

# One Continent Indivisible

*"The Triumph of Tyranny," by Stephen Borsody (Macmillan, 285 pp. \$4.50), asserts that the Continent's problems can only be resolved by a United States of Europe. The Rt. Hon. Arthur Henderson, Q.C., M.P., is chairman of the Parliamentary Group for World Government.*

By Arthur Henderson

**T**HIS book is a most valuable contribution to the study of European problems, both present and past. Professor Borsody's analysis of the arbitrary way in which the old Hapsburg Empire was broken up after the First World War is accurate and objective; nor would anyone who is familiar with developments in Central Europe during the "twenty years' crisis"—that is during the inter-war years—differ materially from his assessment of the results of the treaties of Versailles and Trianon. There is little doubt, for example, that the most important single factor contributing to Danubian instability was the hostility between Hungary—dismembered by the Trianon Treaty—and her Czechoslovak, Rumanian, and Yugoslav neighbors. The author reminds us that more than one-quarter of all Hungarians living in the Danubian Valley were incorporated into Czechoslovakia, Rumania, and Yugoslavia.

The impact of Hungarian hostility was a powerful stimulus to the formation of the Little Entente as a solid block against Hungary's revisionist aspirations. The author recalls the efforts of the late President Benes to secure a rapprochement with Hungary, and he condemns Hungary's rulers for refusing to consider Benes's proposals. With this background, the efforts of those who supported the concept of a Danubian federation were frustrated and nullified. As Professor Borsody points out, "jealous and suspicious, infected by the spirit of intolerance, the Danubian states lacked the good will and moderation needed for a federation."

The present writer can confirm this from his own experience. I paid a number of visits to Prague, Budapest, and Bucharest in 1938 and 1939, and in spite of the growing Hitler menace, threatening the security of all three countries, it was impossible to avoid the conclusion that the need for bound-

ary revision precluded the possibility of cooperation in defense of common interests in face of a common danger.

The troubles created among the new Danubian states were of course only one aspect of the crisis between the two wars. "The war to end war" did not end war! The peace treaty did not bring peace and security. The international collective machinery—the League of Nations, which was set up with the object of solving problems by pacific means and establishing the rule of law and justice, was inadequate for the tasks that lay before it. No doubt Czarist Russia would have been included. Soviet Russia was excluded. The United States of America declined to join.

The author holds that the roots of the inter-war crisis lay in the dissolution of Allied unity. He states—and I think rightly—that the decision of the United States not to join the League of Nations "dealt the first and almost mortal blow to the peace organization." I am one of those who believe that World War II would almost certainly not have occurred if the United States had taken its rightful place in the League of Nations, where she would have been able to exercise a constructive and developing influence. I think it is true that the withdrawal of the United States into traditional isolation and the progressive weakening of unity between Britain and France, led France, whose fear of Germany was unabated, to "an exaggerated search for security" and to seek allies in the Middle Zone. I agree with Professor Borsody's view that her alliances with Poland and the Little Entente, which set up the *cordon sanitaire* in Central and Eastern Europe, were designed to encircle Germany and keep the Soviet Union contained. In the result, as we have seen, that policy failed completely.

Opportunities to lead Europe into more hopeful ways presented themselves and were missed. The author insists that imperfect as the Locarno Pact of 1925 was, "if ever a favorable opportunity to bring about European reconciliation existed, it was during the Locarno era." This may well have been so, but in my view the Geneva Protocol of 1924, based on the banning of aggressive war and a system of collective security in a disarming

world, offered the most practical step forward towards the goal of a world society. One of the major mistakes of British foreign policy was the failure of the British Government to ratify this Protocol. The Locarno Pact, valuable though it may have been, was only a second-best regional arrangement.

Professor Borsody argues rightly and strongly in favor of European federation and refers to the efforts of Aristide Briand to create a United States of Europe in 1929-1930. But Briand's plan did not materialize, as the author points out, "not because it was not needed, but because it would not be popular in an age which extolled national egotism . . . politicians preferred drifting along with the old tide of Nationalism to charting bold new courses of federalism." However, there are many people, including the present writer, who would agree with Mr. Borsody, that Europe's problems can only be finally resolved in a United States of Europe.

The author indicts the West for failing to go to the help of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, but, alas, the West was itself divided at the time as a result of the Suez adventure. But for Suez the U.N.'s moral condemnation might well have deterred Russia.

**I** FIND myself in complete agreement with Professor Borsody in urging the need for a European solution of the German problem; such solution, as he observes, will, however, depend on the West's success in "perfecting the ties of unity among the free nations, both in Europe and within the Atlantic Community . . . without a European solution of the German question the future of the new-born German democracy may be gravely imperiled. And, of course, on German reunification hinges also the future of European reunification."

The fear that many people genuinely hold of the possible revival of German militarism could best be allayed if a reunified Germany had its place in a system of European security in a world that was advancing along the road to disarmament.

This book should be read by all those who are interested in the problems of Europe—problems which have already been the major causes of two world wars and which must now be resolved if we are to escape from the dangers of a World War III.

But, as the author points out, to avoid war and get rid of tyranny is not enough. Nations will have to subordinate national sovereignty to a new world order in which "freedom can be safeguarded through union."

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## The Little Differences

THE WORKINGS of the human mind have never been under closer or more constant scrutiny than today. Following the signposts left by pioneers like Freud and Jung, present-day psychologists, psychiatrists, and other investigators are methodically exploring the horizons of intellect, searching — often with startling success — for the mainsprings of intelligence. As a result of such inquiries, an awareness of the world inside us is slowly filtering into the popular consciousness. Conversations are studded with terms that not many years ago were the private jargon of scientists; our judgments of people are tempered by our knowledge that the shape of a personality is more than simply a matter of will power; our inclination is perhaps more to pity than to censure.

Despite this, however, it is becoming increasingly difficult for a person to perceive his own mind and to chart the elements of his uniqueness. He can easily find out how bright he is, but he cannot so easily determine the special quality of his intelligence.

To Descartes and most other eighteenth-century philosophers, to think like other people seemed to present no overwhelming dangers. Schooled in the precepts of Aristotle, they found it reasonable to suppose that, since there was only one correct system of logic, all men of common sense should of course follow essentially the same patterns in their thinking. Given identical premises, clear-headed men would necessarily arrive at identical answers. But these philosophers were inclined to overlook

a crucial fact: all men do not begin from the same premises. Nor should they. Differing experiences give people different windows on the world. A person should see to it that he is free to search for his own premises, to follow the paths that exist in his own mind. The great challenges that face men call for solutions that will not emerge from the kind of compromise that committees produce, or from the kind of thought that bubbles easily to the surface as a person scans a newspaper or watches a TV program. These challenges call for the unique creative force of the individual mind. Committees may sometimes accomplish something, a group of brainstorming thinkers may yield a worthwhile idea, electronic computers may play their part; but in the end it is the individual, thinking alone, who comes up with the great ideas. The protective coloring of the crowd is a fraudulent illusion; it doesn't protect at all, except from the labor pains caused by producing significant new ideas, and from the possibly even greater pains caused by hearing those ideas criticized and denounced by people who have an unshakable attraction to the comfortable



old notions that are the common coin of the realm.

This is not to beat the dead horse of Babbitry. One of the happiest trends afoot today is the slow but perceptible movement away from gray-flannel conformity. Even in businesses where a subservient conformity once appeared to many to be a *sine qua non* of success, employers are increasingly seeking out the people whose minds are valuable precisely because they do not conform. And perhaps as significant as any other clue is the ubiquitous series of advertisements, portraying people of clear eye and lean jaw, that celebrates "the man who thinks for himself."

But if a conscious outward conformity is showing signs of declining, a less conscious conformity of thought does still linger. In every age there has been a shortage of great minds; there have been far too few people who were able to penetrate to the core of a problem and offer their fellows the answers they had been looking for. All men cannot have the kind of mind that devises a formula like  $E=mc^2$ , or writes a play like "Hamlet" or a book like "The Republic." But all men can create within themselves the kind of freedom such minds have. They can offer their fellow men the rare example of independent thought.

The mind that is aware of itself, that respects its own uniqueness, exerts a far more significant influence than the one that is simply adrift in the intellectual currents of its day. It can, by being an articulate dissenter, check the influence of the crowd. It can choose the best ideas and carry them to other minds. Because of the persuasive force of one personality acting upon another, it can be an agent of incalculable good.

IN 1845 a twenty-eight-year-old man, whose trade at the time was the pencil business, left the town in which he lived and built himself a hut at the edge of a secluded pond. There he lived for over two years, alone. One of the fruits of this period of solitude was "Walden," a book whose impact as a symbol has increased rather than diminished with time. For in each person there seems to exist the same impulse that sent Thoreau to Walden Pond, the impulse simply to be oneself. Most people are unable to retreat to the woods, but all people can create in themselves something like what Thoreau created in himself during those two years. It is possible for each of us to nourish his fragile, elusive qualities of uniqueness, to have a mind that reaches in its own way for the big, difficult questions more readily than it accepts the small, easy answers.—J.F.F.