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## Twentieth Century Totalitarianism: Germany and Russia

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# TWENTIETH CENTURY TOTALITARIANISM: GERMANY AND RUSSIA

WHITNEY R. HARRIS\*

Professor Gray L. Dorsey has effectively analyzed that form of twentieth century totalitarianism which he calls the system of the Party-State as exemplified by Soviet Russia's experiment with Communism. The purpose of this paper is to compare with Communism a parallel, albeit less enduring, form of totalitarianism—the experiment with Fascism in the Third Reich of Germany.

## I. WORLD WAR I AND THE RISE OF TOTALITARIANISM

In a century in which terrorism has become a major instrument of international intrigue and violence, the single most significant act of treachery was the assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand, heir to the Hapsburg throne, and his wife, in Sarajevo, then the seat of Bosnia-Herzegovina, on June 28, 1914.

The uneasy peace of Europe hinged on the balance of the triple alliance—Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy—and the triple entente—Great Britain, France, and Russia. When Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia to avenge the Sarajevo murders, Russia came to the aid of Serbia. Subsequently the skein of treaties upon which the peace of Europe depended, unraveled. Germany sided with Austria-Hungary; France supported Russia, and Great Britain aligned herself with France.

The war that began in August, 1914, involved more nations and combatants than any previous war in history. World War I (WWI) was the first armed conflict between nations that could command the energies of all their subjects, as well as the products and resources of industrial technology. It was the first war fought primarily by civilian, rather than professional soldiers.

World War I brought on the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, the emergence of Soviet Russia, and the spread of Communism. It led to the rise of Adolf Hitler, the Third Reich of Germany, and Fascist totalitarianism. World War I culminated in the second World War, the victory of

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Russia over Germany, the end of Fascism, and the emergence of Communism as the primary totalitarian threat to the democratic Western World.

*A. World War I and the Rise of the Communist Party*

The founder of Bolshevik Communism was Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov, more popularly known by his pseudonym, Lenin. His elder brother, Aleksandr, had set a revolutionary example by participating in a plot to assassinate Tsar Alexander III. Lenin followed this radical bent, using Marxism as the basis of his struggle against the Russian monarchical system and regime.

Lenin's role in organizing the Union for the Struggle for the Liberation of the Working Class in St. Petersburg, led to his arrest, imprisonment, and exile for three years to Siberia. While Lenin was in exile, members of various Russian Marxist groups organized the Russian Social-Democratic Workers' Party (RSDWP). These Russian Marxist organizations functioned under a central committee that endorsed Lenin's concept of placing the working class at the head of the anticipated bourgeois revolution against the aristocracy, and preparing the working class for the ultimate seizure of power from the bourgeoisie.

Having completed his period of exile, Lenin left Russia in 1900 and devoted himself to the publication of the revolutionary newspaper, *Iskra*. He attended the second congress of the RSDWP which met in Brussels and London in 1903 and rose to leadership of the majority group, the Bolsheviks, over the minority, or Mensheviks. Lenin organized the third congress of the RSDWP in London, under direct Bolshevik control, in 1905. This organization predicted that revolution would soon occur in Russia, and called upon the proletariat to lead it. The 1905 revolution, however, failed to provide Lenin with the opportunity which he sought for seizure of power. He attended the fourth and fifth congresses of the RSDWP in Stockholm and London. In 1912, in Prague, Lenin organized a strictly Bolshevik conference under his own central committee. By 1918, after having gained power in Russia, Lenin abandoned the designation "RSDWP" and adopted instead the name "Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik)."

Russia suffered a tremendous loss of manpower and material resources during World War I. By the Spring of 1917, the morale of the people was shattered. Revolution broke out in March, forcing Tsar Nicholas to abdicate in favor of a moderate Provisional Government. Lenin seized

the opportunity to foment a worker's revolution. He returned to Petrograd on April 16, travelling across Germany in a sealed car that the German military provided. He failed to gain immediate control, and in May, 1917, a second Provisional Government took power under Alexander Feodorovich Kerensky.

The Provisional Government's attempt to continue the military struggle became increasingly unpopular with the people, and the Bolsheviks gained support by promising to end the war. Lenin went into hiding following accusations that he was a German spy. Lev Davidovich Bronstein, better known by his pseudonym, Trotsky, was arrested although he had only recently joined the Bolsheviks. In August, the sixth congress of the RSDWP declared that it was the mission of the proletariat to liquidate the bourgeoisie government.

The proposal to convene a second congress of Soviets on November 7, 1917, set the Bolshevik revolution in motion. Regional congresses, preceding the second congress, called for Soviet Government to replace the Provisional Government. These regional congresses also pledged to end the war, give land to the peasants, and turn the factories over to the workers. Lenin returned from hiding and assumed leadership of the revolution. He promised that the new government's first action would be to achieve a just end to the war.

Kerensky's efforts to put down the rebellion with military force were unsuccessful. The revolution swept through Russia, and by the end of November, 1917, the Soviets held power throughout the country. With Lenin as Premier and Trotsky as Commissar of Foreign Affairs, the Bolsheviks controlled Russia by a dictatorship, ostensibly of the proletariat, but in reality by the coterie of revolutionists who dominated the council of people's commissars.

Autocracy had been overthrown in Russia upon the abdication of the Tsar. The republic, if Kerensky's Provisional Government could be considered as such, had lasted only a few months. In November, 1917, a new form of totalitarian, the dictatorship of the proletariat, took control of the lives and destinies of the Russian people under the watchwords "land", "bread", and "peace".

"Land" was given to the peasants by a decree that the land belongs to those who worked it; "Bread" was promised by installing Factory Soviets in control of industry; "Peace" was initiated by Trotsky's invitation to all belligerent powers to conclude an immediate armistice. The Allies declined Trotsky's initiative, but the German government accepted, and ne-

gotiations for peace between Germany and Russia began at Brest-Litovsk on December 22, 1917. By the time the Congress of Soviets ratified the treaty on March 16, 1918, the Ukraine had already signed a separate peace treaty. Under the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, Russia gave up Poland, Finland, the Baltic states, and agreed to the payment of indemnity. Nonetheless, the Treaty gave Lenin the vital time he needed to stabilize the revolution and to defeat the counter-revolutionists.

Under Lenin and Stalin the Soviet Party-State gained tyrannical domination of Russia. In some ways, the Bolsheviks established a regime even more absolute than that of the Tsars. For, while the monarchy claimed power over the people, both land and industry remained for the most part under private ownership. Under Communism, after Stalin, all means of production in industry and agriculture were vested in the Party-State. The Party-State maintained absolute control over the Soviet economy and society. Communism came to Russia at the end of World War I through the revolutionary tactics of the Bolsheviks. Russia's victory in World War II further consolidated its hold over the Russian people.

### *B. World War I and the Beginning of National Socialism*

Germany's defeat in World War I and the abdication of the Kaiser did not give rise immediately to a new totalitarian regime, whereas, in Russia, military defeat and the abdication of the Tsar brought on the Communist regime. The defeat of Germany did, however, produce an environment of frustration and humiliation which provided a seed bed for revolution.

Armed conflict in World War I ended with the Armistice of November 11, 1918. The war was terminated formally the following June with the signing of the Treaty of Versailles which imposed severe penalties upon Germany. Alsace & Lorraine was ceded to France; the Saar basin was placed under League control; West Prussia and most of Poznan were ceded to Poland; Germany lost all her overseas colonies; the Rhine River and the land area fifty kilometers to the East were demilitarized; the army was reduced to 100,000 men; the navy was scuttled, and the air force dismantled. Finally, war guilt was fixed on Germany for which heavy reparations were imposed.

No German representative participated in formulating the Treaty, leading Germans to frequently refer to it as the *Versailles Diktat*. The treaty gave rise to much resentment, particularly among veterans who

felt that Germany had not been defeated on the field of battle, particularly in the war on the Eastern front. Germans found the treaty unjust and demeaning to Germany, and the imposition of war guilt was an insult to their sacrifices. They felt that the leaders who signed the Treaty betrayed Germany. This resentment spawned numerous patriotic societies and parties, differing in organization and tactics, but united in the objective of removing the restraints and humiliation of the Versailles Treaty.

One of these patriotic parties, founded by Anton Drexler, was the German Workers' Party. It had received no measurable success when a young veteran, propertyless and disillusioned, an Austrian by birth, became a member in 1919. He had spent four years in the German Army, become a corporal, and had been decorated with the Iron Cross. He had become violently anti-Semitic during his youth in Vienna where he eked out a bare living by performing various menial tasks, including the sale of posters that he painted. He had a Messianic desire to bring about the rebirth of a new and greater Germany, racially Aryan, and militarily aggressive. His name was Adolf Hitler.

Hitler proclaimed the program of the German Labor Party at its first public meeting in Munich on February 24, 1920. The party never changed the original twenty-five points that Hitler set out in that program, even after the name of the party was expanded to National Socialist German Workers' Party (NSDAP). The program included demands for the abrogation of the peace treaties of Versailles and Saint Germain, the unification of all Germans in a greater Germany, the acquisition of land for the sustenance of the German people and colonization of surplus German population. Furthermore, Hitler included a statement that only a member of the race could be a citizen and that no Jew could be a member of the German race.

Hitler became First Chairman of the NSDAP on July 29, 1921. Two years later, on November 8, 1923, he undertook an abortive attempt to seize political domination of Germany by revolutionary means. By this time the Communist revolution in Russia had defeated the counter-revolutionists, and was firmly entrenched.

On the evening of November 8, 1923, the Bavarian Commissioner General, Von Kahr, was addressing a political gathering in Buergerbraukeller in Munich. Hitler, supported by his storm troopers, burst into the meeting and proclaimed the Nationalist Revolution. A conference followed at which, under pressure of Hitler's armed escort and abetted

by the still respected General Ludendorff, Von Kahr pretended to cooperate with Hitler in setting up a Provisional National Government with Hitler as Reich Chancellor. As soon as he was able to leave, however, Von Kahr informed the police, and troops were brought into Munich to suppress the putsch.

On the next day, November 9, 1923, Hitler, Ludendorff, and their supporters attempted to march into the center of Munich. At the Feldherrnhalle they met a patrol of police that ordered them to disband. As they continued to advance, shots were exchanged, and some men were killed on both sides. Hitler fled, and the putsch was put down. Hermann Goering was wounded and shortly afterwards escaped abroad. Hitler, Wilhelm Frick, Ernst Roehm, and other leaders were arrested and brought to trial for high treason.

Hitler's trial took place in the Spring of 1924. He used the forum to proclaim his political views which, insofar as they stressed the resurgence of Germany, fell upon receptive ears. In his concluding statement to the court he declaimed: "May you pronounce us guilty a thousand times, the Goddess of the eternal court of history will smilingly tear up the accusation of the prosecutor and the sentence of the court, because she pronounces us free." The court, however, ruled otherwise, and convicted Hitler of high treason, sentencing him to five years confinement in Landsberg fortress. In eight months he was paroled, and again assumed leadership of the Party.

During his confinement in Landsberg, Rudolf Hess voluntarily came to the prison to be with his Leader. While together in Landsberg, Hitler dictated to this faithful paladin *Mein Kampf*, in which he delineated his political convictions and philosophy. The book reinforced the basic tenets of the Nazi Party program. Hitler declared his determination to remove all restrictions of the Versailles Treaty and to unify all Germanic people in Europe. He proposed the *Fuehrerprinzip* of administration in which all orders should emanate from the top. Hitler declared his intention to create a racial state, comprised of a master race of Aryans. He renewed the call for *Lebensraum* for the German people, and made it clear that this space lay in the East. He did not, however, propose any of the radical theories of Marxism, such as the collectivization of land and industry, which had provided, in addition to the withdrawal from World War I, the impetus for Communist totalitarianism in Russia. The 1920 program of the NSDAP was confirmed, amplified, and particularized by

Hitler in *Mein Kampf* in 1924. The world received notice then, as never before, of the aspirations and intentions of a potential despot.

After his release from prison, Hitler abandoned the thought of using revolutionary means to seize power and concentrated upon political activities. The ban upon public speeches, imposed upon him as a condition of his parole, was removed in 1927, and he entered the political struggle with great energy. The National Socialists obtained only 2.6% of the total vote in 1928. By July, 1932, however, partly because the worldwide depression had brought despair to Germany, they had increased this percentage to 37.3%, the largest of any political party. Although the Nazi voting strength subsequently declined somewhat, the aged Reich President, Field Marshal von Hindenburg, named Hitler Chancellor on January 30, 1933. In Russia, the Bolsheviks gained power by overthrowing the short-lived republic established by the Provisional Government after the abdication of the Tsar. In Germany, Hitler came to power within the democratic system which he, in turn, sought to subvert and destroy.

## II. THE NAZI DICTATORSHIP UNDER ADOLF HITLER

Hitler's first objective upon gaining the Chancellorship was to achieve control of Germany and to establish a personal dictatorship. He was aided in this objective by a conflagration. On the night of February 27, 1933, a fire set by a half-witted Dutch communist, Van der Lubbe, damaged severely the Reichstag. There is cause to believe that the Nazis themselves incited Van der Lubbe to commit this act of arson. In any case, using the event as a *cause celebre*, Hitler eradicated opposition leadership in the following days, taking Communist and Social Democratic opponents into custody—the first visible signs of the coming terrorism.

The morning after the fire, Hitler obtained from President von Hindenburg a decree suspending the bill of rights of the Weimar Constitution. On March 23, 1933 Hitler forced the Enabling Act, or the euphonious Law for the Protection of People and State, through the weakened Reichstag. The Enabling Act conferred upon Hitler the right to prepare laws for issuance by the Reich Cabinet without consideration of the Reichstag.

On December 1, 1933, Hitler promulgated a Law of Securing the Unity of Party and State. The Law declared the National Socialist Party as the bearer of the concept of the German state and "inseparably the state," creating thereby a single-party state under a single leader. The



Party-State thus came to Germany sixteen years after Lenin established the Communist Party as the sole political party of Soviet Russia.

The Bolsheviks, under Lenin's leadership, had originally conceived the proletarian dictatorship as a system of representative government composed of councils of workers and peasants, rather than of elected members of parliament. Toward the end of the Lenin era, however, the single party system had already gained domination. All parties other than the Communist Party (Bolshevik) were banned. Thus, the Russian proletarian dream degenerated into pure Party dictatorship. In the struggle for control of the political apparatus after the death of Lenin, the post of secretary general of the party provided the best vehicle for establishing a personal dictatorship. Joseph Stalin held this post and used it to consolidate his personal control over other party functionaries. In 1929, Stalin expelled Trotsky and brought all political opponents into submission.

Hitler had yet to dispose of actual and potential political opponents. On June 30, 1934, the Night of the Long Knives, Hitler eliminated Ernest Roehm and other leaders of the SA (*Sturmabteilung* or Brown Shirts), along with his remaining political opponents, such as former Chancellor General von Schleicher, in an orgy of murder and savagery. Upon the death of von Hindenburg on August 2, 1934, Hitler became President as well as Chancellor. Germany was in his hands. Hitler's 1934 was Stalin's 1929.

### III. WORLD WAR II AND THE TEST OF TOTALITARIANISM

As *Fuehrer* of Germany, Hitler began to prepare for the war by which he would gain *Lebensraum*, or living space for the German people in the East. On November 5, 1937, at a secret conference at the Reich Chancellery, Hitler announced at a meeting of his top political and military leaders his intention to wage war. He declared: "The German question can be solved only by way of force. . . ." He also said that it was his irrevocable decision to solve the German space problem not later than 1943-45.

The rearmament of Germany had been declared publicly in 1935. By the following year, despite the apprehensions of his military commanders, Hitler's troops entered the Rhineland, in direct contravention of the Treaty of Versailles. Hitler had yet to bring the Armed Forces under his direct control. The opportunity to do so presented itself, unexpectedly, in January, 1938, when the fortuitous disgrace of War Minister von Blomberg and the contrived disgrace of Army Commander von Fritsch, enabled Hitler to remove these two highest military officials and

reorganize the military establishment by a decree of February 4, 1938 placing himself in direct command of the entire Armed Forces.

In March, 1938 Hitler brought Austria into the Reich through chicanery and threats of force. He won the Sudetenland at Munich from Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain. One year later, Hitler seized the rest of Czechoslovakia from its intimidated President, Emil Hacha. Having begun the *Drang nach Osten*, March to the East, Hitler turned next to Poland.

The Poles refused to be cowed by Hitler's blustering demands, relying upon their own capacity to defend and the expectation that France and England would come to their aid in the event of a hostile attack by Germany. In the likely event of additional support for Poland from Soviet Russia, the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces of Germany faced the risk of war against powerful opponents on two fronts. Fortunately for Germany, Stalin was as duplicitous as Hitler.

On August 23, 1939 Hitler and Stalin, partners in dishonor and aggrandizement, consummated the German-Soviet non-aggression pact, together with a secret protocol which provided for the division of Polish territory between them. Thus, with the political basis successfully laid for war, on September 1, 1939 Hitler attacked Poland with feigned provocation. The order that threatened the doom of western civilization and brought the German people to the edge of extinction, read as follows: "By order of the Fuehrer and Supreme Commander, the German Armed Forces have taken over the active defense of the Reich. In fulfillment of their commission to withstand the Polish menace, troops of the Germany Army early today launched a counter-attack. At the same time, squadrons of the Air Force started for Poland in order to crush Poland's military objectives." France and England, honoring their treaty obligations to Poland, declared war on Germany on September 3, 1939. These allies, however, were unable to provide effective military assistance, and the Soviet Bear moved in from the East. Twenty-four days after the attack began, the German High Command announced the total destruction of the Polish armed forces and the defeat of Poland.

Following the military interlude remembered as the "Phony War" or "Sitzkrieg", during which Germany occupied Denmark and Norway, the German Army and Air Force, on May 10, 1940, with 135 divisions supported by 2,750 aircraft, smashed into Holland, Belgium, and France. In six weeks Hitler was triumphant in the West. On June 22, 1940, Germany signed an armistice with France in the same railway car, in the

forest at Compeigne, where on November 11, 1918 German emissaries put their signatures to the armistice ending hostilities in the first World War.

Preparations began at once for the next and final stage of the *Drang nach Osten*. With France under occupation, Hitler sought to neutralize Great Britain by massive air strikes. Momentarily delayed by campaigns in Yugoslavia and Greece, on June 22, 1941, exactly one year after the fall of France, Hitler ordered German armies into Russia, under the code name Barbarossa. On the morning of that day Hitler proclaimed to his troops: "I have decided to give the fate of the German people and of the Reich and of Europe again into the hands of our soldiers." It was to be a struggle to the end, for Hitler's goal was not merely the defeat of Russia, but the Germanization of her lands and territories, and the total subjugation of her peoples. Moreover, it brought into desperate conflict the two great totalitarian systems of the Twentieth Century under equally oppressive regimes and ruthless dictators.

Despite the non-aggression pact of August, 1939, neither Hitler nor Stalin trusted each other. Shortly after taking his share of Poland, Stalin forced the Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania to permit Soviet forces to occupy key positions in their territories. Finland refused to grant Stalin a similar right to occupy her territory. Consequently, Stalin attacked Finland and, after a spirited defense by its northern neighbor, Russia forced Finland not only to surrender the territories first demanded, but additional areas as well. Early in June, 1940, while Hitler was occupied in France, Stalin completed the occupation of the Baltic states. On June 26, Stalin issued an ultimatum to Rumania for the surrender of Bessarabia and northern Bukovina. Soviet forces entered these territories and Rumania yielded. These moves placed Soviet forces close to the Rumanian oil fields upon which Hitler depended for fuel.

Despite the opposition of Goering and other military advisers Hitler decided to attack Russia before the war with England had ended. To defeat England would have required strengthening the air force and navy at the expense of the army, and Hitler felt that he could not take this risk while Russia continued to improve her strategic position. Despite the danger of war on two fronts, Hitler was determined to strike Russia before Stalin could further increase his military strength. On December 18, 1940 Hitler issued the directive for "Case Barbarossa" which began with the ominous statement: "The German armed forces must be pre-

pared to crush Soviet Russia in a quick campaign before the end of the war against England.”

Hitler's attack upon Russia was one day before the anniversary of the French invasion by Napoleon. In both cases, initial victories ended in retreat and disaster. Superior military forces could not overcome the vastness of the Russian terrain, the virtually unlimited reserves of fighting men, and, most of all, the cruel Russian winters. In Hitler's case, the pressure of Allied forces in the Mediterranean, and the air assaults from the West, made even more difficult his frontal assault against Russia. Hitler's opportunistic ally, Japan, had commenced its own campaign of aggression by wantonly attacking American naval forces in Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. Four days later, Hitler virtually sealed his doom by declaring war on the United States.

Despite the repeated encirclement of Soviet armies and the surrender of hundreds of thousands of troops, Hitler's rapidly advancing forces could not muster enough strength to take Moscow in the first year of the war. The Russian counter-offensive of December 6, 1942, against soldiers ill-prepared for the Russian winter, foretold the eventual defeat of the German army. Tremendous German advances to the south in the following year simply lengthened German lines of supply, making ever more difficult the maintenance of powerful forces deep in Soviet territory. The reality of the German position became evident by the failure to take Stalingrad toward the end of 1942 and the surrender of the German 6th Army under Field Marshal Friedrich Paulus on February 2, 1943.

Unable to match the combined military and economic power of the Allies, Hitler's armies faltered and fell back in the East and became helpless to withstand Allied landings in the West. Assaulted from all sides, and pounded mercilessly from the air, the German armies were hammered into submission; Hitler had led Germany to defeat and total disaster.

At 3:30 p.m., on the afternoon of April 30, 1945 the draconian dictator, together with Eva Braun, his wife of two days, committed suicide in the bunker of the Reich Chancellery in Berlin. Soviet troops were then in Berlin and rapidly approaching the Reich Chancellery. The Soviets claim to have recovered bones of the fallen despot in the ashes where the bodies had been burned above the bunker.

A few days later, on May 8, 1945, Admiral Doenitz, whom Hitler had named as his successor, signed articles of unconditional surrender, bringing to an end Hitler's dreams of conquest. The third Reich, that Hitler

promised would last a thousand years, had crumbled and fallen in but twelve years. The cost had been twenty-five million soldiers and civilians killed, six million Jews and other racial minorities murdered, and a destruction of property by bombs and shells unparalleled in history.

#### IV. THE VICTORY OF COMMUNISM UNDER STALIN

Even before the war, Stalin had enlarged Soviet territory to the West by absorbing Latvia, Esthonia, and Lithuania, and parts of Finland, Poland, and Rumania. With the end of the war, he was determined to add further territories on the Soviet peripheries, east and west, and to extend the domination of Communism to mid-Europe.

The Allies had contemplated the disposition of Germany long before the war ended. In the summer of 1943 a British Cabinet Committee, set up by Prime Minister Churchill under Clement Atlee, declared that the Allies would have to occupy all of Germany at the end of the war in order to achieve complete disarmament. The Committee proposed to distribute Allied military forces in three proportionate zones of German territory. The British were to occupy the northwest, the Americans the south and southwest, and the Russians the east. The Committee recognized the fact that, under this allocation of territories, Berlin would fall within the eastern zone. Accordingly, the Committee proposed that Berlin should constitute a separate zone to be occupied jointly by the three major Allies. These recommendations were forwarded, with the approval of the British Government, to the European Advisory Council. At that time, the members were Sir William Strang of the British Foreign Office, Mr. Winant, the United States Ambassador to Britain, and M. Gousev, the Soviet Ambassador to Britain. Prime Minister Churchill subsequently offered the following explanation of these proposals:

“At this time the subject seemed to be purely theoretical. No one could foresee when or how the end of the war would come. . . the question of the Russian zone of occupation in Germany therefore did not bulk in our thoughts or in the Anglo-American discussions, nor was it raised by any of the leaders at Teheran.”

Prime Minister Churchill and President Roosevelt agreed to this British proposal at the conference in Quebec in September, 1944, with one exception: that the United States was to have an enclave around Bremen in north Germany, as part of the American zone of occupation, so as to provide direct access to the sea. By this time German armies had been driven out of Russia and Allied forces had landed in Normandy, had

taken Paris and were driving towards the German frontier. Yet, as Churchill stated, no one as much as mentioned Russia in this momentous decision for the tripartite division of Germany under military occupation and the isolation of Berlin within a zone to be assigned to the Soviet Union.

At the Yalta Conference in February, 1945, the Allies first discussed with Stalin their proposal for the joint occupation of Germany. Additionally, at the Conference, President Roosevelt first proposed that France be given its own zone of occupation. Stalin readily agreed to this when it was made clear that the French zone would be carved out of the proposed British and American zones. There was no significant discussion about the status of Berlin. As to the eastern boundaries, Stalin insisted that Russia should receive the eastern Polish territories to the so-called Curzon line. This was a line which had been proposed by Lord Curzon and M. Clemenceau as the eastern boundary of Russia during World War I to induce Russia to remain in the war against Germany. Stalin demanded this further extension of Soviet territory as a reward to Russia for her effort in World War II. He insisted that East Prussia be divided between Russia and Poland for administration. Stalin also proposed that Poland be compensated for its loss of territory by extending her western boundary to the line of the rivers Oder-Neisse. Churchill protested that these territories amounted to one-fourth of the arable land of pre-war Germany. "It would be a pity," he said, "to stuff the Polish goose so full of German food that he will die of indigestion." But Stalin was not thinking of Poland. Soviet Russia would dominate Poland in any case. His primary concern was East Germany.

Roosevelt agreed with Stalin that the western boundary of Russia should extend to the Curzon line, with minor modifications in favor of Poland. Roosevelt proposed that Poland should receive compensatory territory from Germany "including that portion of East Prussia south of the Koenigsberg line, Upper Silesia, and up to the line of the Oder." He said, however, that "there would appear to be little justification for extending it to the Western Neisse."

Meanwhile, the war with Germany was drawing rapidly to a close. The armies in the west under General Eisenhower moved swiftly across the western boundary of the Soviet zone of occupation. General Eisenhower ordered his forces to advance without regard to zonal demarcations, but once they made contact with the Soviet forces, he ordered them to withdraw to their own zones of occupation. This greatly trou-

bled Churchill who felt strongly that no area taken by the Expeditionary forces should be given up as a military matter but only as part of a final political settlement.

The death of President Roosevelt on April 12 made the situation more difficult. Mr. Truman took office without previous summit conference experience. Within six days, Truman received a communication from Churchill stating that when the occupational zones were hastily drawn at Quebec in September, 1944, it was not foreseen that General Eisenhower's armies would capture territories so extensively in eastern Germany. Churchill also stated that, while zones of occupation could not be altered without Russian agreement, the Allied Control Council in Berlin should review the matter upon termination of hostilities. Truman replied that he felt that the Allied forces should retire to their agreed zones in Germany and Austria as soon as the military situation allowed.

Hostilities with totalitarian Germany ended at midnight on May 8, 1945. Would this lead to an understanding with totalitarian Russia? In his victory address to the British people, Churchill expressed his concern for the future in these words:

On the continent of Europe we have yet to make sure that the simple and honorable purposes for which we entered the war are not brushed aside or overlooked in the months following our success, and that the words "freedom", "democracy", and "liberation" are not distorted from their true meaning as we have understood them. There would be little use in punishing the Hitlerites for their crimes if law and justice did not rule, and if totalitarian or police governments were to take the place of the German invaders.

Stalin had said at Yalta: "It is not so difficult to keep unity in time of war since there is a joint aim to defeat the common enemy, which is clear to everyone. The difficult task will come after the war when diverse interests tend to divide the allies."

The common bond which had united the Allied Powers vanished with the defeat of Germany. To Churchill, as he later wrote, "The Soviet menace had already replaced the Nazi foe." He could not rid his mind of the fear that with the removal of American armies from Europe, the military might of Communist Russia would remain in a position of unparalleled and unchallengeable strength. Churchill felt that a meeting of the heads of state of the three great powers must take place before this military advantage passed to the Russian side. On May 11, 1945, Churchill sent Truman the "Iron Curtain" telegram. It was the first time Churchill

used that expression, antedating his speech at Westminster College, Fulton, Missouri, on March 5, 1946, where he spoke again of the Soviet threat to the security of the free world. He later commented that of all public documents written by him on the subject, he would rather be judged by this message.

I am profoundly concerned about the European situation. What will be the position in a year or two, when the British and American armies have melted and the French has not yet been formed on any major scale, when we may have a handful of divisions, mostly French, and when Russia may choose to keep two or three hundred on active service? An iron curtain is drawn down upon their front. We do not know what is going on behind.\* \* \* Surely it is vital now to come to an understanding with Russia, or see where we are with her, before we weaken our armies mortally or retire to the zones of occupation. This can only be done by a personal meeting.

In subsequent correspondence, President Truman and Marshal Stalin agreed to a meeting of the Big Three at Potsdam, on the outskirts of Berlin, on July 15, 1946. Churchill's plea for an earlier meeting was not accepted. By the time of the meeting, British and American forces had been withdrawn from eastern Germany, Russia had advanced her frontier to the Curzon line, and Soviet dominated Poland had already pressed to the River Oder and the Western Neisse. Communist Russia had fully achieved her territorial and political ambitions. The Soviet control of eastern Europe was subsequently demonstrated by its military action against democratic aspirations in Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia, and by the blockade of Berlin and the building of the Berlin Wall. Half of Germany is free and democratic today. Eastern Germany and all the rest of Eastern Europe is under Communist domination and control.

The final stage in the history of the Third Reich was written at Nuremberg during 1945 to 1946, through the trial of the major war criminals of the Hitler regime. Hitler, Goebbels, and Himmler were dead by suicide. But twenty-two other leading Nazis were brought to trial before a quadripartite court of the four major powers. Twelve, including Martin Bormann, who was tried in absentia, received death sentences, three were acquitted, and the remaining seven were given varying terms of imprisonment. Those convicted were declared guilty of waging aggressive war, and the commission of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

In addition to the individual defendants, a number of organizations were indicted, including the Gestapo and SD (the Secret State Police and



Security Service), the SS (Hitler's Elite Guard), the SA (Hitler's Brown Shirts), the General Staff and High Command, the Reich Cabinet and the Leadership Corps of the Nazi Party. The Tribunal declared that the following organizations were criminal: the Gestapo and SD, the SS, and, most significantly the Leadership Corps of the Nazi Party. The Tribunal thus found, based upon the evidence adduced at trial, that the German Party-State system, as led by Hitler, was a criminal political entity. This raises the interesting question of what the verdict of an impartial tribunal might have been upon the Soviet Party-State system under Joseph Stalin with respect to Soviet acts of aggression predating WWII, and Russia's complicity with Germany in 1939.

#### V. COMMUNIST RUSSIA AND THE FREE WORLD

While the political concept of the Party-State could properly embrace Fascism in both Italy and Germany, it proved to be, in both nations, a means to absolute personal dictatorships. Personal dictators soon replaced the theoretical Communist concept of a dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia as well. But the Party-State accurately describes the Soviet Union today.

The structure of the Soviet state rests upon the Communist Party, the government bureaucracy, the armed forces, and the political police. The Party controls the government through the central committee, the presidium, and the secretariat. The first secretary is the immediate ruler of the nation and he is chosen by the presidium. The political organization of Nazi Germany was not dissimilar. The Nazi Party was the sole political party, and Hitler controlled the nation through his personal bureaucracy, the armed forces, and the secret state police.

The rise of democracy in the Western World has given hope for universal freedom in the world. It has been challenged by tyrants in small states, principally militarists, who gain absolute power for a time. The Party-State system presents the most formidable threat to universal freedom. The system failed in Germany because of the ill-advised aggressions of its leader. In contrast, Soviet Russia has prevailed thus far on the battlefield, and the Communist regime is in little danger of change from external forces.

The Soviet Party-State will probably never accept the concept of freedom as recognized and observed in the Western democracies. The spirit of *Glasnost* is a significant step toward freedom of expression, but it is a step within the system. The Party-State remains firmly in control in So-

viet Russia. Nevertheless the Russian people aspire to be free, and in time will gain their liberties.

As it was with the Third Reich of Germany, so may it come to pass in Soviet Russia.

Truth, crushed to earth, shall rise again;  
Th' eternal years of God are here;  
But Error, wounded, writhes in pain,  
And dies among his worshipers.

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*Marx, like Hegel, denied that a rational order exists in the physical world and that human beings possess reason. However, he stood Hegel's philosophy on its head. Instead of the order of the physical and social worlds emerging from a transcendental ego, Marx believed that the material world is primary, and human consciousness emerges from experience. Most importantly, human consciousness emerges from the experience of producing the material means of existence.*

*The engine of social change, according to Marx, is class struggle. In a perfect world, all would freely choose when and how to participate in the cooperative effort to produce the material means of existence. Such a utopian society would be wholly voluntary and without conflicting interests; this is what he meant by "communism." However, according to Marx, throughout history some have compelled others to work in ways they have not freely chosen, and some are so compelled. These classes constitute the two elements of the class struggle. When an oppressed class becomes sufficiently conscious of its oppression and of the need for revolution, it attempts to overthrow the ruling class. If the revolution succeeds, the winners reconstitute society in accordance with their own interests. If their interests do not overlap sufficiently with the interests of the whole people, the class struggle is renewed.*

*The class struggle and periodic revolutions constitute "dialectical materialism," Marx's account of the "objective laws of social development." Only those whose consciousness reflects the objective laws of social development correctly understand human events and act responsibly in human affairs. Marx's successors, especially Lenin, decreed that only members of the Communist Party have a consciousness that correctly mirrors the objective laws of social development. Therefore, only Party members should make decisions that significantly affect human survival and welfare. This explains the monopoly on decision making that the Communist Party enjoys, and zealously protects, in the Soviet Union. But the doctrine that only Communist Party members have true consciousness has extremely important implications for international discourse.*

*The Soviet government is organized so that the "false consciousness" of non-party members cannot direct and control any significant actions. Because of the "false consciousness" of the masses, the Party cannot reason with them. Therefore, all non-members of the Party must be deceived and manipulated for their own good. Of course, non-Communists in foreign lands are assumed to have "false consciousnesses." Therefore, members of the Soviet Communist Party and those under their control do not commu-*