walks of life, the Ministry of State Control, which is specially concerned with keeping in touch with administrative functions and making independent reports on their operations, and the prosecutor general and his subordinates, who have recently been given additional investigating powers. (463) There is also the technique of *samokritika*, or self-critique, according to which Soviet officials and functionaries as well as the people in general are encouraged, besides examining themselves, to criticize the operations, but *not the policy*, of the party, the state administration, or the economic enterprises.* This not only serves as a vent to pent-up aggression, but is also useful to the rulers in detecting current weaknesses, abuses, and public attitudes. As a result of this, the Soviet regime can, when it wants to, judge the responsiveness of its population to its propaganda with a surprising degree of accuracy. Also, besides these sources, there are the press and the letters to the press and party headquarters, which have, at least for Smolensk, been analyzed thoroughly. (90a) One is bound to wonder whether the recent changes in the Soviet Union were not, at least in part, motivated by such evidence about dissatis-

* "Self-critique" is preferable to the more frequent translation of "self-criticism." There is a Russian word *krititsizm* which means criticism. *Kritika* means critique, and the Soviet regime is interested in promoting the technique of critique, but not in encouraging a critical attitude through criticism.

faction with the regime. There is one major problem, however: as the totalitarian regime maintains its internal coercion and indoctrination, the degree of apparent consensus will in time increase, and the secret police will find it much more difficult to do its work. There is no doubt that the Soviet population is today much less divided in its opinions and reactions than it was a generation ago. This naturally makes information gathering less reliable. But it also makes it less urgent, since such consensus means that the regime's ideology has been "internalized" (see Chapter 15). And propaganda is thereby greatly facilitated.

Such consensus, such internalizing of the ideology, did not occur to any extent in Germany under Hitler (except within the party). Goebbels was by no means unaware of the difficulties he was confronting. In his diaries, published by Louis Lochner after the war (125), the problem is a recurrent theme. They also show how well he knew how to exploit the clumsy views which were being aired by the Allies regarding the German people as a whole, particularly the demand for unconditional surrender. As the plain facts of the Allies' successful air war against Germany mounted, the unconditional-surrender formula remained as one of the few propaganda weapons to fall back upon. Another one was provided by the Morgenthau Plan put forward at Quebec in September 1943. But not only did the Allies provide desperately needed propaganda weapons; the Soviet Union, by repeatedly demanding that ten million Germans be furnished for reconstruction purposes in the Soviet Union, allowed Goebbels to note: "Demands like that are wonderful for our propaganda. They stir German public opinion deeply. The idea that our soldiers might not return home at all but might have to remain in the Soviet Union as forced labor is a terrible thought for every woman and every mother. The German people would prefer to fight to their last breath." (125a) Incidentally, this is an illustration of the fact noted above that a propagandist prefers a good fact to the best lie. But in spite of such aids, the task of propaganda became ever more desperate as the war continued. What evidently kept Goebbels going was that he himself believed, at least until the end of 1943, in the Führer's ability to avert disaster.

That critical views printed in the press need not have any significant effect in a totalitarian regime, unless the leadership sees fit to take them into account, is demonstrated by Hitler. Great

difficulties resulted from his hostility to the German press. This contrasted curiously with his avid interest in reading press reports from abroad. (73b) But although they were brought to him almost hourly, they failed to influence his modes of expression and his basic propaganda lines. Nor did he receive sound information about the probable course of British and American policy, nor about the trend of opinion in both countries. When he arrived at his decision to go to war with Poland, he did not seem to have expected the British to do much more than make a gesture of protest, and he hoped until the last to be able to keep the United States out of the war. The efforts of certain qualified persons, especially in the Foreign Office, to furnish Hitler with more adequate data were thwarted by the predominant party cadres. (321; 391) This circumstance shows the catastrophic effect of the factor we are here analyzing: an unintended consequence of totalitarian terror is an almost complete isolation of the leader. At the time Hitler decided to go to war, in the fateful August days of 1939, he isolated himself, and no advisers, not even Goering, let alone foreign diplomats—according to Sir Nevile Henderson's pitiful account—could secure access to Hitler. (142b)

Not the vacuum specifically, but the effect of it on the totalitarian ruler has caused one leading student of these problems to make the following comment: "Where the instruments of public enlightenment are wholly under the domination of the active elite of power, the controllers of the media develop a fantasy world in which the images communicated to the people have little relationship to reality. The stream of public communication becomes dogmatic and ceremonial to such a degree that it is inappropriate to think of communication management as a propaganda problem. It is more accurate to think of ritualization than propaganda." (112e) Undoubtedly this kind of ritualization exists to some extent. On the other hand, repeated shifts in the actual lines of communication, involving the leadership in serious self-contradictions, suggest that large amounts of propaganda as such continue to be issued. The "fantasy world" in which the dictator lives, and which is a product of the vacuum that the terror has created around him, plays its role in competition with the real world that he seeks to master.

The lieutenants of a dictator are often more clearly aware of the complexity of the issues and the risks involved in a particular

course of policy. It is interesting that a key German official believed that Hitler's unrealistic propaganda lines were decidedly detrimental to the regime. His comments indicate a typical clash of views between the professional propagandist and the ideologue, whether educator or party fanatic, who is preoccupied not with the survival but with the advance of the totalitarian movement. This man's comments are so revealing that they deserve quoting in full:

I was of the firm conviction at that time that a national socialist Germany could live in peace with the world, if Hitler had been restrained in his actions, had bribed the radicalism internally, and had externally an objective which took account of the interests of other nations. The provocative demonstrations, unnecessary in their extent . . . the anti-semitic excesses, the inciting and tolerating of violence, and the world propaganda of Goebbels as embodied in the tone and content of his Sportpalast demonstrations were psychologically unsuited to gain support abroad for national socialist Germany and to cause other nations to recognize the good side of national socialism. These tactless and offensive outbursts decisively influenced world public opinion against Germany immediately after 1933. (73c)

That the propaganda was unwise probably is right, but it overlooks the fact that Hitler was not primarily interested in the German people and was basically motivated by his totalitarian mission, as he conceived it; for this the German people were merely the tool.

As in nature, so in society, the vacuum is relative. And since totalitarian dictators, as already mentioned, to some extent at least realize their isolation, various efforts are made to reduce the "thin air" around them. We have shown some of the techniques employed for increasing the intake of popular reactions; totalitarian regimes have also developed techniques for increasing the outgo. Apart from the party members' continuing function as spreaders of propaganda lines, there has been developed the technique of whispering campaigns. A high party official will call in some of his friends a little further on down the line in the party and, in strict confidence, tell them something highly startling or secret. He knows perfectly well that they will go and tell somebody else, in similarly strict confidence, and so on. This technique was and is employed also for the purpose of reaching and misleading foreign correspondents. The technique is, of course, not unknown in other societies; but in them it serves a purpose radically different from that in a totali-

tarian dictatorship. It is the means of penetrating a fog rather than reducing a vacuum.

The vacuum has another curious effect, as far as outgo is concerned. As already mentioned, people under totalitarian dictatorships become so suspicious of all communication, suspecting every news item of being propaganda, that even paramount facts are disbelieved. Thus it appears that, as late as September 12, 1939, the Germans professed not to know, or rather not to believe, that Britain and France had declared war upon Germany. To the blatant headlines of Goebbels' propaganda press, their reaction evidently was: "Another of Goebbels' propaganda stories." At the time of the Franco rebellion, when the papers reported, quite truthfully, that the British navy was demonstrating in the western Mediterranean, a widespread public reaction in Germany created a genuine war scare, because people were convinced that the British navy was threatening instead the North Sea coast of Germany. (125b) Goebbels in his diaries reports a number of other instances of this kind, and the entire collection provides a striking illustration for the vacuum theory; as the war went on, the problem of reaching the German populace became more and more perplexing.*

In the Soviet Union, the war also gave rise to many rumors, which swept the population by means of the OWS news agency — a translation of the popular and symptomatic abbreviation for the Russian phrase, "one woman said . . ." During the period of initial Soviet reverses, many exaggerated accounts of Soviet defeats, flights of leaders, and so forth were passed from mouth to mouth, contradicting the official radio broadcasts and newspaper communiqués. Later on, by 1943 and 1944, as a corollary to the many promises of a happy future made during the war by the Soviet leaders, rumors circulated that the Soviet government had decided to end collectivization of agriculture and to release all political prisoners. Possibly such rumors were even originated purposely by the regime itself in order to gain public support for the war effort. In any case, some interviews with former Soviet citizens suggest that these rumors

* Actually, this problem also plagued the people in charge of wartime propaganda in the Western democracies, for during the war "constitutional dictatorships" were instituted, and the controls over news resulting from this temporary concentration of power caused the public to become increasingly suspicious.

were widely believed, and the population was quite disappointed by the postwar harshness of the Stalinist policies. A similar instance is the extensive misrepresentation of figures on the grain harvest in the late fifties, which so gravely affected Khrushchev's agricultural efforts.

It would seem from all the evidence at our disposal that the vacuum works like a cancer in the totalitarian systems. This means that its growth endangers the continued existence of the totalitarian scheme of things. It may even catapult such a dictatorship into a calamitous foreign adventure, such as Hitler's wars. Stalin's ignorance of the agricultural situation similarly made the food problem in the USSR very much more acute, according to Khrushchev's revelations. Reality is hard to perceive in a vacuum created by fear and lies, buttressed by force — hence the Khrushchevian policy of reducing the vacuum by greater popular participation.

An important feature of totalitarian propaganda is its all-pervasiveness, the direct result, of course, of the propaganda monopoly. Not only the members of the party and the more or less indifferent masses, but even the more or less determined enemies of the regime fall prey to its insistent clamor, to the endless repetition of the same phrases and the same allegations. A general pattern of thought, almost a style of thinking, proves increasingly irresistible as the regime continues in power. This is the basis of the consensus formation in the USSR. "It is clear," we read in one thorough study of these problems, "that there are people in all ranks of life who believe implicitly what they read and hear." Arguing from a presumably hostile sample, these analysts say that despite this "it is striking how the more implicit aspects of Soviet official communications, the mode of thought and the categories in which events are grouped, are reflected in the thought patterns and expression of our informants." (161b)

It has been, as a matter of fact, the frequent experience of interviewers of former Soviet citizens to find that even those who profess the most violent hostility to the Soviet system tend to think in patterns instilled into them by that regime. Their attitudes on such matters as freedom of the press or the party system are often inclined to mirror, even by contradiction or negation, official Soviet propaganda. Similarly, in such matters as word usage, words laden

with propaganda-derived value judgments are used as part of their daily vocabulary. They thus serve unconsciously as unwitting propagandists for the regime they abhor.

This singular success of totalitarian propaganda is the result of constant repetition. Soviet press, radio, oral agitation, and propaganda operate ceaselessly, supplementing the party and Komsomol activities and the ideologically oriented training system. (160a) Soviet newspapers, controlled centrally, repeat day after day the political themes set by *Pravda*, the organ of the party Central Committee, and *Izvestiya*, the central-government organ. *Pravda* itself, with a circulation of well over three million, is read and studied throughout the Soviet Union, particularly in the party cells, where it is compulsory reading. Local newspapers, many with circulations of several hundred thousand, such as *Pravda Ukrainy* and *Leninogradskaya pravda*, re-echo the essential points of the Moscow daily, often reprinting its editorials and commentaries. The local press is also sometimes given special instructions about the handling of the news and the sequence in which the various statements of the leaders are to be presented. For instance, after Malenkov's "resignation" in February 1955, Radio Moscow issued such special instructions to all the provincial papers. In addition to *Izvestiya* and *Pravda*, there are a large number of specialized papers for youth, the trade unions, the military, and others, published centrally and distributed throughout the USSR. All these newspapers, with a combined circulation of over forty-seven million in the 1950s, play an important role in the Soviet process of indoctrination. (422a)

This process is backed by the other two basic media of propaganda and indoctrination: the radio and personal agitation. The radio, with an estimated listening audience of about forty million, quite naturally devotes a great deal of its time to political matters. (160b) A reliable estimate places the amount of time devoted to political and scientific broadcasts at 28 percent of the central program time. One of the most important Moscow radio broadcasts is the morning reading (7:00 A.M.) of the *Pravda* editorial, which is relayed simultaneously by all other Soviet stations. (409a) Soviet radio publications openly admit the political importance of radio broadcasting, as seen in the following statement: "Radio helps considerably in the Communist education of the workers. It is one of the most important means of disseminating political information,

of spreading the all-triumphant ideas of Marxism-Leninism, popularizing the most advanced industrial and agricultural techniques and the achievements of socialist culture, science, and art." (445) News and editorial programs particularly are designed to complement the press propaganda coverage and highlight the important points in the current propaganda themes. Foreign news is rarely given prompt treatment, and it is usually presented as a commentary. Furthermore, the use of radio-diffusion speakers, which work on the basis of wire transmission and are therefore useless for listening to non-Soviet stations, is promoted. This, of course, insures complete monopoly for Soviet broadcasting, and about 70 percent of all sets in the USSR are of this type. (160c) Similar sets are now being introduced in the satellite regimes of Central Europe.

The third and, in some ways, the most important device is that of direct, personal agitation. This involves literally millions of agitators, some full-time, some part-time during special campaigns, who organize mass meetings, give lectures, visit families in their homes, distribute literature, set up study and discussion groups, and, in general, attempt to draw everyone into active participation in the indoctrination process. The estimated number of regular agitators is around two million, thus providing one agitator for every hundred Soviet citizens (including children). (160d) In a sense, this mass indoctrination constitutes an effort to conduct a nationwide process of brainwashing, which only a very few succeed in completely avoiding. It is on these propaganda processes, as well as on the educational training system, that the regime depends for the achievement of total ideological integration of its people. It is these instruments of mental molding that are used by the administration to produce a generation of convinced followers, thinking and acting in disciplined unison.

The technique of personal agitation has been elaborated by the leaders of Communist China. Based upon their experience during the long period of incubation when they were struggling to survive—a time they speak of as the "low ebb"—they have evolved, systematized, and tested what they call the democratic "mass line." As early as 1934 Mao charged the party cadres with mobilizing the broad masses to take part in the revolutionary war. (228) Although the situation has radically changed, since Mao and his party took over the government of all mainland China and established a totali-

tarian dictatorship, they have retained, adapted, and elaborated these techniques. "The mass line is the basic working method by which Communist cadres seek to initiate and promote a unified relationship between themselves and the Chinese population and thus to bring about the support and active participation of the people." There is nothing particularly novel about the mass line; it is the propagation of the party line, applied under primitive technical and intellectual conditions, to millions of illiterate followers. To vulgarize and in the process distort and corrupt Marxist economic and social analysis was and remains no mean task. The detailed methods are in each case molded naturally by the folkways of the particular people. "This method includes the two techniques of 'from the masses, to the masses,' and 'the linking of the general with the specific,' the basic formulization [*sic*] given by Mao Tse-tung in 'On Methods of Leadership' (June 1, 1943)," writes the most penetrating student of Communist Chinese leadership methods. (215)

Fascist propaganda techniques placed a similar emphasis upon the spoken word. Both Mussolini and Hitler were powerful orators who served as examples to many of their subleaders. Both also explicitly favored the technique; Hitler had supported this method emphatically in *Mein Kampf*, and it became a key policy of the Goebbels operation. One whole section of the party's propaganda apparatus was dedicated to the training of speakers, and there was a deliberate effort made to cultivate oratory rather than written communications. Thousands of men were thus trained to emulate Hitler in developing the technique of rousing the mass assembly, with its emotional outbursts and its vague longings, to violent action against the Jew, the Marxist, and the November criminal.

All in all, the system of propaganda and mass communication developed in the totalitarian systems is of crucial importance for the maintenance of the regime. It may be doubted whether it could function so well without the terror, but it cannot be doubted that as it actually functions it is highly effective. If manipulative controls are carried beyond a certain point, the system becomes self-defeating. Hence the loosening up after Stalin's death was intended to make the anti-Stalin propaganda effective. Now that there has developed a distinguishable "Soviet style of thinking" (161c), there can be some easing of the controls. But "it would be unduly opti-

mistic to assume that the Soviet leadership is to any major degree moving toward the establishment of free discussion." (161c) The principles of thought control, as maintained by Lenin and other Communist leaders, are merely more flexibly applied. In a sense, such thought control dehumanizes the subjects of the regime by depriving them of a chance for independent thought and judgment.

EDUCATION AS INDOCTRINATION AND TRAINING

When discussing the nature of the party, we showed how the totalitarian organization extends to the young and even the very young. Octobrists, Pioneers, and the Komsomol seek to organize and indoctrinate the child at the earliest possible age, as did the Hitler Youth and the Ballila. But besides engaging in this party activity, the totalitarians also transform a large part of the educational process itself into a school for their particular ideology. The entire educational process is utilized for the propaganda efforts of the regime and is part of this purpose in ever larger measure as the totalitarian nature of the dictatorship unfolds. (161d) As such, it is a mainstay of the process of consensus formation, as in turn the growing consensus obscures the propagandistic nature of the instruction. This is true even though the educational system, especially on its higher levels, provides an important haven for dissidents and serves as an "island of separateness" from which a certain amount of opposition emanates. We shall discuss this aspect of education in another place (see Chapter 24). Here we wish to consider its operation as a technique for "making" fascists or communists.

In considering totalitarian activity in this field, however, it is important to remember that a certain amount of such "civic education" is found in all political societies. In a well-known study, Charles Merriam explored this problem in its various ramifications and undertook to formulate certain generalizations. (242) It is quite evident that all societies must instill a love of the country and its institutions in its citizens in order to generate that degree of

loyalty without which there cannot be effective cooperation. And since no political regime can last without a certain amount of effective cooperation from most of its members, the development of loyalty has been the concern of all governments. This was emphasized by Aristotle, who devoted some significant pages of his *Politics* to the "making of citizens." But there is a vital difference between employing the educational system to develop in youth the ability and inclination "to think for themselves," as the conventional phrase goes, and using education for the purpose of making all those who come within its grip think alike. There can be no question that time and again civic educational programs in free countries have tended to overstep the boundary suggested by this contrast. Patriotic organizations often seek to pervert education into some kind of propagandistic indoctrination, "to develop a burning faith," or in some other way to restrict free inquiry and confine it within the bounds of a particular political (or religious) orthodoxy. But such activities are fairly generally recognized for what they are and, even though they may temporarily prevail under the impact of a war or other crisis, they are at length repudiated by the citizens at large.

In the nature of the case, almost no criticism is possible under totalitarian dictatorship. Teachers and pupils alike are continually exposed to the pressures emanating from the totalitarian party and its associated mass organizations. And when, in the course of the dictatorship's development, more and more teachers become absorbed into the movement, often by formal recruitment into the party itself, the distinction between education and propaganda becomes increasingly blurred, as far as broadly moral and social fields of study are concerned. (58) Education, like ideology, becomes an instrument in the hands of the regime that takes upon itself the definition of the truth. This process reached its extreme point in Stalin's celebrated concern with language. In his *Maršizm i vo-prosy yazykoznanija*, Stalin completely rejected the hitherto official Soviet doctrine of linguistics, branding it as "un-Marxist." Until Stalin's 1950 statement, the official line, enunciated by academician N. Ya. Marr, was that language was part of the superstructure derived from the economic basis. As such, it was subject to the same process of dialectical development. Stalin declared that, on the contrary, language was an independent phenomenon, not to

be confused with the superstructure. Party propagandists, quickly taking the cue, declared that the Russian language was the international language of the age of socialism, just as Latin, French, and English had been the common languages of past epochs. Similarly, in the case of the now discredited Lysenko theories, it was through the official intervention of the regime, particularly of Zhdanov, that an obsolete environmental approach to biology was proclaimed to be in keeping with Marxism. The attempt to force various fields of culture into line with the party orthodoxy, of course, had very serious deleterious effects upon the educational system. The same was true of the Nazi claim that the theory of relativity was a "Jewish" deviation from truth, and that certain trends of modern mathematics and physics, not to speak of biology, must be rejected because they were in conflict with the race myth of the official ideology.

In order to be able to direct an educational system to respond to such metarational directives, it is necessary to organize it in strict subordination to the official hierarchy. Beyond the general bureaucratization characteristic of all modern society (see Chapter 16), it becomes necessary to force all teachers into membership in the party or into related organizations, such as the National Socialist Union of Teachers, the Fascist Association of Teachers, or the Soviet professional unions for academic workers. But what is even more important is that the entire educational system be permeated by the "spirit" of the movement. From the elementary school to the university, the system must be responsive to the propaganda appeals at the top, as they elaborate and adapt the official ideology. At the same time, it must be geared to creating the "new Soviet man," who would be an idealizing projection of certain key features of the ideology, such as the class-conscious worker in the Soviet regime or the "warrior" in the Fascist regimes. (130; 12; 201b) This notion of the infinite pliability of human beings is, of course, an important premise of the totalitarian emphasis on education as the long-range arm of propaganda. (107b)

The organization of the educational system of the Soviet Union underwent considerable change after the first postrevolutionary phase. The original ideologues, more especially Lunacharsky, were fired with a genuine enthusiasm for educational reforms, which bore a resemblance to what has become known throughout the

West as "progressive education." They believed in freeing the child of the fetters of traditional authority and hoped that a system of complete freedom in the schools would be suitable to the molding of the future Soviet citizen. Sidney and Beatrice Webb, themselves committed to this Western progressivism, have written movingly of this early phase of Soviet educational effort. It was combined with a vigorous attack upon analphabetism, which had been so doleful an aspect of tsarist autocracy. (379b) It is evident, in retrospect, that this phase of Soviet education predates the consummation of totalitarian dictatorship in the USSR.

Marked by a spirit of revolt against the disciplinarian traditions of the tsarist schools, this reform resulted in the shattering of school authority. Pupil self-government was considered the best method of instilling a sense of responsibility in the young; the authority of the teacher was minimized, homework and examinations were abolished, and, in short, it was "child-centered." This somewhat destructive phase ended, however, as early as 1923 and was followed by a similarly unsuccessful era of organized experimentation designed to develop a uniquely Soviet educational process. The new Soviet education was to be a manifestation of the class relationships prevailing in the USSR, and hence was to favor the laboring masses. Discriminatory practices became widespread against the children of white-collar workers, ex-aristocrats, and others. At the same time, efforts were made to give the children the benefits of political education at the earliest possible age. Even kindergarten children were expected to participate in discussions involving, for instance, the relationship of the military to the bourgeoisie. In short, it was "ideology-centered." Traditional subjects, on the other hand, were neglected. (134; 354; 388)

The big change occurred in the early thirties. It was a part of the general process of totalitarianizing the system, marked by the party purges, collectivization, and the suppression of the opposition. It occurred also in the midst of a tremendous expansion of educational facilities, as the following figures for primary- and secondary-school attendance indicate: 1914: 7,800,000; 1928: 11,952,000; 1939: 32,000,000; 1950: 33,000,000; 1954: 29,000,000; 1962-63: 38,500,000. (72)

The number of teachers also grew rapidly: 1914-15: 23,007; 1938-39: 1,270,162; 1962-63: 2,199,000. (464a) By 1932 the regime

had acknowledged the failure of its experimental educational policies, and an about-face was made. For it had been discovered that the educational system failed to produce the skilled manpower needed in an increasingly industrialized society. As a result, professional ranks were re-established in an effort to give the academic profession more prestige; salaries were rapidly increased; traditional subjects (such as history and literature) reappeared; the Komsomol was called upon to help assert the authority of the teacher; and the process of political education was rationalized. On the youngest levels it was abandoned altogether, while it received growing emphasis in the upper academic classes. In 1938 the official, short-course history of the party, a remarkable falsification of the past, was made obligatory study matter for the older students. The purges removed from the scene many nonparty teachers, and the others were made fully subject to party control through the professional teachers' unions. The internal atmosphere of the schools became characterized by the strictest discipline and great respect for the teacher as a representative of the state. Indeed, an American high-school student would be surprised by the regulations which bind his Soviet counterpart according to the RSFSR decree of August 2, 1943, which we quote in full. Every student is bound to:

1. Stubbornly and persistently master knowledge in order to become an educated and cultured citizen as useful as possible to the Soviet Fatherland;
2. Duly learn; attend classes regularly; not be late at the beginning of school occupations;
3. Obey unquestioningly the directives of the director of the school and of the teachers;
4. Come to school with all required textbooks and writing materials; be completely ready for the class before the entry of the teacher;
5. Come to school clean, with hair well-groomed, and tidily dressed;
6. Keep his place clean and orderly;
7. Enter the classroom immediately after the ringing of the bell and take his place (one may leave or enter the classroom during class only with the teacher's permission);
8. In the classroom sit erect, not lean on his elbow, not sprawl, listen with attention to the teacher's explanations and to the answers of other students, not talk and not indulge in any extraneous matters;
9. When the teacher or the director of the school enters the classroom or leaves it, greet him by rising;

10. While answering the teacher, rise, keep erect [this and no. 9 are also true of university students], and sit down only with the teacher's permission; raise one's hand when wishing to give an answer or ask a question;
11. Enter in a notebook the exact notation of the assignments made by the teacher for the next day and show this notation to his parents; do the entire homework by himself;
12. Show respect to the director and the teachers; when meeting the director of the school or a teacher in the street, greet him by a respectful salutation, the boys by taking off their headwear;
13. Be courteous with elders, behave modestly and decently at the school, in the street and in public;
14. Not use swear or rude words, not smoke; not play any games for money or any objects of value;
15. Take care of the school property; take care also of his own and his colleagues' property;
16. Be attentive and obliging with old people and children, with weak or sick persons, let them pass and give them one's seat, assist them in every way;
17. Obey parents and help them in taking care of small brothers and sisters;
18. Keep one's room clean, and one's clothes, shoes, and bed linen in good order;
19. Always carefully keep the student's card, not give it to other persons, and produce it at the request of the director or a teacher of the school;
20. Cherish the reputation of the school and of one's class as much as one's own.
Students are liable to be punished, including expulsion from the school, for violation of these rules. (65; 189a; 15a)

The internal atmosphere of the school was thus made to correspond to the general emphasis on discipline so characteristic of authoritarian societies.

More recently, increased emphasis has been paid to technical and vocational training, at the expense of literature and the humanities. (15b; 462) At the same time the regime has made it clear that not all high-school students can expect that their studies will lead them to higher institutes of learning. On the contrary, in keeping with the swing initiated in 1940, admission to higher institutes is becoming increasingly difficult, not only through the introduction of fees, but also through the raising of admission standards. This trend has

continued; and while fees have been abolished once more, standards of admission have remained high. The striking achievements of the Soviet Union in the field of technical education were highlighted by the sputniks and have since become a familiar argument in the West, cited by all those who seek to improve scientific and technical education in the United States and elsewhere. There has in fact grown up something that has been rightly called a "mythical image" of education in Communist countries. The idea that education is equally accessible to all and that all take as much as they possibly can is hardly a realistic description of Soviet education. (161a) Careful statistical analysis has revealed that educational opportunities are definitely related to the rank of the parents, and as these rank groups (classes) are fairly stable, the differentiation is marked.

Partly as a consequence of this situation, and partly because of the high opinion of education that Communist ideology promotes, the USSR has no shortage of candidates for higher education, and it has become dangerous for all pupils to orient themselves purely in terms of higher academic training. The schools are to instill in the pupils "a desire to join the ranks of the toilers" (430a), and high-school graduates are now being sent directly into industry or agriculture. This is particularly true in the agricultural regions, where many pupils complete their education at the age of eleven and are allowed to work. In the urban areas the minimum working age is fourteen. Basically, it is a matter of getting ahead. "The only substantial opportunity for advancement," a leading authority has said, "is within the framework of the Soviet bureaucracy, which like all bureaucracies rewards skills which are ordinarily obtained through formal education." (161f) For a while there was even a trend toward looking down upon manual work. Khrushchev made vigorous efforts to counteract this trend. Soviet education is widely appreciated by the public, and even escapees have expressed the view that much of this education should be kept. The same sort of reaction has been noticeable among East German refugees. The propagandistic, regime-oriented aspects are evidently not felt to be sufficiently important to outweigh the availability of education for all.

The administration of the educational system is highly centralized, despite the formal autonomy of the republics in the field of

education. Textbooks, educational programs, and the ideological line emanate from the center, and the intellectual activity of scholars is closely supervised. Recent years, for instance, saw repeated attacks on many historians in the various Soviet republics for their alleged "nationalist deviationism." On the whole, however, it would be erroneous to conclude that, because of the emphasis placed on political indoctrination, the Soviet school fails in the function of training and preparing specialists, technicians, and generally alert Soviet citizens. Indeed, the conclusion is that Soviet totalitarianism seems well on the way to achieving a fairly high level of schooling as well as an educationally reinforced general consensus.

The National Socialists, although they almost immediately attacked the educational task in totalitarian terms, did not really have sufficient time to mature such a system. Even though they were vigorously aided by the Hitler Youth (see Chapter 5) from the very beginning, schools and more especially universities maintained a degree of passive resistance (see Chapter 24). Nevertheless, the liberal and humanistic educational system, which had been the pride and glory of Germany in the past, was revamped. Physical education was placed in the center, and the kind of personality in which the Nazis believed, where loyalty and honor were invoked to cultivate an unquestioning obedience to the Führer, was not only encouraged but coercively imposed. This unquestioning obedience was given a meaningful underpinning by inducing the pupils to identify themselves completely with the Führer and his regime. The process of building such an identification meant, where it succeeded, that education was completely politicized. Not only the content of various subjects, such as history, literature, and biology, but also their range of priorities of preference were determined by such political considerations as could be derived from the party ideology. The key concept in this connection became action (*Tat*), expressive of a thoroughly pragmatic attitude which may be indicated by paraphrasing an old American saying: "We don't know where we're going, but Hitler does and anyhow we're on the way." This education for action and active obedience appealed, in a sense, to an older strand of passive submission to traditional authorities which the few years of the Weimar Republic had not succeeded in uprooting, despite the efforts of the men then in charge. But it must not be confused with the older concept, as was done by war-

time propaganda. For the new activist outlook committed the person who accepted it to the values and beliefs of the National Socialists, in many respects sharply at variance with traditional German views. The identification it asked for could have become the stepping stone for a more independent viewpoint, once the identification had disintegrated; but, while it lasted, the mystique of "service" and "loyalty" made the submission to the "will of the people and of the state," as personified by Hitler, and to the orders of functionaries and officials appear not only as naturally right, but also as "morally obligatory." (192a) This mystique or ideology possessed, of course, strongly militaristic and imperialistic overtones, which helped to convert the entire educational system into a school for aggressive war and conquest.

The Nazis made short shrift of the former local autonomy in the field of education. They at once organized a Ministry of Education, in which all educational authority was centralized. This Reich ministry did not, however, succeed in completing a revolution of the methods and organization of education, which merely became again somewhat more authoritarian and rigid. But it imposed upon the schools a welter of politically oriented subject matter that even in its headings is revealing: family sociology, race theory and practice, genetics, population policy, ethnography, prehistory, current events, colonial politics, planning, civil defense, aeronautics, social aid. (472) It will be recognized that some of these subjects may well be useful additions to the curriculum of a modern school, if taught in the spirit of experimentation and free inquiry. By the Nazis they were made vehicles for the transmission of their ideology of "blood and soil."

The situation in Fascist Italy, though resembling that of Hitler Germany, was characterized by the struggle between the government and the church over the control of the schools. The Fascists actually sought to counterbalance the continuing influence of the Catholic Church in the schools by a compulsory service in the Fascist youth organizations (see Chapter 5). In the course of this struggle, they developed approaches which the Germans never improved upon; indeed in the entire field of education, the Italians were the originators, led as they were by a man of unusual learning and ability, Giovanni Gentile. It must be said at once, however, that his "reforms" were perverted by the needs of the totalitarian dicta-

torship. One commentator has written that Gentile's reforms were "designed to reduce the domination of the textbook, and of learning by rote, and to bring the tang of actual life, and the problems of conduct, into the schools." And he comments rightly that "this is the crucial issue in education all over the world." (95d) But what the totalitarians did was exactly the opposite. They substituted for the scholarly text of the humanist tradition the domination of the programmatic party textbook, the learning by rote of rituals and propagandistic formulas, all seemingly unbookish—to bring the tang of life and conduct, as seen by totalitarians, into the schoolrooms. In short, they revealed the great danger to all education implicit in these well-sounding phrases. Time and again the theme song was repeated: "The School is life, and Italian life is the enthusiasm of faith and Fascist discipline."

The wearisome details of teacher regimentation and pupil indoctrination in Fascist Italy need not be described further. The story is essentially the same as in the other totalitarian regimes. The schools were permeated by the party, dedicated to the task of "making Fascists." (319) There were pictures of the Duce everywhere, commemorative altars, tablets, celebrations, songs, parades, and the ever repeated slogans of Fascist propaganda. The Teachers' Association issued guides to help the teachers keep up the continuous barrage, and the textbooks were full of the same slogans. A learned investigator at the time summed up his impression of these texts in a rather effective manner:

Why are you a Balilla? Why are you a "Little Italian girl?" It is not enough to have a membership-card and the uniform! You must be sincere in heart and educated to Fascism! For example, you must learn to obey. What is the first duty of a child? Obedience! The second? Obedience! The third? Obedience! The Fascist celebrations are explained. The Flag and the rods are illustrated . . . The life of the Duce is retold under the caption: "The Child Prodigy" . . . An entire legend of Mussolini as a war hero is created. The impression is given that the war was fought at his wish and under his direction. (95e; 225a; 367)

The same theme song was repeated over and over again throughout the years from elementary and high school into the universities. And although much rigorous intellectual training of the formal continental sort continued in Italy's schools, the essential frame-

work was provided by this typically totalitarian adulation of leader, party, and system. It seems astonishing, in view of this record, that further reforms in this direction were envisaged by the proposed school reform (Carta della Scuola) of 1938 (225b) put forward by Giuseppe Bottai. Bottai called for an "organic union of party and school through the youth organization" which would "finish forever the age of the agnostic school . . . we decisively want a Fascist school, a Fascist pedagogy—Fascist teaching to create the Fascist man, by the thousands upon thousands." (446b)

How nearly alike in method and effect the communist and fascist approaches to school education are is dramatically shown by developments in the Soviet zone of occupation in Germany. Only the controlling elite cadres and the ideology differed—and these not as much as was pretended. The development of educational reform started with a genuine impulse toward democratization. A number of former teachers and school officials, mostly members of the Social Democratic Party and committed to the progressive educational idealism of the Weimar Republic, were put to work and produced the "law for the Democratization of Education," in 1946. Rejecting the traditional concepts as those of a *Standesschule* (class school), and professing a sharply antifascist outlook, the law provided: "The German school must be organized so as to guarantee the same right to education, according to their abilities, to all youth . . . regardless of the estate of their parents." And, consequently, it demanded that "the form of public education is a system of schools which is equal for boys and girls, is organically structured and democratic." (192b) So far, so good. But as the evolution of the Soviet zone of Germany veered toward totalitarianism, the interpretation of the term "democracy" became increasingly that of the Soviet Union. Democratic school reformers left or were ousted, and the entire school system was permeated with the spirit of the class struggle, that is to say, it became politicized and was made into an arm of the propaganda machinery of the dictatorship. All teachers were enrolled in the official organizations; the students were exposed to a variety of strictly pragmatic subjects related to the tasks of the dictatorship; and loyalty was made part of the test of admission to the higher ranges of the educational system. At the same time, the students were subjected to rigid and doctrinaire discipline. Today education on all levels in East Germany is rated inferior to

that in the Federal Republic, and the trend toward predominantly technical work is viewed as educationally doubtful. (192; 257) The continuous flight of technical and scholarly personnel, which reached disastrous proportions before the building of the wall in Berlin, served not only as a striking reminder of the intellectual limitations of the regime, but also provided outsiders with much detailed information.

The experience of East Germany is part of a general process, undertaken in all the European satellites of the USSR, of politicizing education and relating it to the indoctrinating function of the party. In all these regimes, the schools have been subjected to intensive purges designed to weed out both the recalcitrant teacher and the hostile student. The most notorious, but certainly neither unique nor extreme, example was that of the Communist Action Committee in screening and expelling professors and students of the ancient Charles University in Prague, after student demonstrations on behalf of the Benes government. In all of the satellite systems, political loyalty was made the prerequisite for admission to higher institutes of learning. Candidates have been screened in an oral examination designed to test their political consciousness and to ascertain the level of their ideological maturity. A candid description of these practices was given in a short story published in 1955 in *Nowa Kultura*, the official literary organ of the Communist regime in Poland. The author describes the emotions and experience of a peasant boy facing the examining board. Prior to departure from home, his mother pins on him a holy picture, which his father silently removes just before they arrive in town for the examination, and his uncle warns him—"our times are political; remember to say everything as you should, just like we read in the papers." (433)

But admission was made to depend not only on the ability of the candidate to convince the examiners that he is suitable for higher education in the "people's democracy." (457) A special system of priorities was set up, designed to keep out of the higher institutions those whose class origin might make them potentially enemies of the new system. In that discriminatory spirit, Anna Jungwirthova, a member of the Czech parliament, suggested that "if the children of bourgeois origin are healthy enough, they should choose manual work, the kind of work in mines and factories which their class

gladly left to the proletariat . . . There, deep underground, applying the drill to the coal, or in the harsh glare of the foundries near the molten iron, they will see a new world, a world of versatile work. There they will find their new higher schools and colleges: there we will be able to mould and re-educate them into builders of socialism." (425; 45)

In conclusion, it can perhaps be said that the profession of teaching is profoundly different under a totalitarian dictatorship. In terms of the ideals of teaching in a free society, this profession may be said to be totally incompatible with the totalitarian conception of education. As in so many other fields, totalitarianism totally alters the meaning of the terms used. The teacher becomes the long-range indoctrinator, the instiller of an ideology that is intended to subjugate the students intellectually and to commit them for the rest of their lives to a doctrinal orthodoxy. But, unlike quite a few other features of totalitarian dictatorship, this is not a new notion. Plato expounded it in his *Laws* and argued that a stable community depended upon such firm indoctrination (279; 284; 128), and various churches, including the Roman Catholic, the Greek Orthodox, and the Moslem, have taken this view with varying intensity over the centuries. But so have the Confucians and Buddhists, and the Mandarin bureaucracy of the Chinese empire was built upon the doctrinally fixed teaching of virtue in a manner strictly analogous to Plato's views. It is evident that the totalitarians in their approach to teaching and education have returned to what has been the predominant tendency of the past. Where they differ is in asserting that these ideological doctrines are "scientific" rather than transcendently inspired by religious experience. They allege them to be rational and hence in keeping with the modern world. Unfortunately for them, true science is forever on the move, and even those genuinely scientific insights that were involved in the totalitarian movements' original positions have since been superseded by new ones. It is difficult to forecast what this will do to the stability of the totalitarian structure in the long run, but it cannot be doubted that it contributes to their long-range difficulties.

13

*THE TERROR AND THE PASSION
FOR UNANIMITY*

Totalitarianism is a system of revolution. It is a revolution which seeks to destroy the existing political order so that it can subsequently be revolutionized economically, socially, and culturally. Totalitarian movements, motivated by the general goals that their ideologies outline, have, like the great revolutionary dictatorships of Cromwell and Napoleon, not been content with taking over the government. But other, earlier, dictatorships have been only concerned with the maintenance of the status quo. Such dictatorships, after seizing power, usually have devoted their energies to the preservation of the existing order, without setting in motion any further fundamental changes. And when such changes did occur, as the result of the logic of counteraction, they were more often than not produced in spite of the efforts of the dictator.

By contrast, the totalitarian movement, having seized power, seeks to extend this power to every nook and cranny of society. Thus change becomes the order of the day. This change, which is not meant to stop with the fulfillment of a five-year plan, is intended to be the task of generations. The process of building communism is not finished with the mere physical liquidation of the capitalists. The revolution continues, as Soviet leaders still emphasize, with each accomplished task giving birth to another. Similarly, victory in World War II was not to be the signal for Hitler to sit down and contemplate the "Thousand-Year Reich." It was to be followed by gigantic schemes of reconstruction for the whole of Europe, of vast resettlements, of constant colonization, of a relentless struggle for the worldwide extension of Hitler's Reich. The

present is never good enough — the totalitarian movement is always concerned with the future.

This futuristic orientation, to repeat, is based firmly on the totalitarian ideology, with all its pseudo-scientific doctrines and all its actual twists. Whether it be the “inevitable” laws of Marxism-Leninism or the equally inaccurate “intuition of the Führer,” the totalitarian movement goes ahead confident in the blissful thought that it is marching in step with history. The constant rejection of the present for the sake of grandiose schemes of social reconstruction and human remolding thus provides the basis for the total extension of totalitarian power to all segments of society.

It is this determination to achieve total change that begets the terror. (401a) Change always entails opposition; in a free society total change cannot occur, because it would bring forth massive resistance from a variety of groups and interests. In a totalitarian society, opposition is prevented from developing by the organization of total terror, which eventually engulfs everyone. Yet total change remains a utopian goal. The spreading vacuum around the leader prevents, as we have seen, a total fulfillment, since the alienation of even the party cadres multiplies that of the population at large. Nonetheless, the totalitarian schemes for the destruction of the existing society are indeed total. In every respect, human life and the nature of social existence are to be profoundly altered. What the ideology originally provided is supplemented by the subsequent operational requirements of the regime. Revisions need not be embarked upon all at once — indeed, the history of totalitarian systems shows that usually a step-by-step program, with considerable oscillations in the use of violence, is adopted. Yet violence that leads to terror is almost inevitable within this context. For life in society is composed of closely interlocking and overlapping groups. It is almost impossible to subject one social group to punitive, or as totalitarians would call it, “re-educative,” measures without producing a hostile reaction not only from the group concerned, but also from connected groups, whose vested interests dictate this response. The totalitarians really have no choice but to intensify their efforts.

Thus the repressive measures of the totalitarian regimes, which aim first at eliminating their open enemies, are gradually extended to other sections of society. Totalitarian terror grows until it reaches the limit where it becomes self-defeating. The vacuum,

indifference of the populace, and apathy among the workers all operate to set these limits. Actually, these shifts and oscillations are in themselves in line with the terror as process: unpredictability is an essential part of it. It not only becomes a political prophylaxis of the regime, aimed at anticipating political resistance — it becomes the fundamental method of achieving the total goals of the regime and of maintaining the permanent revolution without which the regime would lose its character and probably also its power. (112c) Totalitarian terror broadly understood is, therefore, the vital nerve of the totalitarian system.

This system, because of the alleged ideological infallibility of its dogma, is continually tempted to increase terror by a violent passion for assent, for unanimity. Since history tells the totalitarian he is right, he expects all others to agree with him, thereby vindicating the correctness of his historical insight. This passion for unanimity makes the totalitarians insist on the assent of the entire population to the regime's outlook and activities. Such assent, which finds expression in coerced plebiscites and elections, must not be passive; on the contrary, the totalitarian regimes insist that enthusiastic unanimity characterize the political behavior of the population. Thus periodic elections in the USSR consist of more than the act of depositing a single-name ballot in the electoral box. For weeks before the election, intensive agitation is conducted by millions of party members and Komsomol youths. The population is expected to attend mass meetings, pass appropriate resolutions, and approve the past and future policies of the regime. The election day itself becomes a joyful event — a holiday — in which the masses are expected to celebrate the 99.9 percent support they give to the regime.

Plebiscites are not an invention of the totalitarians. It was an important feature of the dictatorial rule of Napoleon and even of Cromwell. The practice grew out of the revolutionary consultations of the people, which were supposed to embody Rousseau's ideas on direct democracy. But Napoleon went further. At certain crucial moments in his career, such as his election for life as first consul and his assumption of the emperorship, he called for popular plebiscites. These were held openly, with much coercion. Even so, the French proved too independent, and therefore Napoleon personally “corrected” the result to improve on what local intimidation and fraud had failed to accomplish. (104c) The practice was revived by

Napoleon III with comparable results, though there was even greater leniency allowed those who were determined to register their opposition.

These plebiscites of the Napoleons and their imitators resemble the practices of the contemporary totalitarian regimes, perhaps inspired them. However, the official sources show a difference in approach. According to a National Socialist authority, "the meaning of such 'consultation' of the people by the Führer was to be seen in the fact that the relation of confidence between the leader and the people as followers receives tangible political expression on the occasion of important political decisions." Not only is the decision made by the leader, the people merely "registering" their agreement, but the magical unity of leader and led receives its symbolic consecration. Here is one of the roots of the passion for unanimity. Any dissent is like an act of desecration, which must be "stamped out" if it cannot be prevented by terrorization beforehand. Mussolini stated this quite frankly, before the 1929 plebiscite, saying that even if the majority voted no, the Fascists would not step out, that a plebiscite could consecrate but not overthrow a revolution.

The National Socialists used the plebiscite repeatedly to demonstrate a thoroughly metarational state of affairs: a people completely in the grip of passion, the passion of self-assertion and self-realization. They talked of the "boiling soul of the people" (*Kochende Volksseele*) as one might talk of an erupting volcano—a force of nature at once formidable and irresistible. When Hitler, in the autumn of 1933, decided to leave the League of Nations and the disarmament conference, he appealed to the people to express their feelings. The move was designed to prove to the whole world that this demand for "equality of treatment" was backed by the boiling folk soul. But it was also, and even more importantly, intended to commit as many Germans as possible to the folk community of the Nazis by making them feel united in their national passion. The referendum, held on November 12, 1933, produced the desired results: of 45,176,713 qualified voters, 43,491,575 or 96.39 percent participated in this ballot, and of these 40,622,628 or 95.1 percent were reported as voting in the affirmative; 2,101,191 or 4.9 percent as voting in the negative; the remainder as invalid. We spoke of the "desired result"; actually this result was still far from the 99.9

percent figure which was eventually achieved after the technique had been applied again and again. When Hitler, after Hindenburg's death in July 1934, took over all the powers of the presidency, when he occupied the Rhineland (1936), when he forced the Anschluss of Austria (1938), the decision was "submitted" to the people for "ratification" in a "free plebiscite." (104d) Elections served the same purpose in Fascist Italy. There, too, the desperate search for a magic unity through patent uniformity exemplified the totalitarian passion for unanimity. Basically, the Italian electorate at large remained indifferent, while the cadres of the party organization were gripped by a veritable frenzy to seek support. Their "capillary action," to use Mussolini's phrase, became intensified at such times to the point where terroristic acts of violence, large and small, were the order of the day. (95f)

But why should the leaders of such all-powerful regimes invariably demand the support of more than 99 percent of the population? What causes this passion for unanimity? Could it be that this is itself a propaganda weapon? Does a Goebbels consider that a feeling of apartness and loneliness in those who are not satisfied with the regime should be fostered as an effective means of discouraging and eventually completely disorienting them? Such an effect would presuppose that opposition elements believed the results of such plebiscites and accepted the figures as bona fide. Yet why should they, when they distrust all official news?

Such concern for unanimity could, however, be explained in other ways. There is the totalitarians' concern with the judgment of history. It is satirized in Orwell's *1984*, where the totalitarian propagandist of the Ministry of Truth finds himself rewriting history by manipulating the reports, but the satire is quite real. There is the further probability that this urge for unanimity results from the rulers' desire to delude themselves about the actual extent of their support. Furthermore, with overwhelming support the totalitarian leadership may feel justified in committing the most outrageous crimes. They hide, so to speak, in the womb of a solid collectivity. Another, at least partial, explanation of the passion for unanimity is the totalitarian belief in the big lie as a propaganda technique. Hitler, Goebbels, and others are on record as believing that, if you have to tell a lie, tell a big one—the mass of the people will be more ready to believe it because it appeals to their superstitiousness.

Thus the 99.7 percent ayes in a plebiscite compel belief in a highly favorable result, even though the actual figure is assumed to be exaggerated. Evidence from the Soviet experience seems to indicate that the compulsive emphasis upon total support of the regime may actually have succeeded in convincing many, even those who are highly suspicious.

But in the last analysis, the passion for unanimity seems to spring from the pseudo-religious fervor of the totalitarian ideology. The great universal religions conceive of their mission as that of converting all mankind to their faith as the only means to salvation in the world to come. The totalitarians similarly believe in the universal validity of their secular mission. The drive toward unanimity manifested itself in the Middle Ages in the persecution and extermination of sectarians and heretics, such as the Waldensians and the Albigensians, and the later recurrent pogroms instituted against the Jews. Their dissent, indeed their very existence, was felt to be an intolerable offense to the majesty of the divine order that all the faithful accepted. The dissenter in a totalitarian dictatorship is in a similar position; he too is an intolerable offense to the grandeur of the totalitarian enterprise and must be liquidated because, according to the ideology, he has no place in the world the totalitarian movement is bent upon building. The terror involved in these enterprises, though partly intended, may prove self-defeating. Yet in spite of all his awareness of such possibilities, Khrushchev continued in the familiar pattern. Votes in the Supreme Soviet and other bodies were unanimous and acclamatory; dissidents were thrown out of the party, arrested, and in every way harassed; and the atmosphere of terror, though tempered, was in essence maintained. However, it does not seem to have prevented a plot against him. His successor may well consider this experience a lesson to be heeded.

We can see clearly why totalitarian terror and total unanimity are thus interdependent. The passion for unanimity, characteristic of a mass movement, demands tools to enforce it. And according to totalitarian ideology, all "normal" members of the society will naturally be part of that unanimity. Only scattered social misfits — be they bourgeois (historically doomed) or non-Aryans (racially deformed) — remain outside that unanimity, possibly joined by a few traitors. The terror makes certain that the masses are not infected,

while the social misfits are liquidated. In this way, all the brutal, premeditated violence of the terror becomes rationally justified to the totalitarian.

Totalitarian terror has not only this negative function to perform. Operating within the context of enforced unanimity, it becomes a stimulant to more enthusiastic expressions of support for the regime. It classifies men's behavior according to degrees of dedication, and mere absence of opposition to the regime becomes insufficient as proof of devotion to it. Positive action is demanded, and men compete in loyalty. It is no accident that secret-police files in the USSR stress, first of all, whether a given individual is passive or active. One can of course be active in a totalitarian society only on behalf of the regime. Hence the unanimity desired of all is particularly required of party members. A remark on someone's file that he is passive represents a major question mark as to his dedication. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union particularly stresses the fact that *partiinost* demands active, very active, support of the regime, measured by concrete achievements.

The same was true in the Fascist and Nazi dictatorships. In the election campaign after the murder of Matteotti, there was a great deal of pressure, of violence, of the parade of uniformed force. Whether or not one agrees that these "secured the triumph of the party," there is no question that it is right to stress the extent to which party activity was made the test for membership after the victory had been won. "No compromise, no quietism, no cowardice in the face of the responsibilities imposed by the party" — that sums up the party member's role. (95g) Outward conformity to certain changes in style of speaking and eating were made the test of party enthusiasm, and members who did not conform were not only rebuffed, but at times expelled, beaten, or imprisoned.

In National Socialist Germany, the party was so large that its membership failed to display some of the characteristics of complete dedication just described. As a consequence, the SS increasingly stepped into the role of unquestioning, enthusiastic supporter of the regime. It was the SS in its three distinct formations that embodied, for the masses of the subject people, the terroristic apparatus of the regime, symbolized by the dagger that every member received upon his initiation into this "elite." From one careful analysis (465c), it becomes clear that the SS possessed a more satanic outlook on life

and politics than was represented by the ordinary Nazi and SA men. There was at work a distinctly anti-intellectual and antirational trend in the SS which was fully shared by Himmler, their boss. These anti-intellectuals infiltrated the government, the military and economic cadres, and the party, which they sought to control. (202) After the abortive putsch of the underground opposition, the SS even succeeded in taking over the key controls of the armed forces. Its style of "the marching column" triumphed. The SS was essentially an "order." Its attitude was pointedly summed up in the already quoted demand, "Believe, Obey, Fight!" All ideas were reduced to the sloganized framework of an ossified ideology to be enunciated, and perhaps restated, by the Führer at his pleasure. Any dissent, whether in the party or the people at large, must be ferreted out and crushed with ruthless terror. (43; 465c; 261; 191)

Information about Communist China is quite inadequate in this matter of terror, as in so many other respects. But the technique that has come to be known as brainwashing appears to be a particularly vicious form of terrorizing people inside and outside the party. (217a) In any case, the mass flight into Hong Kong, which could only be stopped by violent measures comparable to the Berlin wall, would seem to suggest, and interviews with the escapees confirm, intensive terror on a vast scale. China, like Russia, has of course known terror intermittently in connection with its autocratic past. As one leading scholar has put it: "Terror is the inevitable consequence of the ruler's resolve to uphold their own and not the people's rationality optimum." In all oriental despotism, terror has been employed regularly, sometimes extensively, at other times with circumspection. But this terror was not linked with propaganda and ideology. It is in Communist China, of course, and the hundred flowers soon withered in its hot blasts. (389b) Recurrent statements by Mao and his lieutenants about education, persuasion, and "the light" ought not to deceive one about the psychic terror involved. (217a; 215f)

In both Stalinist Russia and Hitler Germany, the totalitarian terror increased in scope and violence as the totalitarian system became more stable and firm. But it would appear now that this was due to special factors, more especially the character of the leader, rather than to any inherent trait of totalitarian dictatorship.

The degree of terror appears to be oscillating, with a return to the extreme always possible, depending upon personal and situational conditions. (400) But let us review the development in both these regimes. In the initial period after the seizure of power, the major energy of the machinery of terror was directed at the obvious enemies — such as the Social Democrats in Germany, the Mensheviks or bourgeoisie in Russia, the democratic parties in Eastern Europe (see Chapter 14). Only when such enemies are destroyed is the sword of the regime turned against the masses; only then does mass terror gradually develop. Hannah Arendt observes:

The end of the first stage comes with the liquidation of open and secret resistance in any organized form; it can be set at about 1935 in Germany and approximately 1930 in Soviet Russia. Only after the extermination of real enemies has been completed and the hunt for "potential enemies" begun does terror become the actual content of totalitarian regimes. Under the pretext of building socialism in one country, or using a given territory as a laboratory for a revolutionary experiment, or realizing the *Volksgemeinschaft*, the second claim of totalitarianism, the claim to total domination, is carried out. (5)

This proposition exaggerates, for what is a potential development is stated as a universal law. But it is probably true to say that, at the stage where violence becomes capricious, totalitarian terror reaches an extreme. It aims to fill everyone with fear and vents in full its passion for unanimity. Terror then embraces the entire society, searching everywhere for actual or potential deviants from the totalitarian unity. Indeed, to many it seems as if they are hunted, even though the secret police may not touch them for years, if at all. Total fear reigns.

A different and less extreme form has prevailed in the Soviet Union in recent years. It is directed against "antisocial" elements, variously denounced as "hooligans" as "parasites," whose behavior deviates markedly from the forms approved by the party and its leaders. Such behavior is seen as possibly amendable, and hence instrumentalities of social pressure and other forms of psychic intimidation are more promising than physical violence, though this is not excluded and may be quite arbitrary. It remains to be seen how permanent this "stage" turns out to be.

The total scope and the pervasive and sustained character of

totalitarian terror are operationally important. By operating with the latest technological devices, by allowing no refuge from its reach, and by penetrating even the innermost sanctums of the regimes (see Chapters 14, 15), it achieves a scope unprecedented in history. The atmosphere of fear it creates easily exaggerates the strength of the regime and helps it to achieve and maintain its facade of unanimity. Scattered opponents of the regime, if still undetected, become isolated and feel themselves cast out of society. This sense of loneliness, which is the fate of all but more especially of an opponent of the totalitarian regime, tends to paralyze resistance and make it much less appealing. It generates a universal longing to "escape" into the anonymity of the collective whole. Unanimity, even if coerced, is a source of strength for the regime.

Of course, it would be a gross oversimplification to claim that in all places and at all times the citizens of a totalitarian regime are subject to immediate arrest and live in a spine-chilling fear for their lives. First of all, terror can become internalized; the people become familiar with a pattern of conformance; they know how to externalize a behavior of loyalty; they learn what not to say and do. Second, reliance on force can decrease as a new generation, brought up in loyalty and fully indoctrinated, takes its place in the totalitarian society. But terror as a last resort is always present in the background, and the potentiality of its uninhibited use does not disappear. "The strain may well be less now," a close and long-time observer of the Soviet scene has written, "than in the harshest times under Stalin. But nobody can be certain that there never will be a reversion to Stalin's methods." (238b)

Terror is not restricted, of course, to totalitarian regimes. Under the more despotic tsars terror had been recurrent in Imperial Russia. So it has been in other autocratic regimes throughout history. It also occurs in nonautocratic regimes where it may prevail in particular "zones of terror," such as that constituted by a racial minority. (403c) But the totalitarian regimes of the twentieth century have brought the skills and insights of modern technology to the terroristic enterprise; they have perfected the "process of terror." The preceding analysis has shown the terror to be a process in which activities of deliberate violence are undertaken by the power wielders to strike general and undefined fear into anyone who dissents. The clearest indication of the nonexistence of terror is the

presence of organized groups that criticize the powers-that-be publicly and continually. Where this sort of opposition is lacking, under modern conditions, terror is at work, whether it be crude and open or subtle and disguised.

14

THE SECRET POLICE AND THE PEOPLE'S ENEMIES

"When the old society dies, the corpse of bourgeois society cannot be nailed down in a coffin and put in the grave. It decomposes in our midst, this corpse rots and contaminates us," warned Lenin. (394) To the totalitarian, this "rotting corpse" of the *ancien régime* is still a mortal enemy from whom the people must be protected. It makes no difference whether the people desire such protection or not. The totalitarian is convinced either that the masses are with him or that they ought to be. And in both cases, they have to be defended from the enemy who makes every effort to impede the process of indoctrination—to teach people to perceive the totalitarian "truth"—and even to overthrow the totalitarian system. This struggle against enemies is a constant one and, as suggested in the preceding chapter, often grows in intensity as the totalitarian regimes become more stable. The regime can then afford greater violence, and initial patience and expediency give way to unbridled terror.

Who are the enemies? A list would include the several categories of enemies, spies, saboteurs, and traitors that the totalitarian regimes pursue continuously. Each totalitarianism, or pseudo-totalitarianism, has its own special major enemy and a whole cast of additional foes who appear and disappear from the scene, depending on the given political and international climate. Thus the Hitler regime had one arch foe: "the international, capitalist, Jewish conspiracy." This conspiracy was said to include Jewish Bolshevism, except for a brief interlude during the Stalin-Hitler Pact. In addi-

tion, the enemies of the Nazis were the various non-Germanic races: the Slavs who were to be destroyed; the Latins who, except possibly the Italians, were said to be generally lazy and effeminate; the Americans who were said to be Semitic, negroid, and so on. Domestically, the enemies were the Communists, the Social Democrats, the racially impure (partly Jewish), and the churches, which acknowledged a higher deity than the Führer. This by no means exhausts the list, but it does suggest that the "enemies" are numerous, and constant means to remove them are therefore needed.

In Communist China, the imperialists and colonialists have been in the center of attention, Americans serving as the prime illustration of such hideous aberrations of humanity. This singling out of the Americans is, of course, due to the United States's support of Chiang Kai-shek on Taiwan; since he is unabashedly counterrevolutionary, the argument appears unanswerable. Khrushchev and his lieutenants have also come in for their measure of abuse; not only have they been dubbed traitors to the sacred cause, but also revisionists, imperialists, and so on. The totalitarian propaganda becomes difficult with such shifting of fronts; not only the United States and China but Yugoslavia as well illustrate the point of sudden transformation from friend to enemy, and the consequent transfer of hostile symbols and terms.

But probably the most imposing roster of "enemies of the people" is provided by the history of the struggle of the Stalin regime against its many and varied foes. The entire capitalist order, with its countless satellites, is said to be the enemy of the Soviet Union. On the international plane, it supposedly organizes successive systems of capitalist encirclements and plots, ringing the Soviet Union with air bases and military establishments, planning war and destruction. It is sufficient to read the daily Soviet press to perceive a most terrifying picture of warmongering and conspiracies against the USSR. This, the Soviet leaders assure their people, has internal repercussions also. The last remains of the bourgeoisie, they say, take heart and proceed to sabotage "the great socialist construction," endangering the people. In this field, Khrushchev and his regime were as thoroughly totalitarian as its predecessors. Not only has the abuse of the non-Communist powers (and especially the United States and Germany) continued unabated, with such new terms as "revanchists" being added to the list; there has

also been added abuse of members of the internal opposition, as Stalinists, dogmatists, and counterrevolutionaries.

"Enemy of the people" is a familiar phrase in Soviet terminology. It appears in the press, in speeches, in secret archives. At various stages of Soviet development it has embraced former Mensheviks and liberals, disaffected elements in the Communist Party, supporters of the opposition against Stalin, local nationalist leaders, unsuccessful Soviet industrial managers, defeated generals, purged party, police, and military leaders. And as Soviet influence has expanded westward, the former leaders, political, intellectual, and professional, of the satellite countries have also become enemies of the people. Anyone in contact with the "bourgeois international conspiracy" is an enemy, and it is symptomatic that, among the orders issued to the NKVD at the time of the occupation of Lithuania in 1940, one was to arrest all Esperanto students and foreign-stamp collectors.

The totalitarian regimes, however, do not proclaim the total destruction of all their enemies. In the case of some of them, the totalitarians' official purpose is to "re-educate" them, though the National Socialists seem to have been less hopeful than others about their capacity to do this. The enemies of the people have sinned, it is true, but once the totalitarian regime is firmly in power and the environmental situation is different, some of them may actually be redeemed and re-educated. Such a process, of course, demands sacrifice from those concerned, and it was because of this cynical spirit that the inmates of the Auschwitz and Dachau death camps were met by signs proclaiming "Arbeit macht frei" (Labor makes free).

In general, however, the enemies of the people are found to be "incorrigible." Their liquidation becomes the standard practice and may be decreed for large groups of people as well as for individuals (see Chapter 15). The liquidation of individuals is particularly characteristic of the initial totalitarian period, after the seizure of power or the takeover with foreign help, when such individuals still stand out. Much more typical, and indeed unique in its scope, is the liquidation of vast masses of people, categorized in an arbitrary fashion as enemies of the people and therefore unsuitable for further existence in the totalitarian system. Such was the fate of the Jews killed by Hitler's henchmen in the death camps, or of the

Polish officers murdered by the Soviets in Katyn, or of the Chechen-Ingush peoples deported in 1944 to Siberia for allegedly having fought against the Soviet Union.

All of this, of course, demands an elaborate machinery of terror, and the history of the totalitarian regimes is to some extent mirrored in the gradual evolution and perfection of the instruments of terror. In the Soviet Union one of the early acts of the regime was to organize a special body with the task of stamping out its enemies. This All-Russian Extraordinary Commission, or Cheka, was set up in December 1917 and was charged with combatting counterrevolution and sabotage. (441g) The bourgeoisie, it was said, aided and abetted by the Entente, was plotting a comeback, and constant vigilance was therefore required. The abortive attempt in August 1918 by the Social Revolutionaries to assassinate Lenin gave the Bolsheviks an excellent practical justification for the intensification of terror. Mass arrests followed, and the shooting of hostages became widespread. Terror did not cease with the conclusion of the Civil War but grew with the growing stabilization of the regime. The official label of the secret police was changed occasionally, as political circumstances made it expedient: first Cheka, then GPU (State Political Administration) and OGPU, then NKVD (People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs), then MGB (Ministry of State Security) and MVD (Ministry of Internal Affairs), and in 1954 MVD and KGB (Committee for State Security). (89g)

The greatest impetus to the expansion of the Soviet secret police was provided by the collectivization of the early thirties and the purges of the Communist Party and the state apparatus, which operated almost incessantly for a decade, until the Eighteenth Party Congress in 1939. The opposition of the peasants to the collectivization program resulted in the adoption of stringent repressive measures. The GPU, in cooperation with local party organizations, arrested and deported literally millions of so-called kulaks, some of whom were merely resettled in the distant regions of the USSR, and some of whom provided the backbone for the developing network of NKVD labor camps. Police organization naturally expanded in proportion to the demands of this task. The importance of the secret police was similarly maximized by the mass purges, launched by Stalin, to clean up the party and the state bureaucracy

by removing former deviationists and potential opponents. These great purges accounted between the years 1933 and 1938 for some two million of the three and a half million party members in 1933. (37e) As the purge became more hysterical and violent, it ceased being merely a party operation, and the secret police became the prime agent. Indeed, the period 1936–1938 is known in common Soviet parlance as the *Yezhovshchina*, named so after Yezhov, the head of the NKVD. By 1938 the situation had become so strained that, if it had not been for the timely liquidation of Yezhov and his close associates, the secret police might have swallowed up the party.

Between 1939 and 1953 the Soviet secret police was headed by Lavrenti Beria. During his rule its forced-labor operation expanded tremendously and included mass deportations from Poland and the Baltic States. At the same time, the NKVD carried out the “pacification” of territories acquired through the Ribbentrop-Molotov pact, particularly by eliminating the local intelligentsia in the newly acquired territories. After the war, similar policies were carried out in the Central European areas controlled by the USSR. The satellite police forces were then closely linked, through personnel and direct supervision, with the Soviet MVD.

After Beria’s arrest in 1953, the role of the secret police diminished somewhat. Since then the secret police has not had a personal spokesman in the highest party organ, the Presidium. The administrative organ for meting out sentences, the Special Board, was quietly abolished. Another change was the division of functions between the MVD and the newly established KGB. This measure, however, was probably made necessary by considerations of administrative efficiency. The vast functions of the secret police were split into two separate entities, very much like the former division between the MVD and the MGB. Under the existing arrangement the MVD is charged with the broad functions of policing the interior and maintaining its elite troops. The KGB performs the more specialized tasks of investigation, espionage, counterintelligence, and the like. Needless to add, this change not only might result in greater administrative efficiency, but certainly makes the emergence of a state within a state—as some have called the secret police—more unlikely. “Informed visitors to the Soviet Union,” we are told, “agree that most Soviet citizens appear far less fearful of the KGB

than they were of its predecessor organizations under Stalin, but they also report that the KGB continues to be active, subjecting the politically suspect to careful surveillance and relying as of old on networks of informers to report disloyal utterances or conduct.” (89p)

As a further safeguard and also to prevent excessive abuse of power, a special division in the Chief Prosecutors’ Office (see Chapter 10) was set up in April 1956 to supervise and investigate the activities of the secret police. This Office has since provided considerable protection for Soviet citizens. Cases of such protection have been greatly on the increase in recent years—only time will tell how regularized the situation will become. As of now the secret police continues to play a great role in Soviet life. Khrushchev explicitly underscored this in April 1956—two months after criticizing the “Stalinist terror”—by declaring in a speech to the *Komsol*: “Our enemies are hoping that we will relax our vigilance, that we will weaken our state security agencies. No—this will never happen! The proletarian sword must always be sharp.” (441r)

In both fascist movements, the original instrument of the terror, designed to intimidate opponents as well as eventually the governments, were uniformed armed bands, the blackshirts or *squadristi* in Italian Fascism, the brownshirts or SA (storm troopers) in National Socialism. They committed various acts of violence: broke up meetings of opponents, administered castor oil to their leaders, beat up persons whom they considered undesirable, and so forth. Both movements eventually became concerned with these “revolutionary” elements and sought to subdue them. The Nazis were more successful in this than the Fascists, the reason being that Heinrich Himmler succeeded in replacing the SA with his Elite Guards (SS or *Schutzstaffeln*) and in turn assumed the control of the police and eventually superseded it, using the SS to do so. At the beginning, the Secret State Police (*Gestapo* or *Geheime Staatspolizei*) was the key arm of the government and was under the control of Hermann Goering as head of the Prussian government, but Himmler succeeded in taking it over on June 17, 1936. Just before the war the *Gestapo* and the SS became two branches of one office under Himmler, by a decree of May 26, 1939, although distinct tasks were presumably assigned to them. The police at that time contained two organizations: the *Ordnungspolizei* (ordinary police)

and the Sicherheitspolizei (security police); both were headed by immediate subordinates of Himmler and key SS men. The Gestapo, which formed an integral part of this complex organizational whole, had by 1936 become part of the prosecutor's office, was removed from judicial control, and assumed theoretical control and operation of the concentration camps. But it actually had little to do with the operation of the concentration camps, which in 1939 were placed under the Economic Office of the SS. The Gestapo perverted the notion of "protective custody" and used it for anyone's arbitrary arrest and confinement in a camp for as long as it wished; it thus became the most dramatic symbol of the terror and of totalitarian dictatorship at its worst. Cooperating closely with it and soon exceeding it in arbitrary violence was the Security Service (SD or Sicherheitsdienst) of the SS. Many of the worst excesses, such as the management of the slaughter houses at Auschwitz, were placed in their hands. (43; 261; 291)

The Italian development was quite different from the Nazi. As we said, the party activists or squadristi remained a factor in the Fascist dictatorship, committed to and committing violence. The secret police, on the other hand, was run as a *state* service, and on the whole tended to oppose the more extreme party elements. The party, in fact, continued to maintain its own investigatory services, while the secret police, organized after 1926 as Opera Volontaria per la Repressione Antifascista (OVRA), operated as an arm of the government not even exclusively staffed by Fascists. It was headed until his death in 1940 by Arturo Bocchini, who never achieved anything like the position of Himmler in the Councils of Fascism (213), thereafter by Carmine Senise. Throughout, the relations between party and police were fraught with tension. Actually, the party continued to operate its own secret-police units and to try and control the political aspects of the OVRA. Its special service of Political Investigation was lodged with the militia, which contained the party stalwarts. It had direct control of the Special Tribunal, which took charge of the cases of anti-Fascists. It also administered, together with the state police, the *confino* or confinement, the Italian version of protective custody, by which persons who had incurred the displeasure of the party or the regime would be confined either to a locality or (in more serious cases) to the penal islands, which took the place of Hitler's concentration camps.

Though conditions were not as serious, they were surrounded by the same air of terrifying mystery and, when combined with the common practice of beating up individuals at random, sufficed to create the characteristic atmosphere of totalitarian terror. Ciano tells in his diaries of the beating of an individual merely because he had used *Lei* (he) instead of the Fascist-decreed *Voi* (you). The police, remaining independent of the party, as well as of the Ministry of the Interior, illustrated well the relation between government and party in Fascist Italy (see Chapter 4).

Germino, in his discussion of the police (120e), draws attention to a passage in Ignazio Silone's *Bread and Wine* which describes the all-pervading tentacles of the terror:

It is well-known [says Minorca] that the police have their informers in every section of every big factory, in every bank, in every big office. In every block of flats the porter is, by law, a stool pigeon for the police. In every profession, in every club, in every syndicate, the police have their ramifications. Their informers are legion, whether they work for a miserable pittance or whether their only incentive is the hope of advancement in their careers. This state of affairs spreads suspicion and distrust throughout all classes of the population. On this degradation of man into a frightened animal, who quivers with fear and hates his neighbor in his fear, and watches him, betrays him, sells him, and then lives in fear of discovery, the dictatorship is based. The real organization on which the system in this country is based is the secret manipulation of fear.

In Italy as elsewhere, party and police shared in this manipulation of fear, though on the whole the system was less total, less frightful, and hence less "mature" than in Germany and the Soviet Union, and in China and the satellites today.

The machinery of terror, defending the "people" from their "enemies" and glorified in totalitarian publications for its heroism and efficiency, relies on a rather elastic criminal code which makes the category of political crime a broad one. As we saw earlier, there occurs in all totalitarian regimes a great proliferation of criminal (penal) laws (see Chapter 10). Thus even industrial failure frequently becomes a political offense for which the guilty ones must be found.

Soviet press articles have continually tended to emphasize the dangers of subversion and to stress the merits of constant vigilance.

In one article, "On Political Vigilance and Watchfulness" published in *Partiinaya zhizn*, the party membership was exhorted to remain ever vigilant against foreign plots to undermine the Soviet Union. Because of the activity of imperialist agents and spies, party members were warned to observe all security regulations carefully, to beware of gossiping, and to guard themselves against drunkenness and greed which would make them susceptible to the offers of enemy agents. But the article also warned against "creating an atmosphere of suspicion against honest Soviet people." (434) Careful scrutiny of the Soviet press also reveals that in all regions there are now operating, parallel to local MVD offices, plenipotentiaries of the KGB. The degradation of judicial procedures, which formerly was the result of all this secret-police activity, has now been somewhat reduced. Yet the Law on Criminal Liability for State Crimes (December 25, 1958) reaffirms a set of very elastic general provisions concerning "counterrevolutionary" activity. When one then considers that Khrushchev himself believed that one should not wait in punishing a thief until one has caught him, but should indict and try him in anticipation (89q), the courts' role still appears — in the political sphere — that of a handmaiden to the secret police. (15)

In serious political cases, the principle of collective responsibility has been frequently adopted by the totalitarians. In 1934 it was officially made a part of Soviet law with respect to cases involving deserters to foreign powers. The totalitarian secret police is furthermore given a free hand in political cases, and the Soviet NKVD and the German Gestapo dispensed "justice" through administrative processes from which there was no appeal. Confinement in concentration camps, or even execution, was the way most political cases were handled. The Soviet secret police often exercised its prerogative of forcibly resettling suspected "enemies of the people" in outlying districts of the Soviet Union, from which they were not allowed to depart. This method was used particularly frequently with those who are condemned en masse in a hostile category, such as the Volga Germans in 1941. These methods have by now greatly attenuated. Recently it was even reported from Moscow that a Soviet court had propounded the principle of the "presumption of innocence" of an accused man. The terror has assumed increasingly subtle forms.

In terms of the development of totalitarian terror techniques, the

Soviet secret police has generally been more sophisticated in its operations and more effective in eliminating opposition than the Gestapo was, especially in relation to foreign peoples. The MVD has been able to penetrate the subject population much more thoroughly with networks of police informers, and consequently the experience of underground movements in Communist nations has been altogether unhappy. Relying more on local cadres than the Gestapo was able to, the MVD has been generally successful in nipping in the bud any organizational moves by incipient opposition elements. And unlike the practices of the Gestapo, in recent years there were no more mass street arrests, shootings of hostages, or public-square executions, which serve only to intensify resistance. Soviet arrests were quiet, usually by night; liquidations were performed in secluded death chambers or other discreet spots.

Besides the enemies of the people inside a totalitarian society, there are, of course, the even more formidable enemies who are suspected to operate beyond the frontiers of the system. Apart from the foreign policy of the regime, there are many activities which the terroristic apparatus of the totalitarian regime engages in to cope with these enemies. First, there are the activities, usually criminal in nature, by which a totalitarian regime seeks to remove, through murder or abduction, outstanding individual enemies of the regime. The Soviet secret police eliminated, so it is generally believed, Leon Trotsky by the hand of a murderer in Mexico. Other notorious cases involve two deserters from the Soviet secret service: Ignace Reiss and W. G. Krivitsky. Reiss deserted the NKVD network in Western Europe because of the purges in Russia, reacting particularly to the execution of Marshal Tukhachevsky in June 1937. He succeeded in evading NKVD murderers until September, when his body was found riddled with bullets on a lonely Swiss road. Swiss police established the fact that he was killed by an NKVD liquidation squad. Krivitsky, an NKVD general and head of its Western European spy network, deserted soon afterwards and succeeded for four years in evading repeated attempts at assassination or kidnaping, but finally died a mysterious death in an American hotel.

A second, and in many ways more dangerous, method is that of organizing subversive groups which, since the Spanish Civil War, have been known as "fifth columns." These became particularly notorious in connection with the Hitler conquest of Europe. In all the countries that Hitler eventually attacked, movements sprang up

and were supported by the Nazi secret police, whose avowed aim it was to organize their country on a fascist model and to cooperate with Hitler to the point of surrendering national independence, if necessary, to accomplish this goal. (348a; 165) By this growth of fifth columns, the concept of the "people" is really extended to include a worldwide population of sympathizers. This process of "universalizing" the people is evidently more easily consummated when the ideology itself is universalist and rests upon such a slogan as, "Workers of the world, unite!" But it was also at work in the case of the Nazis, and on a considerable scale. Its psychological effects upon the "enemy" of the Hitler regime were very much greater, however, than was warranted by the actual strength of the movement, and the same terrorizing effect can at present be observed in connection with the Communist cells in the United States. A careful student of this entire fifth column activity has shown that only in the instances of Czechoslovakia and Austria were the Nazi activities a genuinely effective factor in the conquest of the country. But their effectiveness in terrorizing the "enemies of the people" was phenomenal. In Holland, in Belgium, in France, in Norway, in Denmark — everywhere, the "enemy within" was believed to be the real explanation of the sudden collapse of a country that had been believed defensible. (69) This enemy, who when seen from the Nazi side was "the people on the march," consisted of German soldiers and officers, police agents and saboteurs, disguised as every imaginable kind of native, aided and abetted by quislings, as they came to be called. The atmosphere soon acquired under such conditions the eerie quality of a novel by Kafka.

Unfortunately, the case is more serious when the ideology is universalist and when genuine native movements provide a transmission belt for the "strategy of deception." (172) Infiltration by Communist agents is facilitated by the availability of individuals and groups who have become thoroughly alienated from the national community and indoctrinated with ideological notions that make them a ready prey to such approaches. What is even more serious, in the long run, is the atmosphere of anxiety created by such activities and the corresponding mass hysterias and witch hunts they engender. Only a firm and temperate policy of "constitutional reason of state" can provide the desired security. (108)

15

PURGES, CONFESSIONS, AND CAMPS

The purge, which the totalitarian terror has fashioned into a special instrument, may be understood in the distinctive sense of rejuvenating the movement, its cadres and the apparatus. In this sense the purge is limited in its application to members of the totalitarian movement. Such purges are consequent upon the imperatives of power and the dogmatic dictates of the ideology as interpreted by those in control. It is the interaction between these two factors which produces the purge as a unique instrument of totalitarian governments. It must be recognized, however, that the purge also occurs at the beginning of a totalitarian dictatorship, when it is directed against those not associated with the movement but occupying positions of power, or against nontotalitarian collaborators of the movement whom it wishes to eliminate as it consolidates its power. Such was the purge of the German bureaucracy in April 1933; such the purge of liberals and socialists in the Soviet satellites after 1946; such was the elimination of most of the liberal and democratic followers from Fidel Castro's ranks, as he turned Cuba into a dictatorship. In what follows we shall deal primarily with the specifically totalitarian purge that recurrently cleanses the ranks of a totalitarian movement, for the other kind of operation is also found in nontotalitarian systems of government.

As we have seen, totalitarian terror maintains, in institutionalized form, the civil war that originally produced the totalitarian movement and by means of which the regime is able to proceed with its program, first of social disintegration and then of social reconstruction. The pulverization of the opposition, both actual and potential, makes room for a coerced public enthusiasm for the official goals

and introduces into the system a vigorous competition in loyalty to the regime. The purge, however, is more restricted in scope. Jews or capitalists cannot be purged because by definition they are not part of the system. The purge can be applied only against those who are already anointed, who have accepted the totalitarian ideology, and who are, directly or indirectly, associated with the movement.

The purge, furthermore, is a manifestation of the resilience and energy of the totalitarian movement; though it may be related to and an indication of its corruption, it is not, as is sometimes said, a sign of its forthcoming disintegration. Soviet leaders have at times claimed that the party strengthens itself by purging itself, and the unity of the party has indeed often been strengthened through recourse to a purge. Elements that might challenge the will of the leadership are removed, often brutally, and inner cohesion re-established. The party records of Smolensk down to the late thirties suggest these aspects. (90b)

Purges have generally not occurred when the totalitarian parties are either weak or engaged in internal power conflicts. They have taken place during periods of relative political stability, when the leadership could afford to engage in such an operation. Also, when the purge has been part of an inner struggle for power, its extreme, explosive, and more widespread manifestations appeared only as an aftermath of that struggle and signified the victory of one of the competitors. Being then essentially a clean-up operation, the purge is by no means a manifestation of weakness.

Soviet totalitarianism is much more fully developed in this connection than its Nazi or Fascist counterparts. Because of its longer life span, Soviet totalitarianism has had time to undergo a considerable internal revolution, and it has passed through phases of totalitarian development that were forestalled in Germany and Italy by the outbreak of the war. The Fascist institution of the "Changes of the Guard," however, was a mild form of purge and served the same purpose. In contrast, the Soviet regime has been able to revise radically its ambitious schemes of social reconstruction and has already been faced with three crises of succession. The shift in direction that such successions have entailed naturally increases the likelihood of purges. Clearly, all this did not happen in the Fascist (120f; 24; 37f) and Nazi dictatorships, which to a large extent maintained their original teams intact, though there were of course

shifts in influence among the several lieutenants. There was, however, the Roehm purge by which Hitler smashed the smoldering opposition of his leftist following in the storm troopers, incidentally eliminating a number of prominent enemies of the movement, such as General Schleicher. But this purge did not possess the functional characteristics that we have just indicated as those of the developed totalitarian purge. A similar observation applies to the large-scale executions following upon the attempt, on July 20, 1944, to kill Hitler. The extensive resistance movement which had been developing among Germans in all walks of life—trade unionists, businessmen, government officials, university professors, as well as army officers—was a natural consequence of the defeats Hitler had suffered in the war he had provoked and of the certain loss of the war and the large-scale destruction of German cities by bombing. (302b; 76b; 295a; 100) But that those implicated in an armed revolt, especially in wartime, should be executed is an event in no way peculiar to a totalitarian dictatorship, although the cruelty, ruthlessness, and savagery with which the punishments were administered are truly totalitarian. All things considered, the sequel to July 20, 1944, would seem not to be a purge, in the sense here defined as an "institution" of totalitarian dictatorship, but rather a punitive action against a resistance resulting from the rapid disintegration of the regime. Consequently, we have to conclude that no real purge technique developed under the Hitler regime. The explanation may partly be in the personal traits of Hitler, but there are two other factors of major importance involved. On the one hand, Hitler kept a large part of the German bureaucracy in office, forcing them to join the party and thus committing them to the regime. Since such formal commitments could hardly be expected to produce ardent National Socialists, there was no sense in trying to differentiate among them by the typical purge criterion of loyalty to the party and its ideology. (103a) On the other hand, Hitler really substituted the SS for the party as the hard core of his regime, and it is in this sector that eventually a purge might have proved necessary and desirable.

Another significant deviation is China. Once again, it may be too early to tell, because Mao is still in power and operating largely with his original associates. A minor purge occurred in 1955, but it does not seem to have been followed by others. Instead we find

party followers and others quite ready to make confessions of ideological aberrations and thereupon to be restored to confidence. One is tempted to speculate whether we do not have to admit here a certain influence of older Chinese traditions, especially the anti-ideological pragmatism. It would seem that "deviations" do not play the role they have in the Soviet Union and some of the European satellites. (217b; 215g) Even so, there have been several purges, and it has rightly been said of the Kao-Jao purge (1954) that it comes closer to the Soviet model for eliminating challenges to the ruling clique. One author writes: "It places the Chinese approach to party organization and leadership squarely in line with orthodox Communist thought and practice," and he adds: "Once the Communist party gains power in a country, it would seem, resort to the purge as the ultimate weapon for maintaining internal leadership solidarity becomes almost inevitable." (346a) There is a difference, but it is a difference in degree rather than in kind. This difference is suggested by another student's observation that "party members are reared in a climate of sin . . . In time all must be expected to be exposed for errors . . . Ideology stipulates that right prevails in the party and in the objective process . . . An individual must be blamed for every failure." (215i) Hence the purge is truly a purification process: "The purged are vilified . . . and are repudiated as the source of failure in entire periods or organizations." (215i) The functioning of the purge, as here set forth, seems to be very general in the satellites, however, and in each of these countries—Poland, East Germany, Hungary, Bulgaria—purges have been a persistent occurrence. Not only were major figures eliminated, such as Gomulka, Slansky, Llaslo Rajk, all prominent Communists, in the early fifties, but massive purges cleansed the rank and file. One in four party members was purged in each of these countries. (38b) This kind of purge, of course, broadly parallels that of the Soviet Union. It all suggests not only that the more accentuated manifestations of the purge are essentially an indication of the resilience of the totalitarian movement, but also that there is a continuity in the purging operations. The history of the Communist Party of the USSR indicates that the leadership of the party, operating in a context devoid of the democratic devices for assuring efficiency through open electoral competition, is faced with the dilemma of resolving the problem of

efficiency, while maintaining the elite status of the party. Since the latter aim excludes any open political competition, the problem has to be resolved internally by the device of the purge. This purge then operates continually, on the basis of constant interaction of personal motives, group manipulation, and power pressures. The purge is in this sense permanent. (37) However, it continues to be in part motivated by a genuine fear of actual revolts, as has been shown. (38b)

In specific crises, the purge may be utilized for the achievement of particular power objectives and may, if need be, become quite violent and far-reaching. Thus the period of transition of the Soviet dictatorship into a modern industrial totalitarian regime made the thirties a period of extreme purges. It is not within the scope of this chapter to set forth a detailed account of this period. Suffice it to say that, from the time of the assassination of Kirov in 1934 to the liquidation of Yezhov in 1938, some one million party members were purged, and many of them, particularly the higher officials, were executed. By such means the consolidation of the Stalinist dictatorship was achieved. Stalin was not boasting idly when he declared that, after the party had smashed the enemies of the people, it became still more united in its political and organizational work and rallied even more solidly around its Central Committee. (325a) However, the Central Committee itself lost about 75 percent of its membership. Another very important aspect of the Great Purge was the elimination of a large part of the top army personnel. This final act came toward the end, in 1937, after much of the purge of the party had already taken place. Schapiro has argued convincingly that this delay may have been a deliberate design on the part of Stalin, since it would have been impossible for him to survive without the support of the armed forces. (312f) This author, in keeping with prevailing thought, cannot find any evidence for a plot on the part of the military; but that does not mean, of course, that Stalin did not believe there was one, especially since evidence to this effect was reportedly "manufactured" by the Soviet secret police in collaboration with the Gestapo. (312g)

The overshooting of the mark in the course of the Great Purge led to consequences that were at variance with the purge's real functions. "In the atmosphere of fear and indecision which the purge engendered, it was becoming increasingly difficult to restock

the party and the administrative apparatus with replacements, made necessary by the many removals," one authoritative scholar has written. (312c) This experience taught the Soviet rulers a permanent lesson, it is believed. Subsequent purges have not been allowed to go to such extremes. Mao, too, had to call a halt to the upsurge of violence, but even his calling it "a product of feudal society" did not prevent the Chinese peasants from engaging in orgies of bloody revenge during the year of violence, 1952. However, less extreme conditions have prevailed since that time, and, after all, the liquidation of the landlords and other enemies of the people was not a purge in the technical sense. (215h; 376)

Nonetheless, in the Soviet Union after the conclusion of the hostilities in 1945, a series of quiet purges swept the party apparatus, as well as the intellectual circles, and reached, after Zhdanov's death in 1948, people of such stature as Voznesensky and other close collaborators of the deceased heir-apparent. Such purges continued on the republic levels until Stalin's death in 1953, which immediately gave them a more specific political connotation. The most striking purge after 1953 followed the aftermath of the struggle for succession between Beria and the other members of the collective leadership. It now appears clear that Beria felt himself to be in an insecure position, probably because of the original implications of the "doctors' plot" of January 1953. At that time, it was clearly hinted in the Soviet press that the "Jewish doctors' conspiracy" against the leading personalities of the Soviet regime was tolerated by the secret police. Beria probably felt that he had to buttress his position in the power hierarchy by placing his own men in key positions throughout the USSR. In this manner he would be able to neutralize the elements which sponsored the January intrigue aimed apparently at him. But efforts to do this provoked a reaction from the other leaders, who in turn felt endangered by Beria's maneuvers. The situation was brought to a climax in June 1953, and Beria was arrested. During the summer and early autumn, many of his supporters were removed from office, and a number of them were imprisoned. Beria and six of his closest associates were executed in December 1953. This episode illustrates both the continuing nature of the purge and its link to the aftermath of a crisis situation.

Let us repeat: the purge appears to be endemic to some forms of modern totalitarianism. It is produced both by the existential condi-

tions of these systems and by the subjective motivations of its leadership. The purge serves to invigorate the movement, which often is clogged with careerists and flatterers. It restores some of its original revolutionary fervor. It ensures what Pareto called a "circulation of the elite." It releases the inherent tensions of a closed system. And it has been noted that the purge evokes from the masses a grim feeling of satisfaction at the sight of the downfall of frequently oppressive bureaucrats and party officials. This "equalization" of suffering makes the burdens of political oppression somewhat more palatable to the average man.

At the same time, the purge is utilized to prevent the stabilization of political forces around the totalitarian leadership and to prevent the development of local autocrats in the provinces, which could weaken the central control of the leadership. An artificial instability is accordingly created among the upper levels of the party, and existing deficiencies are transferred from the shoulders of the leaders to convenient scapegoats. This, in turn, allows the totalitarian leadership considerable freedom of action, not hampered by established group interests. No potential alternatives to the leadership are allowed to mature, while the institutionalized competition in loyalty ensures the perpetuation of unchallenged supremacy of the leadership.

The purge is thus an important and unique instrument of totalitarian government. But it has to be handled carefully; Soviet experience in 1937 shows that it can get out of hand. The purge, as a political instrument, operates with the human element, and the forces of hysteria, the drive for power, and sheer brutality can easily get hold of it. The purge can develop a momentum of its own and reach such proportions as to endanger the system itself. Its supporters may be swept away by panic and their loyalty may wane. This is precisely what happened in the Soviet Union during the years 1937 and 1938, and ever since then the Soviet leadership has been careful to avoid using the purge on a total scale.

To sum up: since the purge operates within a political context, the changing nature of that context influences the character of the purge. Originally, during the first decade of Communist rule, the purge was restricted to the party alone and was handled by party procedures. (395) With the growing totalitarianism of the system and the fundamental social and economic changes of the thirties,

the purge increased in scope and violence and became, at the same time, primarily a secret-police function. After World War II, during the period of consolidation, the purge operated quietly in cleansing the party of undesirable elements admitted during the conflict, and it did not erupt violently until the struggle for succession. But even then it tended to be restricted to the upper levels of the apparatus. The public learns of such conflicts only after they are over, when official announcements are made about who was purged.

Whatever the future character of the purge may be, many totalitarian regimes will continue to find the purge useful for maintaining operational efficiency, and one of the indictments of the system may be the fact that it cannot operate efficiently without it.

A curious sequel to the purge has been the confessions. "I do not want clemency. The proletarian court must not and cannot spare my life . . . I have only one desire, to stand with the same calmness . . . on the place of execution and with my blood to wash away the stain of a traitor to my country." So pleaded a former Bolshevik revolutionary before a Stalinist court in 1937. (293) And the state prosecutor mused: "Time will pass. The graves of the hateful traitors will grow over with weeds and thistle, they will be covered with eternal contempt . . . But over our happy country, our sun will shine with its luminous rays as bright and as joyous as before." (292)

The confessions, the vulgar abuse by the prosecutor, the verdicts of death, and the announcements of execution—all made for a fearful pattern that dominated Soviet life during the notorious years of the Great Purge. The confessions were particularly mystifying and troublesome. Here were men who had spent their lifetimes in danger, who had faced death on innumerable occasions, but who were now cringing, admitting their guilt, beating their breasts. And yet none of them *appeared* to have been tortured, drugged, beaten. Why did they confess, and why did the Soviet regime want them to confess?

Before an attempt is made to answer this, it must be pointed out that the Soviet techniques of obtaining confessions and staging public trials evolved gradually toward the stage of refinement reached by the mid-thirties. It is also noteworthy that the emphasis on the role of confession in public trials parallels closely Stalin's rise to a dominant position in the party. Thus the first large trials

which received considerable publicity and in which the defendants pleaded guilty and cooperated with the prosecution occurred only at the end of the twenties and the beginning of the thirties. In 1928 a political conspiracy against the Soviet regime was "unmasked," and the accused confessed to having hatched crude plots to seize power. A much improved version of such a confession trial came two years later with the so-called Industrial Party trial. In it leading Russian technicians confessed to elaborate schemes of sabotage, designed to upset the Soviet economy. But even here the secret police slipped up on occasion, as in the instance involving two alleged contact men for the conspiracy, who in fact had died five years earlier. Another setback occurred in 1933 at the Metro-Vickers trial when some of the accused foreign technicians repudiated their confessions, taking courage in the intervention on their behalf by the British government. Their Russian colleagues, completely at the mercy of the regime, remained faithful to their confessions.

A number of other trials occurred before the "big shows" of 1936–1938. The growing competence of the prosecution, the more elaborate nature of the confessions, and the instances of dramatic confrontation and confirmation displayed in the trials testified that the secret police was mastering its art. This process generally paralleled the further totalitarianization of the political system and the consequent need to eliminate the last possible alternatives to Stalinist rule. It is this developmental factor which probably explains why similar large public trials were not staged in Hitler Germany. The Germans entered the war within six years of the Nazi seizure of power. It was only after the unsuccessful July coup of 1944 that the People's Courts were let loose with full vengeance on actual or potential opponents of the regime, and show trials, with all their terroristic qualities, were staged.

In dealing with the general problem of confession in the totalitarian public trial, it ought to be noted, first of all, that not all of the political prisoners are actually brought to trial. Many of them perish, and only their alleged admissions of guilt are actually brought to trial. This was the case with some of the leading Soviet officials purged both under Stalin and under Malenkov and Khrushchev. The military leaders, notably Marshal Tukhachevsky, were executed after a trial *in camera* in June 1937, and such was also the fate of Beria and his henchmen in December 1953. The possibility

that they may have refused to confess clearly suggests itself. Admittedly, however, a great number of the accused do confess. And they include men who, by normal standards, could not be considered weaklings, cowards, or fools. Therefore the question of why they confessed still demands an answer.

Any attempted explanation of this phenomenon must be, quite naturally, both speculative and inconclusive. It should be obvious that these confessions in a criminal proceeding are a radical extension of the technique of "self-critique," mentioned when we discussed party membership and its personal obligations (see Chapter 11). Such a technique is frequently self-incrimination, at least potentially, and it is therefore easy to see how it might be extended and elaborated where a member is accused of crimes. (238e) State and party can never be wrong, or at any rate not the party. There are sufficient data, furthermore, from former prisoners as well as secret policemen to suggest the basis for at least a partial analysis. (343; 269; 255) It appears that confessions are brought about by two parallel and overlapping processes: the wearing down of the prisoner both physically and mentally. The former technique tends to be more important with non-Communists, the latter with Communists. But both are used simultaneously, differing only in degree of application. They may also be explained in terms of a "circularity of belief." (282a)

The wearing-down process, on the basis of available evidence, consists of four main methods. First, there is sleeplessness, induced by such devices as night-long lighting of the cell, the prohibition against keeping one's hands under the blanket, and the obligation to lie, when trying to sleep, flat on one's back, with the face upwards, toward the electric light. Sleep, under such conditions, is not easy. A second physical discomfort is coldness, caused by poor heating. The cell is never really cold, but always chilly and sometimes somewhat damp. This again makes relaxation unlikely. Third, systematic undernourishment keeps the person above starvation level, but never gives him enough. Food becomes an obsession, obscuring all other thoughts. Finally, there are endless examinations, lasting often for ten hours without interruption and conducted by relays of investigators, all expressing their belief in the prisoner's guilt. These interrogations may often include beating and torture of the

prisoner.* Added to this are such devices as the tomblike silence prevailing in the prison, solitary confinement, the occasional screams of those led to the execution chamber. All of these clearly tend to break down the prisoner's physical resistance.

The other aspect, much more important in terms of the actual trial, involves the technique of intellectually pulverizing the prisoner. Through a process of intellectual attrition, the prisoner is gradually induced to question his own judgment, his own memory, even his own motives. He is confronted with witnesses who repeat in detail alleged conversations with the prisoner, attesting to his evil intentions or acts. In time, with the physical factors also playing their role, the prisoner either begins to realize the futility of further resistance or may actually begin to accept the interpretations pressed upon him by the secret police. Once this happens, he is ready for public exhibition at the trial.†

This intellectual distortion of reality is much more likely to be effective with believing Communists than with non-Communists. The communist way of thinking, operating on the basis of the dialectical process, generally tends to make no differentiation between such elements as prediction and preference. Thus, for instance, to predict Soviet collapse is to favor it, as the following exchange between Vishinsky and Radek, at the latter's trial in 1937, clearly shows:

Vishinsky: Were you in favor of defeat in 1934?

Radek: In 1934, I considered defeat inevitable.

Vishinsky: Were you in favor of defeat in 1934?

Radek: If I could avert defeat, I would be against defeat.

*The use of physical torture, according to Khrushchev's secret speech of February 24-25, 1956, was specifically ordered in the mid-thirties by Stalin himself as a method of interrogating "obvious enemies of the people."

†Psychological studies that have been conducted in conjunction with the National Institute of Mental Health give a more scientific validation for the above hypothesis. These studies involved experiments in which the subject was placed in a water tank face down (with an oxygen mask) and left there to float. At first this created a sensation of great delight and relaxation. After a while, however, his mind began to go blank and his thinking became disorganized. At that point, the subject was ready for a process of "feed-in" of information from those in charge of the experiment, and the subject would absorb this information as his own thinking, without being able to distinguish truth from falsehood. The parallel between this and the material described above suggests a most striking and frighteningly real explanation for the pattern of confessions.

Vishinsky: You consider that you could not have averted it?

Radek: I considered it an inevitable fact.

Vishinsky: You are answering my question incorrectly. Did you accept the whole of Trotsky's line given to you in 1934?

Radek: I accepted the whole of Trotsky's line in 1934.

Vishinsky: Was defeat part of it?

Radek: Yes, it was a line of defeat.

Vishinsky: Trotsky's line included defeat?

Radek: Yes.

Vishinsky: Did you accept it?

Radek: I did.

Vishinsky: Hence, since you accepted it you were in favor of defeat?

Radek: From the standpoint . . .

Vishinsky: You headed for defeat?

Radek: Yes, of course.

Vishinsky: That is, you were in favor of defeat?

Radek: Of course, if I say yes, that means we headed for it.

Vishinsky: Which of us, then, is putting the question rightly?

Radek: All the same, I think that you are not putting the question rightly.

Vishinsky: In 1934 you were not against defeat, but in favor of defeat?

Radek: Yes, I have said so. (294)

The prisoner is thus forced to admit that the situation he expected to come about was the one he desired. And having desired it, he was working for it. Therefore, it would not do to explain that one wanted precisely to avoid such a situation, for as Lenin said, "it is not at all a matter of your wishes, thoughts, good intentions . . . What matters is the results." (203e)

All of these factors together, plus the likely elements of threats and promises of deals, made the prisoners confess or, as often was the case, cooperate with the prosecution while attempting to evade some part of the responsibility. (200) But why was the regime so anxious to have them confess? The answer probably lies in the mass character of modern totalitarianism, which operates on the basis of mass slogans and simple explanations. The trials and confessions are accordingly very useful devices in the "educational" programs of the regime; they give the masses easy explanations for all the existing evils, while justifying the might and wisdom of the leadership. To permit the prisoners to defend themselves, to deny the accusations, to permit cross-examination would only complicate matters, would create heroes, would confuse the public. The confes-

sion, buttressed by subsidiary testimony, eliminates such an eventuality and makes the public trial into an important educational function of terror. The trial of Gary Powers at Moscow in 1960 presumably fits into this pattern. It has also been extensively used in Communist China. (376)

Confessions have been generalized in the most extraordinary fashion in China. In a way that would have been abhorrent to Karl Marx, the Chinese Communists have invested the class situation with a moral significance. Now to some extent this has always been a tendency in vulgarized Marxism, and it has played its role in the Soviet Union, but never has it been allowed to occupy the center of the stage. "Sin" and "guilt" are not key words in the Marxist vocabulary; they make little sense in a philosophy of materialist historical determinism. But in Chinese Communism they have become the core of "thought control"—the infamous brainwashing that is the heart of the Chinese terror. Once again, we are face to face with the basic issue of terror, namely that it is by no means limited to the dimension of physical violence, but has an economic and a psychic dimension as well. Indeed, Chinese thought control is organized psychic terror. For we have here a conscious manipulation of the environment. It has been called the "psychology of the pawn"—a manipulation by which the victim "has been deprived of the opportunity to exercise his capacities for self-expression and independent action." (217c) It is, as has been shown, by no means limited to the Chinese totalitarians, but they have pushed it far beyond the limit observed in the USSR, Hitler Germany, and elsewhere. It is by all odds the most dangerous form of terror because it dehumanizes the victim.

Confessions are the key to this psychic coercion. Nowhere else has totalitarian terror so perfected this instrumentality. It is practiced in two contexts: the prison and the revolutionary university. In both, the inmate is subjected to a constant barrage of propaganda and ever repeated demands that he "confess his sins," that he "admit his shame," and so on, coupled with enforced exhibitionism. Based upon the notion that only the believers in the official ideology are human, whereas their opponents and even doubters are subhuman, that there are people and nonpeople, such coercion goes to the length of pronouncing the death sentence upon a victim unless he becomes a "new man." But physical death is actually less formidable

than the constant questioning and reprimanding, inquiring and condemning that goes on day and night under the direction of the thought controllers. Confession becomes a cult, based upon a demand that the victim "confess to crimes he has not committed, to sinfulness that is artificially induced, in the name of a cure that is arbitrarily imposed." (217d) Such confessions involve a total exposure by forcing a man into a "symbolic self-surrender." Thus, the terror-induced confession embodies the "claim to total ownership of each individual self" and is the penultimate projection of totalitarian "totalism." Confessions—and an elaborate confession completes the process of "reform" in both prison and university—serve the purpose of destroying the individual and his sense of identity. "Individualism" in the sense of any attempt to retain a limited feeling of self-identity is in fact looked upon as one of the worst crimes. To sum up the whole gruesome process in the words of its most penetrating analyst: "Combining personal anecdote, philosophical sophistication, and stereotyped jargon, the confessions followed a consistent pattern: first, the denunciation of one's past—of personal immorality and erroneous views; then a description of the way in which one was changing all of this under Communist guidance; and finally, a humble expression of remaining defects and a pledge to work hard at overcoming them with the help of progressive colleagues and party members." (217e)

Similar confessions are notably lacking in the case of the fascist dictatorships. It is a subject of speculation why this should be so. Do they belong to a later phase of totalitarianism? Are they part of the peculiar dogmatic fanaticism of the Bolshevik creed? These and other explanations have been given, but all we know for sure is that they did not take place under fascism, but have occurred in the European satellites, though less frequently. An interesting case has been advanced for the proposition that something analogous happened in Tudor England. (420)

The concentration camp is another significant and familiar feature of totalitarian terror. It is one of the unique aspects of these systems, not paralleled in the traditional coercive institutions of constitutional or absolutist regimes. In a sense, one of the tests of the "totalitarian" character of a regime is the presence or absence of concentration camps. These camps are designed to accommodate those social elements that, for one reason or another, are allegedly

incapable or unwilling to adjust themselves to the totalitarian society (see Chapters 13, 14). In the concentration camp they are to be given an opportunity to redeem themselves and to make themselves useful again to society. That most of the victims perish in this process is, according to the totalitarian point of view, merely incidental.

According to Eugen Kogon, who has written much the most penetrating study of the Nazi concentration camp, these camps (called *Kazett*, from *Konzentrationslager*) were the sharpest expression of the system of terror, and at the same time its most effective method. (178; 304) He believes that their purpose was to eliminate all actual, potential, and imagined enemies of the regime, by first separating them, then humiliating, breaking, and destroying them, killing ten innocents rather than allowing one "guilty" one to escape. He allows that there were a number of collateral purposes; among these he notes that the camps were intended to provide a training ground for the Himmler "elite"—men who would learn how to be hard and ruthless, specialists in brutality, whose instincts of hatred, domineering, and exploitation would thus be developed. There also was the purpose of providing the SS leaders themselves with readily available slaves who would serve their masters in cringing terror as long as it pleased them to keep them alive.

The camps started from relatively modest beginnings, some dozen of them, with no more than about one thousand inmates each. The acts of revolting torture, sufficiently attested to even at the very outset, did not constitute a system at first. They were the result of brutality of individual guards, but Heinrich Himmler and his SS soon caught on and began to systematize these practices into an elaborate ritual. They were administered from one center, under the direct control of Himmler. Eventually, there were three layers of camps, the labor camps, which were relatively the mildest, a much more severe second group, and finally those that bore the name of "bone mills," which very few people survived. But these distinctions are really not of very great importance. For example, Dachau, which always remained in Group I as a labor camp, actually was among the worst.

It is still not possible to be at all definite about the number of persons placed in camps over the years. Kogon is convinced that millions went through the camps in the course of the Nazi regime.

Since at least 3.5 to 4.5 million were killed in Auschwitz alone, 8 to 10 million does not appear to be a fantastic figure. But probably there were never more than about one million in the camps at any one time, considering that even the large original camps, such as Dachau, Buchenwald, and Sachsenhausen rarely had more than 100,000 inmates. It seems that toward the end, Himmler at one point mentioned a figure of about 600,000 in a decree, at a time when approximately half a million inmates had already been liberated by the Allied armies.

What were the main categories of human beings placed in these camps? According to the SS conception, there were four main groups: (1) political enemies of the regime, (2) members of inferior races and persons who seemed biologically inferior, (3) criminals, and (4) asocial persons. It is evident that these were quite flexible categories, which were by no means interpreted by courts or judicial bodies but simply by discretion of the SS leadership. Under (2) we find, until 1939, largely Jews and people related to Jews. Criminals were not necessarily men who had committed crimes, but also those who might commit or had in the past committed crimes. Among the "asocials" there were, besides tramps, drunkards, pimps, and the like, many who had done nothing worse than being late for work and offending some Nazi. Among the political enemies of the regime, a great variety of people, including dissident Nazis, clergymen (especially Catholics), and Jehovah's Witnesses were found.

Kogon, Rousset, and others have shown that the SS camp directors and their minions depended to a very considerable extent upon the inmates themselves for the running of the camps. They developed the art of setting one group against another: communists were encouraged to maltreat socialists, and the criminals more especially were given frequent opportunities to practice their various "arts" upon fellow prisoners. In response to this system, a variety of secret organizations developed among the prisoners, and extensive defensive mechanisms were worked out to cope with the gruesome realities of camp life. Compensating, in a higher sense, for the depravity of the SS and its helpmates in the camps, there developed opportunities for selfless comradeship and heroic sacrifice. The world of the camps, so incredible from the viewpoint of a liberal and civilized society, reduced human beings to their ultimate essence; unspeakable viciousness, corruption, and debauchery were

counterbalanced by acts of saintliness and a display of the finest and most noble qualities in man.

Soviet labor camps began to develop on a large scale during the thirties in order to accommodate the hundreds of thousands of deported kulaks. These dispossessed peasants were herded together into large-scale makeshift camps and were used as cheap labor in the construction of such projects as the Stalin canal in the semi-Arctic north. Needless to say, the mortality rate was high. Parallel to this came the gradual increase in the number of political prisoners, starting first with the oppositionist elements in the party and then embracing the many thousands arrested during the purges of the thirties. Soviet concentration camps gradually took on more of a political character and became the main repositories for imprisoned alleged enemies of the Soviet system. During the war, these prisoners were joined by hundreds of thousands of arrested Poles, Balts, Finns, and — later on — other Central Europeans, and even a sprinkling of Americans and Britons. The only exceptions to this practice were those executed outright, such as the four thousand Polish officers massacred in the Katyn Forest, and those considered important enough to be put into solitary confinement in the main secret-police prison, Lublyanka, in the center of Moscow. (185)

In theory, Soviet concentration camps were styled "corrective labor camps," designed to "purify" the prisoner and to train him for acceptance as a Soviet citizen. All accounts of former prisoners, however, emphasize that the mortality rate was very high and that few political prisoners were released. (144; 124) As a consequence, consignment to camp meant for most victims a dragged-out death sentence. The camps themselves were run by the Main Administration of Corrective Labor Camps (GULAG) of the MVD. It was the MVD that set the work quotas, standards of living, internal regulations, and disposition of prisoners. GULAG also made an important contribution to the Soviet state economy. According to the Soviet "State Plan of Development of the National Economy of the USSR for 1941," captured by the Germans, the secret-police share of the projected capital investment amounted to about 18 percent of the total planned. (89h) This did not include such well-known MVD undertakings as the lumber industry in the north or goldmining in Kolyma. Clearly, such vast enterprises demanded many prisoners, and the various estimates of forced labor used in

the USSR range in the millions. (393) Greatly reduced in number and size, and renamed "corrective labor colonies," they are now administered by GUITK.

Another striking feature of the Soviet forced-labor system was the fact that not infrequently the secret police hired out its prisoners to local agencies for the purpose of carrying out some local project. When this happened, elaborate contracts were drawn up between the two parties, specifying all the details and setting the rates at which the secret police is to be paid. At the conclusion of their task, the prisoners, or more correctly the slaves, were returned to the custody of the secret police.*

After Stalin's death in 1953, and particularly after Beria's arrest in June of the same year, a wave of unrest swept the camps, culminating in a serious outbreak in the Vorkuta coalmining camps in the north. The regime successfully quelled the revolts, or strikes, but viewed them with sufficient seriousness to warrant some reforms. The administration of the camps was then taken over by the Ministry of Justice, and efforts were made to improve their internal conditions. The criminal prisoners were no longer allowed to terrorize and suppress the political prisoners, and those prisoners who overfulfilled their work norms had their sentences shortened accordingly. That in turn, of course, helped to raise the productivity of the prisoners, a matter not alien to the interests of the regime.

In the fall of 1955 the post-Stalin regime engaged in the first large-scale releases of political prisoners. The scope of this amnesty is not certain; it did not, as far as is known, result in the complete liquidation of the labor camp, and that odious institution still plays its role in the Soviet arsenal of terror. Nonetheless, a number of political prisoners arrested during the purges regained their freedom. Some of them included old Bolsheviks, who had spent twenty years behind barbed wire. Also many foreign prisoners were released. Among the leading groups were two very dissimilar ones: Polish underground fighters seized by the Soviet secret police in 1945 and 1946 and who, after fighting the Nazis for five years, spent their postwar years doing forced labor; and about 10,000 German prisoners, classified by the USSR as "war criminals." The number

* A vivid picture of life in these camps is given in Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*.

of people released is, however, small compared to the hundreds of thousands of prisoners who probably perished.

Purges, confessions, and camps are thus part of the equipment of a developed totalitarian system. Camps represent the great and fearful unknown. The occasional public trial, with the mystifying spectacle of the confession, further enhances this feeling. These devices have been developed to the highest point in the Communist dictatorships, where social changes, mass elimination, and succession struggles within the party went the furthest. But available evidence suggests that, had the Nazi regime endured beyond Hitler, the succession struggle and ideological conflict among Bormann, Goering, and Himmler would also have produced large-scale purges in their aftermath. For the totalitarian system, the purge provides the mechanism of elimination and stimulation within the movement; the confessions are useful to vilify the opposition and to underline the infallibility of the leadership; the camps provide cheap labor and a tool for the liquidation of the "enemies of the people." All three make their contribution to the terror by which the totalitarian regime reinforces the propaganda that in time produces the consensus any government requires in the long run, whether it be democratic or autocratic, constitutional or totalitarian.

As we pointed out at the start of our analysis, such consensus, while providing a basis for the authority of a totalitarian leadership, need not be a sign of democratization, as is often assumed. It is better to think of it in terms of "sources of support" in contrast with "lessening of hostility." (161m) Obviously, there is bound to be a certain amount of consensus, at any one time, among the populace of any government; even the Allied military government achieved some "consensus" among subject Germans. Such consensus is likely to be shifted in content and in degree. It is subject to considerable oscillations, even among party members. There was, for instance, much more consensus behind Hitler's regime among Germans before he started his war, more when he was victorious than when he was encountering defeat. Oscillations of this sort have been observed in the Soviet Union; it was greater when Khrushchev could announce the sputnik exploits than when he had to inform the people of rising food prices. Similarly in Communist China the euphoric consensus among party men when the regime

first entered upon the building of communes has given way, according to their own reports, to much resentment and apathy. Besides these shifts, there are marked differences between regimes in this respect. The consensus is greater in the Soviet Union than in China, greater in Bulgaria than in Poland.

Indeed, consensus in some of the satellites is limited to very specific issues: Gomulka's nationalist posture presumably was applauded by most Poles, even those who were sharply opposed to his regime. Similarly, consensus in Yugoslavia clearly supports Tito's policy of national independence, but how far it extends beyond that is debatable. The fact that the regime considered it necessary to jail a dissenter and opponent, Djilas, because he took a critical view of its "class character" suggests that consensus cannot be very great. Generally speaking, consensus permits moderation and even tolerance. The great Balfour once put it very succinctly when he said of Britain: "We are so fundamentally at one, that we can safely afford to bicker." This saying applies equally to other mature democratic societies, but it does not mean that, when a political community is fundamentally at one, it will permit bickering; it means even less that the degree of actual dissent is roughly proportional to the degree of consensus or oneness. On the contrary, if the consensus is dogmatically based and ideologically rationalized, widespread consensus may manifest itself in popularly acclaimed witch hunts. The year of violence in Communist China (1952) was based upon a presumed widespread consensus, and this is as paradigmatic for such a situation as Hitler's "boiling folk soul," even though both may have been largely a figment of the leader's imagination. The kind of manipulated consensus that the totalitarians are able to create is a far cry from the sort of basic agreement that allowed Lincoln to counsel a friend to put his trust in the people.* But it is a useful means of ensuring support for the regime, enhances its legitimacy, and is apt to increase as long as the regime is successful in raising the standard of living. Indeed, the passion for unanimity discussed earlier is undoubtedly in part motivated by the desire to achieve a minimum of consensus. Purges, confessions, and camps are the tools of coercion by which the recalcitrant are brought into line and made to acknowledge the claims of the regime.

* "Remember, Dick, to keep close to the people — They are always right and will mislead no one." Carl Sandburg, *Abraham Lincoln: The War Years* (1939), III, 384.

V

The Directed Economy