

THE CHALLENGE TO WESTERN CIVILIZATION

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NO event in modern history will prove more important and graver in its consequences than the aftermath of the Japanese war and, connected with it directly or indirectly, the industrialization of Siberia, the nationalization of China and India, and the increasing self-confidence of the coloured races throughout the world. After only one generation the appalling prophecies of Oswald Spengler, the German philosopher, in his work *Decline of the West*, and of Lord Curzon, that great British statesman, in *The End of Liberalism and Lost Domination*, have gained terrible fulfilment.

It seems like one of history's grim jokes that the warning call of "Yellow Peril" by one German leader should become stark reality through the policy of another German leader; that the call "Peoples of Europe, defend your most sacred heritage!" should be largely cancelled by the bursting out of the recent "European civil war."

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The attitude towards such events may, of course, vary. In general it corresponds to ideology of Liberalism and that of Conservatism.

The ideology of Liberalism emphasizes the fundamental equality of all human beings and consequently deals almost exclusively with the rights of the individual and the rights of humanity.

The ideology of Conservatism, on the other hand, declares that human beings, while having equal rights, are not equal; that they never exist as individual, but are fitted into the natural form of family, nation and specific civilization.

The philosophy of Liberalism proclaims as the ideal form of life maximum economic, political and cultural freedom; while Conservatism takes into account the potent forces of race, nation, family, sex, and even more the immense powers of tradition, history, civilization and religion.

The philosophy of Liberalism, in its pure form, consequently recognizes the demands of the coloured race to the point of surrendering the very position of the white peoples, even to the point of surrendering one's own modes of life, expecting that the sacrifice will lead to a more progressive humanity as a whole.

The Conservative philosophy, on the other hand, considers

it the primary duty of every living organism to defend and maintain its own rights of life and standard of life. According to it, a change and—if necessary—surrender of its own forms will not lead to a co-ordination and improvement of all forms, but merely to a development of new power-factors replacing the old ones.

Human spirit again and again tends towards the idealistic conception of Liberal philosophy. But experience of history and knowledge of human character compel the conclusion that Conservative philosophy is more realistic and thus, in the realm of politics, more effective.

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We Europeans are faced with these problems in a far more urgent and threatening manner than, for instance, the Americans. The vast over-population and the cultural and technical standard of its peoples are under immediate threat if the world's political and economic equilibrium is changed too suddenly in a way adverse to the white races. Perhaps even more important is the realization that by such a change the whole position of western philosophy and Christian civilization is threatened—with consequences meaning nothing less than the spiritual death of the European nations.

It is not merely natural but, from the point of view of the supreme law of self-preservation, an inevitable consequence that the peoples of the Western civilization should answer this threat with increased solidarity. True, the "European Civil War" of the past years has interrupted it, but has neither cancelled out its necessity nor influenced its general direction.

Non-European contemporaries often regarded the anti-Bolshevist attitude of the European peoples as merely an issue of propaganda, not as an expression of true sentiment. To listen to the heartbeats of the Spanish and French, of the Swedish and German, of the Greek and Slovak, of the Hungarian and Polish peoples makes one hear, infallibly, the sound of rejection of the anti-European and anti-Christian Bolshevism.

This is not based on economic considerations! On the contrary, many economic principles of Bolshevism have aroused great respect among the European nations. There is a general feeling that, in a "European" form, a similar social new order is imperative.

Rather does this opposition arise from the fact that different civilizations are facing each other. Although the Russians, of course, count racially among the white peoples (as do the

majority of the remaining peoples of the Soviet Union) her geopolitical position has made Russia part of Asia rather than Europe. Still more decisive is the fact that Russia in no way has her roots in the ancient Roman civilization from which has sprung the entire civilization of the West.

We forget too often that not merely Italy and Greece, Spain, and France, but also England and the greater part of Germany were Roman territory, saturated with classic civilization, until Christianity used this very soil to produce what is termed western civilization.

The remainder of Germany and a section of the West Slavs (let us not forget that the Prussians are Slavs!) were drawn into the Roman-Christian orbit. Another section of the West-Slavs, such as the Serbs and Bulgarians, and primarily the vast empire of the East-Slavs (to-day called Russia) did not follow Rome but followed Byzantium.

Understanding of the Russian problem is hampered by nothing more strongly than by the lack of knowledge of Byzantine history, politics and art. Many an expression which we may notice and find strange in Tsarist or Boshevist Russia we meet again in the thousand-years old history of Byzantium whose legitimate heir is Russia, just as Europe is the heir of Rome.

Here the overwhelming spiritual and moral influence on the formation and development of a civilization becomes clearly perceptible, stronger even than biological factors. The spirit of a family may well absorb a foster-child as, on the other hand, a member of the family, too much under alien influence, may undergo development away from the family—as do peoples forming biologically part of the family of white nations but not adhering spiritually to western civilization.

An example in the opposite direction is offered by the Americas, the U.S. as well as the Central and South American republics. The population of the Americas belongs biologically only in part to the white family of peoples. Yet their spiritual and cultural bonds with western civilization are obvious—particularly through the medium of religion.

The importance of religion as a bond within civilization is shown by the example of the Philippines. It was due not so much to the work of the American administration as to the efforts of Spanish missionaries that the Philipinos were struggling against incorporation in the Japanese scheme. Had the Protestant Netherlanders followed the example of the Catholic Span-

iards, a similar situation would very likely have arisen in the East Indies. Even in India and China it is the Christian groups who tend most toward co-operation with the western peoples. Among the rest the Mohammedan groups are more willing than the Hindu, the latter being adherents to a national religion.

These general considerations are necessary because only through knowledge of such fundamentals is it possible to understand the various political developments, the play and counter-play of national and economic interests and all other questions arising out of them.

In the first place they produce, clearly to all who wish to see, the outlines essential to all constructive policy. It has been said rightly that the old order of Europe, born in the French Revolution, between the years 1919 and 1939 showed visible signs of decay and self-dissolution.

Revolution thus caused can have as its aim only the construction of a *New Order to be based on the deepest roots of Western civilization*, if it is to bring harmony and to endure.

The interpretation of events since 1914 (the spiritual side of the crisis became perceptible as early as the turn of the century) and an analysis of the task now set by the aftermath of "the European Civil War" lead, in my view, to the conclusion that nothing more or less is required than a *Renaissance of the West!*

This adherence to western civilization is forced not merely by Europe's internal needs but also by the external necessities arising out of the threat to the white peoples by the end of the war in the Far East. It is finally enforced by this cardinal question: if and how much longer the appearance of the world is to be decisively influenced by western civilization and Christian culture.