

A Copernican world from "The Anatomy of Peace"

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Nothing can distort the true picture of conditions and events in this world more than to regard one's own country as the centre of the universe, and to view all things solely in their relationship to this fixed point. It is inevitable that such a method of observation should create an entirely false perspective. Yet this is the only method admitted and used by the seventy or eighty national governments of our world, by our legislators and diplomats, by our press and radio. All the conclusions, principles and policies of the people are necessarily drawn from the warped picture of the world obtained by so primitive a method of observation.

Within such a contorted system of assumed fixed points, it is easy to demonstrate that the view taken from each point corresponds to reality. If we admit and apply this method, the viewpoint of every single nation appears indisputably correct and wholly justified. But we arrive at a hopelessly confused and grotesque overall picture of the world.

Let us see how international events between the two world wars look from some of the major national vantage points.

The United States of America, faithful to the Monroe Doctrine and to its traditions of aloofness from Europe, did not want to enter the first World War. But the Germans were sinking American ships, violating American rights and threatening American interests. So in 1917, the

United States was forced to go to war in defence of American rights. They went into battle determined to fight the war to end all war, and to "make the world safe for democracy". They fought bravely and spent lavishly. Their intervention decided the outcome of the struggle in favour of the Allies. But as soon as the shooting was over, the major Allied powers – Britain, France, Italy and Japan – betrayed the common cause. They were unwilling to base the peace on Wilson's ideals. They signed secret treaties between themselves. They did not want a just peace. They wanted to annex territories, islands, bases; they wanted to impose high reparation payments on the defeated countries and other measures of vengeance. America, disgusted by the quarrels and selfishness of the other nations and disillusioned by the old game of power politics, retired from the European hornet's nest, after having been abused, outsmarted and double-crossed by her former associates. America wanted only to be allowed to mind her own business, to build up the wealth and happiness of her own citizens. The foreign nations – who would have been crushed without American intervention and who were saved by America – even defaulted on their war debts and refused to repay the loans America had made to them in their hour of danger. So even financial and economic relations with the European powers had to be reduced to a minimum and American capital had to be protected by prohibiting loans to defaulting

foreigners. American policy was fully justified by the ensuing events. Clouds were again gathering in Europe. Military dictatorships were arising in many countries, a race of armaments had started, violence broke out and the whole continent was on the verge of another great war – more of the old European quarrels and power politics. Naturally, it was of primary interest to the United States to keep out of these senseless internecine old-world fights. The supreme duty of the American government to its people was to maintain strict neutrality toward the warring nations across the ocean. Thanks to the weakness of the appeasement policy and the blindness of Britain, France and Soviet Russia, the totalitarian powers succeeded in conquering the entire European continent. German troops occupied the whole Atlantic seacoast from Norway to Equatorial Africa. Simultaneously, the Japanese succeeded in conquering the entire Chinese coastline, menacing the American-controlled Philippine Islands. Incredible and unbelievable as it was, no one could fail to see that the European and Asiatic military powers, known as the Axis, were planning the conquest of North and South America. In sheer self-defence, America was obliged to transform herself into the arsenal of democracy, producing weapons for the British and Russians to fight the Germans. Then, on a day which will "live in infamy" the Japanese Empire launched an unprovoked aggression against peace-loving America, and, together with Germany and Italy,



declared war upon her. Once forced into the war, the nation arose as one man. In a short time, it became obvious that once again the United States was saving the civilised Western world. Events have demonstrated that disarmament and disinterestedness cannot protect America from foreign aggression. Therefore, peace in the world can be preserved only if the United States maintains a large army, the biggest navy and the biggest air force in the world, and secures bases at all strategic points commanding the approaches to the Western Hemisphere.

How do these same twenty years look from the fixed point of the **British Isles?**

In 1914, Britain went to the defence of Belgium, France and Russia. It was impossible for her to stand by while militarist Germany was marching to occupy and control the Channel coast. Britain could not permit Germany to obtain European hegemony and to become the dominating industrial and military power on the Continent, menacing the lifelines of the British Empire and threatening to reduce the British Isles to starvation and poverty. When, at the cost of tremendous efforts and the lives of more than one million of her sons, Britain, together with her allies, won victory, she naturally wanted to see German military might eliminated once and for all from the path of the British Empire. It was only just that the German fleet be destroyed, that German colonies be annexed and that Germany be made to pay reparations. Unfortunately, the isolationists in America stabbed Wilson in the back and the United States deserted her allies. England remained alone to face the European problem. Without the United States and without the Dominions, she could

not give the guarantees France demanded and had to be careful lest after victory over Germany, France should take the place of the defeated Reich and become an overwhelmingly dominating military power on the Continent. As the French went berserk, refusing to disarm and occupying the Ruhr, England had to become the moderator in Europe and to continue the traditional balance-of-power policy that had been successful for so many centuries. Bolshevik Russia, after the failure of military intervention supported by the Allies, succeeded in stabilising a Communist regime, and through the Third Internationale and the various Communist parties in Europe, threatened the entire Continent with revolution. Germany, suffering under the consequences of defeat and French intransigence, with six million unemployed, was particularly susceptible to revolutionary turmoil. It was of paramount importance for European peace that German economy be restored and stabilised. Mussolini had succeeded in re-establishing order in Italy and the growing strength of the National Socialist movement in Germany seemed to stem the tide of Bolshevism. But Great Britain's economic problems were becoming aggravated. The Americans erected high tariff walls and refused to import British goods, thus making it impossible for Great Britain to repay her war debts. She was forced to give up her traditional free trade policy and to enter into a preference system with the Dominions. Italian and German intentions by this time began to alarm France and the smaller countries of Europe. Two camps began to crystallise, one trying to preserve the status quo of the Treaty of Versailles, the other seeking revisions favourable to them. Then as now peace was England's paramount

interest and her natural role was to be the mediator between the two factions, to attempt as many revisions as possible by peaceful means so as to check the dynamism of the dictatorships, and to prevent an outbreak of hostilities at any cost. When Italy embarked upon her unfortunate military operation in Ethiopia, England championed the principles of the League. Sanctions were voted and imposed upon the aggressor by more than fifty nations under British leadership. It was a most alarming factor that France, frightened by growing German power and in the hope of obtaining Italian assistance against Germany in Europe, gave Italy a free hand in Ethiopia. So the League was sabotaged by France. Italy could not be stopped except by intervention of the British fleet, which would have meant risking a major war and had to be avoided. Shortly after the Italian conquest of Ethiopia, Germany reoccupied the Rhineland. France, in her first reaction, wanted to march, but England prevented a military clash between the two major continental powers. For the pacification of Europe, an agreement was made with Germany granting her a new fleet, thirty-five per cent of the British tonnage. Thereafter, Germany and Italy formed a military alliance and provoked a civil war in Spain to try out new weapons and new methods of warfare, and to establish a regime friendly to them. This incident created a highly charged atmosphere all over Europe. Russians were actually fighting German and Italian forces on Spanish soil. Only by pursuing the strictest policy of non-intervention and exercising the utmost patience was England able to prevent France from intervening and spreading the fight all over the Continent. In the face of these threatening events, England





succeeded in strengthening her ties with France. Unhappily, still further sacrifices had to be made to prevent a war, which England could not risk, as she was almost completely unprepared. Other adjustments of the territorial status of Europe had to be considered. At Munich, British diplomacy was taxed to the utmost to obtain the transfer of German-inhabited Czechoslovak territories to the Reich without a violent conflict. Once again England had saved the peace. But after Munich, it was apparent that Germany had made up her mind to conquer Europe. England had to begin rearming and to look around for allies. Belgium and Holland, jealous of their neutrality, did not admit military discussions, but the alliance with France was strengthened, alliances with Poland and Rumania were signed and every effort was made to reach an understanding with the Soviet Union. The Poles, however, stubbornly refused to permit Russian troops passage across Polish territory in case of war and in the middle of negotiations in Moscow, a diplomatic bomb exploded. Russia, betraying her Western democratic friends, had signed a nonaggression pact with Nazi Germany. That gave Germany the green light to attack Poland. All this happened within a few days and England, honouring her pledged word, declared war upon Germany. It was impossible for Britain to bring military help to the Poles in time and Poland was defeated in a few weeks. British troops, however, were sent to France, the best-equipped army ever to cross the Channel. They, along with French soldiers, took their posts at the Belgian and German frontiers and waited for the German attack, believing the defence system they and their allies held to be impregnable. But Hitler, instead of opening an offensive against the

Allies, attacked the peaceful and undefended neutral countries of Denmark and Norway. Britain immediately sent an expeditionary force to Narvik, which fought gallantly but which had to withdraw before overwhelming enemy forces supported by land-based planes. Shortly thereafter, the Germans made a frontal attack against the west, occupying neutral Holland and Belgium in a few days. They turned the Maginot Line and cracked the French defences. The King of Belgium surrendered. Only some of the British troops could be evacuated from Dunkirk and other ports of France. All the equipment of the British Expeditionary Force was lost. France, inadequately equipped and undermined by Nazi propaganda, betrayed her British ally by refusing to continue the fight on the side of the British Commonwealth in the Mediterranean and in Africa, and capitulated to Germany. The whole Continent was in German hands and England stood alone. The situation seemed hopeless. England was without defences. The Luftwaffe began to bomb London and British industrial centres. Italy began to move against Egypt and Suez. Both the mother country and the lifeline of the empire in the Middle East were in mortal danger. Britain could have saved her empire had she accepted German hegemony in Europe, but she preferred to fight alone, even if she had to fight on her beaches, on her hills and in her villages. Along with the sacrifice of tens of thousands of civilians, she won the Battle of Britain, fought off the Luftwaffe with a few fighter planes, fought the German submarines single-handed, mobilised her entire population and dispatched everything she could to the Near East to stem Mussolini's advancing armies. For more than a year, Britain alone defended the cause of democracy.

Neither the Soviet Union nor the United States was prepared to enter the war on her side. Only when Germany actually attacked Russia and Japan bombed Pearl Harbour and invaded the Philippines did Russia and the United States join forces with the British Commonwealth to achieve final victory.

From the point of view of **France**, the picture looked like this:

In 1914, France suffered the second German invasion within half a century. The entire north and east of France were devastated and only by tremendous bloodshed and the sacrifice of a million and a half of her sons could France defend her soil. With the help of the Allies, Germany was finally defeated. The supreme thought in the mind of every Frenchman was to be secure against another German aggression. France felt strongly that as the bastion of Western democracy she was entitled to security, to prevent her soil becoming the permanent battlefield of Teutonic aggression. To obviate the constant threat of Germans on the west bank of the Rhine, France demanded the Rhine as the new Franco-German border. Further, she demanded that Germany be demilitarised and forced to make reparation for the damage caused to France. At the peace conferences, however, she was abandoned by the United States and even to some extent by England and, was obliged to accept a compromise. After having yielded to Anglo-American pressure she asked the United States and Britain to guarantee her eastern frontiers against German revenge. They refused. With a population much smaller than Germany, with a stationary birth rate in the face of Germany's increasing population, France had to rely on her own armed strength and on what alliances she





could make with the newly created, smaller states east and south of Germany. When the Reich began to sabotage reparation payments, France, standing on her rights, occupied the Ruhr, but was not supported by her allies. After America had withdrawn from Europe into isolation, France did her utmost to support the League of Nations and, with her smaller allies, suggested a mutual assistance pact within the League – the Geneva Protocol. Britain refused to commit herself. France found a substitute in the Locarno agreements which at least guaranteed security in the West. From the threat of reborn German militarism in the form of Nazism, she vainly sought protection from England and finally turned to Italy whose interest regarding the prevention of the Austrian Anschluss was identical with that of France. But Italy abused France's gesture and attacked Ethiopia, in violation of her obligations to the League. France was in a desperate position between the League and Mussolini, and in the end lost the friendship of Italy to uphold the League. When the Germans remilitarised the Rhineland, France was alarmed and called upon her partners in the Locarno Pact, but they turned a deaf ear and she had to accept the German fait accompli. Feeling abandoned and growing weaker in the face of rapidly increasing German military power, France sought an alliance with Russia but was hindered by Poland who, although allied with France, would not give Russian troops permission to march through Polish territory. When Germany and Italy fomented and supported the Franco military revolution against the Spanish Republic, it was obviously a move to encircle France. This manoeuvre foreboded grave events. France wanted to intervene on the republican

side and thus prevent Franco, supported by Hitler and Mussolini, from coming to power. But England opposed such a move. So the French Republic had to stand by and watch a hostile Fascist power being established by her enemies on her third land frontier. She had staked everything on her friendship with Britain. When it was obvious that Germany had become the dominating military and industrial power in Europe and that none of the other great powers, neither the United States nor Britain nor Russia, realised the imminence of danger, many Frenchmen felt that to oppose German might single-handed was a suicidal policy, that the French must resign themselves to German supremacy in Europe and accept the position of a secondary power on the Continent. France's internal stability was greatly imperilled by a violent cleavage between capital and labour, and differences of opinion between those who advocated a French policy of collaboration with England and Russia and those who sought an arrangement with Germany. In spite of these difficulties, France kept faith with her British ally and continued to follow her lead. She accepted Munich, sacrificing Czechoslovakia, her most faithful friend on the Continent. Her armies were mobilised several times to be in readiness at critical moments. And when even Russia abandoned her, signing a treaty with Germany, and Hitler attacked Poland, France fulfilled her obligation toward her Polish ally, despite the difficulties and disappointments created by the pro-German Polish policy of the previous years. France declared war on Germany, mobilised six million men and exposed herself to the inrush of Nazi military might. She urged Britain to send strong forces across the Channel but England sent only two or

three hundred thousand men and when the Germans attacked in the west, France had to carry the burden of fighting practically alone. The King of Belgium laid down arms. The entire British Expeditionary Force was encircled and pushed into the sea at Dunkirk. The German Panzer divisions swept across all the northern departments of France with overwhelming force. In this critical moment, Italy stabbed France in the back and declared war. The military situation was hopeless. France appealed to America for help which was refused. The British withdrew, betraying their alliance with France in her darkest hour. There was no alternative but to accept the bitter humiliation of defeat and surrender, hoping for a miracle of resurrection and trying to accommodate France to the new order in Europe, to ease the suffering of her people. For four years, the French endured German occupation and helplessly watched the Nazis looting the country. They organised a heroic resistance movement both inside and outside France and four years later, after America had been forced into the war by Germany and Japan, when the Anglo-American troops landed on French beaches, French resistance forces from outside came with them, and French resistance armies within the country arose, liberating their cities and villages, and contributing considerably to the Allied victory.

The image of these same events during the same period appeared to the **German** people as follows:

For more than four years from 1914 to 1918 the German armies fought a coalition of almost the entire world, which had refused Germany the place under the sun her growing population required. In spite of their numerical superiority, the Allies never defeated the German armies in





battle, but they did succeed in blinding a section of the German people with promises of a just peace so that pacifists, socialists, democrats and Jews at home revolted and stabbed the German armies in the back. At Versailles, Germany was unjustly accused of having been responsible for the war. The Allies imposed upon her a treaty based on this lie which meant the dismemberment and enslavement of the German people. Nevertheless, Germany signed this shameful treaty and did her utmost to fulfil its terms and to re-establish a friendly relationship with her former enemies, believing in their promises to disarm. Germany herself was disarmed and her people toiled in utmost poverty and misery to fulfil their obligations toward the victors. On a pretext, France occupied the Ruhr, Germany's centre of industrial production, establishing a regime of terror to enforce the unfulfillable clauses of the treaty. German economic life was disrupted and the country was plunged into an inflation which destroyed all the savings of the German population. Yet Germany accepted the Locarno treaties, guaranteeing once and for all her western frontiers, and entered the League. Germany signed the Kellogg Pact and outlawed war as an instrument of national policy. She insisted that the other parties keep their promises to disarm but they refused to do so. The chains of the Versailles Treaty became unbearable. The Allied powers refused to give Germany equality, a fair share in world trade, colonies and markets in central and southern Europe. Unemployment grew and misery reached unprecedented depths. Communism was spreading and it looked as if Germany would disintegrate, the German people be enslaved forever. During these

desperate years, a saviour arose who filled the German people with new hope, rallied them to his banner and promised work, bread, progress, strength for resurrection. The German people, by their own will power, liberated themselves from the chains of the Versailles Treaty, restored their own sovereignty by remilitarising the German Rhineland. As the Allied powers refused to disarm and broke their own pledges, Germany regarded the military clauses of the treaty as null and void and began to assert her own dignity and to rearm. It was impossible for sixty-five million people to live in such a small and poor country. They needed living space if peace was to be preserved. The separation of German Austria from the Reich was ended and the German peoples were at last united. The new Germany gave work to everybody, spread wealth and happiness in the land and created a prosperity, a period of building and construction, unprecedented in German history. The German nation could not tolerate the spreading of Bolshevism in Europe and at great sacrifice helped the Spanish people to exterminate this Asiatic threat. As Germany arose from her defeat and was again a great, independent power, she could no longer admit the intolerable oppression and persecution of her blood brethren in Czechoslovakia. Relying on the righteousness of her cause, she claimed incorporation of the Sudeten German territories in the Reich which the former enemies of Germany were made to accept without force. But the enemies of peace had learned nothing. The Poles refused to stop oppressing and torturing German minorities and to allow their return to the German Reich. So Germany, to protect and defend her peoples, was forced to act. To prove her pacific intentions, she signed a treaty of

nonaggression with Soviet Russia and liberated the lost German territories in the East. England and France, who for a long time were jealously watching Germany's resurrection, took advantage of her pacification of the East and declared war on the Reich without any provocation and with the clear intention of once again destroying and enslaving the German people. Germany had no quarrel with her western neighbours. So, although the Western world was fully mobilised and menaced German soil, Germany did not undertake any action but waited in the hope of a reasonable settlement with England and France. A few months later, however, it was obvious that England was planning to violate Danish and Norwegian neutrality to outflank German defences from the north. The Wehrmacht had to intervene and protect the neutrality of Denmark and Norway. Shortly thereafter, British invasion of Belgium and Holland and the outflanking of the West-wall was threatening. No more time could be wasted. Germany had to strike in self-defence. The Wehrmacht attacked and in a few days achieved the greatest military victory of all times. Belgium and Holland were occupied, the British pushed back into the sea and France was brought to capitulation. In Compiègne, the Fuehrer avenged once and for all the German humiliation of 1918. Again Germany appealed to England to save the peace of the world, guaranteeing the integrity of the British Empire in exchange for British recognition of German Lebensraum in Europe. Britain stubbornly refused and began to bomb German cities in violation of civilised warfare. Germany was forced to retaliate. She had to strike at British harbours and military targets and to stop deliveries of arms to England by





torpedoing British convoys. The Anti-Comintern Pact, which united the anti-Bolshevik forces of the new order, and the German-Russian non-aggression pact, kept peace in the East. But intelligence reports made it more and more obvious that Soviet Russia was using the Russo-German pact merely to gain time and was secretly arming to the utmost of her ability. Russia was making preparations for an attack on Germany at a moment most convenient for her. Naturally, Germany could not expose herself to such mortal danger. She had to forestall Bolshevik treachery. With a lightning decision – characteristic of the intuition of the Fuehrer – Germany, in self-defence, struck at her foe. Her armies marched against the Soviet Union in order to prevent Bolshevik aggression and to destroy the Red Army, the greatest threat to European civilisation. . . .

And from the vantage point of **Moscow**, the same quarter century appeared in this light:

In 1917, the Russian people succeeded in overthrowing the autocratic dynasty which had oppressed and enslaved them for centuries, and established a socialist people's republic. The capitalist powers, the allies of czarist Russia, intervened militarily. America, England, France, Poland, sent troops into Russia to destroy the new republic and to re-establish the old regime of exploitation. The rapidly organised Red Army fought heroically, defeated the invaders and liberated the Russian soil. However, the young Soviet forces were not yet strong enough to push the armies of the capitalist imperialists back to the pre-war frontier and so the Soviet government, in order to secure peace the quickest way, accepted a

settlement which meant a loss of Russia's Baltic and western provinces. In spite of this settlement imposed on the Russian people, the hostility of the outside world toward the socialist experiment of the Soviet Union continued. Russia finally emerged from her involuntary isolation after five years by signing a treaty in Rapallo with the other prostrate power, Germany. Russia needed machinery, tools, engineers, to build up her industries and to raise the material conditions of her peoples, and Germany was prepared to do business with her. The Soviet Union bought everything for cash and paid in gold, so very soon England and America also began to sell their products in exchange for Russian gold. But the USSR did not succeed in breaking the political hostility of the capitalist world. It became more and more obvious that the success of the Communist economic system aroused great apprehensions abroad and that the capitalist, imperialist countries would attack and destroy the Soviet Union at the earliest opportunity. All the neighbouring countries – Finland, the Baltic States, Poland, Rumania, Turkey, the British Empire, Japan – were openly defying the Soviet Union and following an anti-Soviet policy. So Russia had to postpone her great plan to produce consumer goods in mass quantities and was forced by circumstances to build up key industries in order to construct factories for armament production, and to organise a land army and an air force of huge proportions to defend the Union. The more powerful the USSR became, the more resentment and animosity grew in capitalist countries. The friends of the Soviet people, the Communists, were persecuted everywhere. A new type of military imperialism, Fascism, was

seizing power in one country after the other, intent upon destroying socialist Russia. When Fascism came into power in Germany and mobilised the great German industrial potential for war against Russia, the Soviet government tried to come to an agreement with the Western democratic nations who were also threatened by the growing German militarism. The Soviet Union entered the League of Nations and worked with all her might for the establishment of a system of collective security, for a system of alliances of the peace-loving nations, to make peace indivisible and to check aggression collectively whenever and wherever it started. Soon a Fascist aggression occurred. Italy attacked Ethiopia. But all the powers hesitated, temporised and appeased the aggressor, leaving Russia isolated in her fight for collective security. For several years, the Soviet Union passionately continued trying to organise the world for peace, advocating co-operation of the democratic, socialist and Communist forces in all countries to keep Fascism from spreading and to prevent aggression. America was inaccessible. England and France clearly did not want to align themselves formally with Soviet Russia against the Fascist forces. It became increasingly apparent that they would welcome a Fascist attack on the Soviet Union, that they would like to see the German people and their satellites engaged with the Soviet people in a long and bloody struggle. The Soviet government, desiring peace and knowing how disastrous such a war would be for the Soviet people, watched these manoeuvres and manifestations of ill wind with growing apprehension. They did their utmost to persuade the Western democracies of the suicidal short-sightedness of their policy.





Finally, when Munich came and Britain and France, without even consulting the Soviet Union, sacrificed Czechoslovakia on the altar of appeasement, and permitted the destruction of the most valuable link between Russia and the West, the situation became acute. A decision had to be made. Britain and France were invited to Moscow for conferences, but they sent only third-rate negotiators, affronting the Soviet government. Those negotiations left no doubt that, even then, the Western powers did not desire wholehearted collaboration with Russia. They accepted the point of view of the Polish Fascists who refused to grant the Red Army permission to advance to the Polish-German border to organise common defences. Then and there, it was clear that the arrangement suggested to the Soviet Union by the Western powers had no practical meaning and that it would inevitably result in a clash between the German and Russian armies with terrible bloodshed and serious consequences for the Soviet Union. To prevent such a catastrophe, the Soviet government had to make a decision. A radical change had to be made in past policy. They accepted a German proposal for a non-aggression pact which guaranteed the Soviet frontiers and peace, at least for a certain time, between the German Reich and the USSR. After signing the pact, the German armies attacked Poland. The Polish armies – on which the Western powers had wanted to base their entire Eastern defences – collapsed in a few days. The Polish state ceased to exist. To prevent the Nazi militarists from reaching the Soviet borders, Red Army units reoccupied the lands inhabited by Ukrainians and White Russians which had been stolen from them by Poland during the revolution

when the Soviet Union was weak. Through this act of foresight the German armies were stopped at a safe distance from the heart of Russia, and the Anti-Comintern Pact, the alliance between Germany, Japan and their satellites, against the Soviet Union was neutralised. Shortly after, Soviet diplomacy was justified when Germany attacked the West, defeating the French and British armies, and established Nazi hegemony over the entire European Continent, except the Soviet Union. One year later, the German Fascists unmasked their aggressive imperialism. Hitler violated his pact with Moscow and attacked the Soviet Union. By that time, however, the Russian armies were in readiness and defence industries were working to full capacity far behind the front lines. As a result of German aggression against the Soviet Union, the USSR became the ally of the British Empire and later, of the United States. All these tragic events prove how correct was Russia's foreign policy, how justified her admonitions to the democratic world in the pre-war years. But they also show that the USSR must constantly be alert and prepared in the face of intrigues and aggressions of any of the foreign countries. In a world of hostile powers, the Soviet Union will have to manoeuvre between them and accept the alliances of those who will align themselves with her against the power or powers which represent the most imminent danger to the Soviet motherland.

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The dramatic and strange events between the two world wars could be just as well described from the point of view of any other nation, large or small. From Tokyo or Warsaw, from Riga or Rome, from

Prague or Budapest, each picture will be entirely different and, from the fixed national point of observation, it will always be indisputably and unchallengeably correct. And the citizens of every country will be at all times convinced – and rightly so – of the infallibility of their views and the objectivity of their conclusions.

It is surely obvious that agreement, or common understanding between different nations, basing their relations on such a primitive method of judgment, is an absolute impossibility. A picture of the world pieced together like a mosaic from its various national components is a picture that never and under no circumstances can have any relation to reality, unless we deny that such a thing as reality exists.

The world and history cannot be as they appear to the different nations, unless we disavow objectively, reason and scientific methods of research.

But if we believe that man is, to a certain degree, different from the animal and that he is endowed with a capacity for phenomenological thinking, then the time has come to realise that our inherited method of observation in political and social matters is childishly primitive, hopelessly inadequate and thoroughly wrong. If we want to try to create at least the beginning of orderly relations between nations, we must try to arrive at a more scientific, more objective method of observation, without which we shall never be able to see social and political problems as they really are, nor to perceive their incidence. And without a correct diagnosis of the disease, there is no hope for a cure.

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Our political and social thinking today is passing through a revolutionary era very much the same as were astronomy and abstract science during the Renaissance.

For more than fourteen centuries, the geocentric theory of the universe, formulated and laid down by Ptolemy in the second century AD in Alexandria, was paramount in the scientific world. According to this theory – as explained in Ptolemy's famous *Almagest*, the culmination of Greek astronomy – the earth was the centre of the universe around which revolved the sun, the moon and all the stars.

No matter how primitive such a conception of the universe appears to us today, it remained unchallenged and unchallengeable for fourteen hundred years. All possible experimentation and observation before the sixteenth century AD confirmed the Ptolemaic system as a rock of indisputable scientific truth.

Strangely enough, Greek scientists several centuries before Ptolemy had a concept of the universe far more advanced and nearer to our modern knowledge. As far back as the sixth century BC, Pythagoras visualised the earth and the universe as being spherical in shape. One of his later disciples, Aristarchus of Samos, in the third century BC, in his hypothesis deposed the earth as the centre of the universe, and declared it to be a "planet", like the many other celestial bodies. This system, called the Pythagorean system, plainly anticipated the Copernican hypothesis nineteen centuries later. It was probably not completely developed by Pythagoras himself, but it had been known several hundred years before Ptolemy.

Yet for almost two thousand years following the first insight into the real construction and functioning of the universe, people were convinced that all the celestial bodies revolved around the earth, which was the fixed centre of the universe.

The geocentric system worked perfectly as long as it could solve all the problems which presented themselves under the then existing methods of observation. Ptolemy himself appears to have sensed and suspected the transitory character of his system, as in his *Syntaxis* he laid down the general principle that in seeking to explain phenomena, we should adopt the simplest possible hypothesis, provided it is not contradicted in any important respect by observation.

The geocentric theory of Ptolemy was perfectly in harmony with the religious dogma concerning the story of the creation of the universe as told in the Bible and it became the doctrine approved by the Church.

But in fifteenth century Italy, under the light of new learning and observation and under the impetus of the revolt against the dictatorship of accepted philosophical scientific doctrines, there came a radical change. Several thinkers, particularly one Dominico Maria Novara denounced the Ptolemaic system and began spreading "Pythagorean opinions" – as they were called – about the universe. Around 1500, these old, yet revolutionary ideas, attracted and deeply interested Copernicus while he was studying at the universities of Bologna and Padua.

So new circumstances, new methods of observation, new needs, led to the birth of the Copernican system, one of the most gigantic steps of scientific

progress in human history.

Through the Copernican system, man's outlook on the universe changed fundamentally. In this new concept the earth itself rotated. It was no longer a stable point. Our globe, just like the other planets, revolved in space around the sun and the new theory of planetary movement was founded on the principle of relativity of motion.

This heliocentric theory of Copernicus was by no means perfect. It solved many problems the Ptolemaic system could not solve, but certain outstanding anomalies compromised its harmonious working. It is also well known that for thirty-five years Copernicus did not dare publicly proclaim his discovery. When he finally decided to publish it (in the year of his death) he called his theory "Hypothesis" to forestall the wrath of the Church and public opinion.

The later experience of Galileo proved how justified were the fears of Copernicus. The heliocentric theory was not only condemned by the church authorities as heresy; it was rejected by the greatest astronomers and other scientists of the time. Indeed, it was impossible to prove Copernicus' hypothesis by the then existing methods of observation. Only later, through the work of Kepler and Galileo, was the heliocentric theory put on a solid scientific foundation.

At its inception, the Copernican system was nothing more than a daring speculation. But it opened a new world, pointed out the road to science and prompted new and more refined methods of observation which finally led to general acceptance of the revolutionary but correct outlook on the universe.





During the first half of the twentieth century, in so far as our political, social and economic thinking is concerned, we find ourselves in the same dead-end road as Copernicus during the jubilee of 1500.

We are living in a geocentric world of nation states. We look upon economic, social and political problems as "national" problems. No matter in which country we live, the centre of our political universe is our own nation. In our outlook, the immovable point around which all the other nations, all the problems and events outside our nation, the rest of the world, supposedly rotate, is our nation.

This is our basic and fundamental dogma.

According to this nation-centric conception of world affairs, we can solve political, economic and social problems within our nation, the fixed, immutable centre, in one way — through law and government. And in the circumambient world around us, in our relations with the peoples of other nations, these same problems should be treated by other means — by "policy" and "diplomacy".

According to this nation-centric conception of world affairs, the political, social and economic relations between man and man living within a sovereign national unit, and these very same relationships between man and man living in separate sovereign national units are qualitatively different and require two qualitatively different methods of handling.

For many centuries such an approach was unchallenged and unchallengeable. It served to solve current problems in a satisfactory way and the existing methods of

production, distribution, of communications and of interchange among the nations did not necessitate nor justify the formulation and acceptance of a different outlook. But the scientific and technological developments achieved by the industrial revolution in one century have about in our political outlook and in our approach to political and social phenomena a change as inevitable and imperative as the Renaissance brought about in our philosophical outlook.

The developments creating that need are revolutionary and without parallel in human history. In one century, the population of this earth has been more than trebled. Since the very beginning of recorded history, for ten thousand years, communication was based on animal power. During the American and French revolutions, transportation was scarcely faster than it had been under the Pharaohs, at the time of Buddha or of the Incas. And then, after a static aeon of ten thousand years, transportation changed within a single short century from animal power to the steam and electric railroad, the internal combustion automobile and the six hundred-mile-per-hour jet propulsion plane.

After thousands of years of primitive, rural existence in which all human beings, with few exceptions, were exhausted from producing with their own hands just enough food, clothing and shelter for sheer survival, in less than one century the population of the entire Western world has become consumers of mass-production commodities.

The change created by industrialism is so revolutionary, so profound, that it is without parallel in the history of any civilisation. Despite Spengler, it is unique.

In this new and as yet unexplored era we find ourselves completely helpless, equipped with the inadequate, primitive political and social notions inherited from the pre-industrialised world. Slowly we are coming to realise that none of our accepted theories is satisfactory to cope with the disturbing and complex problems of today.

We realise that although we can have all the machinery we need, we cannot solve the problems of production. We realise that in spite of the far-flung and tremendous scope of transportation, we cannot prevent famine and starvation in many places, while there is abundance elsewhere on the earth. We realise that although hundreds of millions are desperately in need of food and industrial products, we cannot prevent mass unemployment. We realise that even though we have mined more gold than ever before, we cannot stabilise currency. We realise that while every modern country needs raw materials that other countries have, and produces goods which other countries need, we have been unable to organise a satisfactory method of exchange. We realise that although the overwhelming majority of all people hate violence and long to live in peace, we cannot prevent recurrent and increasingly devastating world wars. We knew that armaments must lead to wars between nations, but we have learned the bitter truth that disarmament also leads to war.

In this confusion and chaos in which civilised nations are struggling with utter helplessness, we are bound to arrive at the inevitable conclusion that the cause of this hopelessness and helplessness lies not in the outer world but in ourselves. Not in the problems we have to solve but in the





A Copernican world

hypotheses with which we approach their solutions.

Our political and social conceptions are Ptolemaic.

The world in which we live is Copernican.

Our Ptolemaic political conceptions in a Copernican industrial world are bankrupt. Latest observations on ever-changing conditions have made our Ptolemaic approach utterly ridiculous and out-of-date. We still believe, in each one of the seventy or eighty sovereign states, that our "nation" is the immovable centre around which the world revolves.

There is not the slightest hope that we can possibly solve any of the vital problems of our generation until we rise above dogmatic nation-centric conceptions and realise that, in order to understand the political, economic and social problems of this highly integrated and industrialised world, we have to shift our standpoint and see all the nations and national matters in motion, in their interrelated functions, rotating according to the same laws without any fixed points created by our own imagination for our own convenience.

The Anatomy of Peace

This text is taken from the introduction to "The Anatomy of Peace", published in June 1945. In that book, Emery Reves makes the daring statement that there is only one cause for every war ever fought. And he points out the one and only condition that makes peaceful human relations possible. For the first time, a clearly-reasoned, practical method for attaining the peace we all want is put down in terms that everyone can understand.

In a book destined to startle by the very nature of its simply stated truths, Emery Reves analyses the cause of war and the nature of peace. He finds that the only condition that creates war is the unregulated relationship between sovereign states; and he does not believe that a three-power alliance, the San Francisco league or an international police force will work. Peace will exist, he declares, only when absolute national sovereignty, which causes anarchy in international relations, gives way to a universal legal order, and the decisions made at Dumbarton Oaks, Yalta and San Francisco ignore this basic principle.

Reasoning brilliantly, Emery Reves elucidates the principles by which peace can be saved.

On its first publication, in June 1945, the sale of this book was only a steady one, interest being restricted to advanced opinion. Then on 6 August 1945, at 10.45 am, President Truman startled the world with news of the atom bomb raid on Hiroshima.

Suddenly it occurred to a good many of those who had read *The Anatomy of Peace* that it was the answer the whole world was seeking. To those "in the know", it suddenly became urgent business to tell as many people as possible as quickly as possible to drop everything and read this book.

Emery Reves studied in the Universities of Berlin and Paris, and received his degree of Doctor of Political Economy from the University of Zurich. In 1930, he founded and became president of Cooperation Press Service and Cooperation Publishing Company, based in Paris, London and New York City.

Join Federal Union

Federal Union was founded in 1938 and campaigns for federalism for the UK, Europe and the world. It argues that democracy and the rule of law should apply between states as well as within them. It is the UK section of the Union of European Federalists.

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