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DAYS OF DESTINY

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These are days of destiny, indeed. Twenty-two years and two weeks after the outbreak of World War II, the great Eastern and Western power groups, and the rag-tail and bob-tail of so-called "emergent" nations (doing their hesitation dance in the shadows) are about to meet again in the annual assembly of what is rather tragically called the *United* Nations.

This time there will be one difference: voting strength will tell against the West and not for the West, as in the past.

This week-end too, in West Germany, ancient Adenauer (85) or young Willi Brandt (47) the Mayor of Berlin, will be acclaimed the leader of the Bonn Government; in East Germany the list of endorsed Communist Candidates will be confirmed by all those who are under orders to vote, and Khruschev will be able to calculate time and place for his next move. The so-called "uncommitted nations" all living on borrowed time and borrowed money, will raise their individual cries for "bakshish" on the reedy pipes of "Colonialism" and "imperialism," Indonesia among the rest, and the chaotic Congo will take a big step towards Communism.

The Congo is an enormous area which was split by the accident of political chicanery over the last 100 years into numbers of so-called "countries" under French, Belgian, British, German or Portuguese control. Beneath the peace they imposed, tribal feuds and bitter antagonisms lay hidden but smouldering: with the withdrawal of white control they blazed into atrocious action again. Katanga, a province about as large as New South Wales, seceded from the Communist trending Congo of Lumumba. French Congo, as large as Queensland, showed no desire to link itself with its Belgian half-brother. Portuguese Congo—Angola—to the South, was invaded by fanatical Congolese infiltrated by Communism, and the vigorous efforts of the Portuguese to defeat and punish these brutal murderers whose atrocities make the flesh creep, were blasted by every leftist newspaper in the world, and faithfully copied by the sensationalists of the western world, indifferent to their effect on morals or the betrayal of the European.

In the North and East, gangs of Communistic propagandists infiltrated Northern Rhodesia and sought in every way to revive the murderous Mau Mau. Sir Roy Welensky has felt compelled to call out troops on the border to safeguard the lives of Europeans. Katanga province was the sole area in which peace was preserved. Its President claimed for it, *the right of self-determination* to which so much lip service is devoted by the self-styled anti-colonialists and anti-imperialists. He stressed also his right to secede from the numerically superior but socially inferior, in fact primitively savage tribal groups of the North and West. It is this right to secede from an artificial and accidental political grouping that is denied by such strange bedfellows as the Russians, the Americans and the Indians and others.

One need not be surprised at any one of the Big Three perhaps. We know what *Russia* did to Hungary when it tried to gain freedom and self-determination. We know what *Nehru* the apostle of anti-colonialism did to Kashmir when it tried to secede from India to join its co-religionists in Pakistan.

We have perhaps forgotten that it was the action of the *Southern United States of the Confederation* in seceding from the North that resulted in the Civil War in America exactly 100 years ago, the bloodiest war of its kind in recent history. For five years, 7 million Northerners fought 2 million Southerners in a struggle to the death, and finally after defeat following exhaustion of men, and supplies, put their disfranchised white brothers under negro domination for years. There is a curious parallel in the action in the Congo, at present, where non-whites, under United Nations' orders, if indeed these are not actually the orders of the United States of America, are shooting down white men and expelling others to bolster the addled assembly at Leopoldville soon to be dominated, I believe by Mr. Gizenga, the Communist-inclined successor of the late Mr. Lumumba.

It is not surprising that England has asked on what authority United Nations has acted—certainly not on that of any controlling group of powers. The President of Eire has demanded why the Irish group in U.N. sent to the Congo to preserve peace has been employed without authority, to impose the yoke of Leopoldville upon Katanga.

The United States of America has immediately endorsed the action of the United Nations with the same technique it used in Korea and probably will, as it did then, seek approval of this action from the General Assembly meeting tomorrow. The Civil War in America was, after the event, sanctimoniously said by the victorious North to have been based solely on the desire to free the slaves: the South said sardonically it was fought to preserve a field of trade for the "carpet-baggers" and "moneylenders" who made millions, it is true, by the ruin they brought on the Southern plantation owners. Katanga, of course, is the richest province in the whole of the Congo—an intriguing point of resemblance.

Meanwhile, the United Nations is bankrupt and, by mid 1962, Mr. Hammarskjoeld says, will be in the red by $90-million. A week of destiny indeed.

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Slave Market

As the heat is turned on and off in the cold war, to prevent us from getting used to the threat of war and perhaps looking at something else, I grow increasingly puzzled by the alleged advantages of the Common Market. For we have been told that prices are likely to *rise*—so that the scheme is clearly not in the interests of consumers. When the housewife goes to market she looks out for a bargain and would not feel her trouble justified unless her purchases cost a little less than in the village shop. But this 'Common Market' is a queer kind of market, where prices are to be higher, and in fact is no market at all. One more good old English word is to be twisted and perverted out of all its traditional meaning.

The producer sends his goods to market because it is a good way of selling his goods without a lot of middle men. But in the Common Market it would seem, from some of the remarks of farmers and others, that the producer is not altogether happy about it. As for the worker, we hear a good deal about fluid labour, people working in other countries, and this kind of persuasive talk merges into expatriation. Some people may choose to work abroad, but the majority like to work near home, and they like their home to be near friends and family. But the Common Market suggests financial compulsion.

Clearly some financial malpractice is afoot, which will still further infringe the Britisher's personal liberty in the vital matters of buying, producing and working. But I fear this is only the beginning—and we might say the beginning of the end. For we are to surrender what remains of our part in the infinitely precious freedom of ruling our own destiny, in exchange for all these disabilities.

Now we are told in the New Testament to love our neighbour as ourself, and we are to love our enemies. I do not know how our rulers—and some of them profess Christianity—can square these words with what they are doing, or how they remain free from episcopal criticism. (Perhaps Angola is more interesting). Because neighbour in this context means simply British people, and the rulers are treating the British most shabbily if they are raising their prices, jeopardising their markets and threatening their homes, while depriving them of a final voice in their country. We might add to this list the extraordinary treatment which the British overseas have received in Africa—while British Guiana has by some incredible mismanagement passed under virtually communist control.

But perhaps more attention should be given to the question, "Who are our enemies?" Technically, of course, an enemy is an adversary in war, but as peace of a sort persists, we could do worse than call "enemies" those who are not British, because their interests vary from ours. We are told to love them, to turn the other cheek, and to treat them as we would like to be treated ourselves. But we are nowhere told to take our orders from them or to work solely in their interests. Yet if the Common Market is not in the interests of the British people, or of the Commonwealth, or of security, then it must be in the interest of some "enemy."

Good friends from all over the world might be shocked at being called enemies, but I am afraid that a deeper reason for suspicion cannot be dismissed. The Prime Minister's phrase the "wind of change" was either absolute nonsense, because winds do not affect African affairs very much, or refers to people. Because, under Providence, only people affect human politics. *Plus ça change*, says the French proverb; the more it changes the more it is the same thing: but in human affairs this phrase could only apply if it referred to the same people or the same policy carried out by a succession of people.

Observation of affairs indicates that a small number of people are, through the agency of a larger number of hirelings or dupes, driving mankind into larger groups that can be more easily controlled and exploited, and that ultimately they plan to institute world government. The British temperament and the British Empire and Commonwealth do not subserve this plan, so they are being systematically eliminated. First as the allies of Russia and America, then as the ally of America, we are losing control of our own future: and another turn of the screw is to be the Common Market.

—H.S.S.

Ideas for the Destitute (6)

"Poetry in America is unnatural, artificial . . . . And my final observation is that the modern poet has become a certain kind of sociological freak. The modern poet is a person who was never allowed to play with children his own age. He is a kind of premature monster, like those children in Cruikshank's drawings which illustrate the novels of Dickens. A modern poet says at the start of a poem: "My parents kept me from children who were rough . . . " Poetry is more unnatural in America than in any other country or perhaps in any other time. The more mechanical the civilisation the less the poetry . . . . "

—Karl Shapiro, in *Poetry*, June, 1961.

The Power of Time

We pay much more attention to a wise passage when it is quoted, than when we read it in the original author. On the same principle, people will give a higher price to a picture dealer than they would have given to the painter himself. The picture that has once been bought has a recommendation, and the quoted passage is recommended though isolated from its context.

So I take the following from a book by Sir Arnold Phelps:—

"Time and occasion are the two important circumstances in human life, as regards which the most mistaken estimates are made. And the error is universal . . . This may notably be seen in the present day, when many most distinguished men have laid down projects for literature and philosophy, to be accomplished by them in their own lifetime, which would require several men and many lifetimes to complete; and, generally speaking, if any person who has passed the meridian of life looks back upon his career, he will probably own that his greatest errors have arisen from his not having made sufficient allowance for the length of time which his various schemes required for their fulfilment."

Also from one by P. G. Hamerton (artist, 1834-1894):—

". . . Amongst the favourable influences of my early life was the kindness of a venerable country gentleman, who had seen a great deal of the world and passed many years, before he inherited his estates, in the practice of a laborious professsion. I remember a theory of his that experience was much less valuable than is generally supposed, because, except in matters of simple routine, the problems that present themselves to us for their solution are nearly always dangerous from the presence of some unknown element. The unknown element he regarded as a hidden pitfall, and he warned me that in my progress through life I might always expect to tumble into it. We have all read Captain Marryatt's 'Midshipman Easy." There is a passage in that story which may serve as an illustration of what is constanty happening in actual life. The boats of the 'Harpy' were ordered to board one of the enemy's vessels; young Easy was in command of one of these boats, and as they had to wait he began to fish. After they had received the order to advance, he delayed a little to catch his fish, and this delay not only saved him from being sunk by the enemy's broadside, but enabled him to board the Frenchman. Here the pitfall was avoided by idling away a minute of time on an occasion when minutes were like hours; yet it was mere luck, not wisdom, which led to the good result . . . it frequently happens that procrastination, which is reputed to be the thief of time, becomes its best preserver. Suppose that you undertake an enterprise, but defer the execution of it from day to day; it is quite possible that in the interval some fact may accidentally come to your knowledge which would cause a great modification of your plan, or even its complete abandonment. Every thinking person is well aware that the enormous loss of time caused by the friction of our legislative machinery has preserved the country from a great deal of crude and ill-digested legislation. Even Napoleon the Great, who had a rapidity of conception and of action so far surpassing that of other kings and commanders that is seems to us almost supernatural, said that when you did not quite know what ought to be done it was best to do nothing at all. One of the most distinguished of living painters said exactly the same thing with reference to the practice of his art, and added that very little time would be needed for the actual execution of a picture if only the artist knew beforehand how and where to lay the colour. It so often happens that mere activity is a waste of time, that people who have a morbid habit of being busy are often terrible time wasters, whilst, on the contrary, those who are judiciously deliberate, and allow themselves intervals of leisure, see the way before them in those intervals, and save time by the accuracy of their calculations.

A largely intelligent thrift of time is necessary to all great works—and many great works are very great indeed relatively to the energies of a single individual, which pass unperceived in the tumult of the world. The advantages of calculating time are artistic as well as economical. I think that, in this respect, magnificent as are the cathedrals which the Gothic builders have left us, they committed an artistic error in the very intensity of their plans. They do not appear to have reflected that from the continual changes of fashion in architecture, incongrous work would be sure to intrude itself before their gigantic projects could be realized by the generations that were to succeed them. For a work of that kind to possess artistic unity, it ought to be completely realized within the space of forty years. How great is the charm of those perfect edifices which, like Sainte Chapelle, are the realization of one sublime idea!

An artist who taught me painting often repeated a piece of advice which is valuable in other things than art, and which I try to remember whenever patience fails. He used to say to me, "*Give it time . . .*"

For the Record

". . . Britain has taken this step (Common Market negotations) at the insistence of President Kennedy and the United States State Department."

(*Christian Science Monitor*, 27th September, 1961).

Knowledge

. . . 'You have,' said he, 'a considerable store of learning; far more than I could possibly have imagined you possessed; but it is *knowledge, not learning*, in which I wish you to be skilled. I would rather, in order to gift you with the former, that you were more destitute of the latter. The object of education is to instil *principles* which are hereafter to guide and instruct us; *facts* are only desirable as far as they illustrate those principles; principles ought therefore to precede facts! What then can we think of a system which reverses this evident order, overloads the memory with facts, and those of the most doubtful description, while it leaves us entirely in the dark with regard to the principles which could alone render this heterogeneous mass of any advantage or avail? Learning, without knowledge, is but a bundle of prejudices; a lumber of inert matter set before the threshold of the understanding to the exclusion of common sense. Pause for a moment, and recall those of your contemporaries who are generally considered well-informed; tell me if their information has made them a whit the *wiser*; if not, it is only sanctified ignorance. Tell me if names with them are not a sanction for opinion; quotations, the representatives of axioms? All they have learned only serves as an excuse for all they are ignorant of . .

(From "Pelham, or Adventures of a Gentleman" by Edward Bulwer, Lord Lytton, 1840).

The Age of Reason

We can restrain without difficulty the remnant of admiration we used, many years ago, to feel for *The Times*. But its Literary Supplement still has a certain dignity long departed from the threepenny edition of the *Daily Worker*. Thus a recent editorial commenting on a remark by Earl Russell observed that the popular revulsion from science and scientists (which is marked, and growing) is inspired by something more than the dread of recent inventions, and extends to the whole class of intellectuals. We agree.

Those of us who have devoted a good deal of attention to events in the world of the twentieth century, the groups of people who appear to be consciously involved with them, and their links with predecessors active in the French Revolution and the abortive wave of revolt which swept Europe in 1848, cannot fail to discern a certain pattern which has organic relations with the opinion expressed in *The Times Literary Supplement*, and stamps it with a certain honesty becoming only too rare. Because there is a tendency, perhaps not wholly justified, to assume that "literary" in a synonym for "intellectual."

But in fact, the distinguishing characteristic of the period under comment is the triumph of the Age of Reason heralded by the intellectuals who were the stalking-horse of the Terror —a triumph the fruits of which are already laden with an unimaginable bitterness. Behind events, persons and race, there has been active the cult of Lucifer the Light Bringer, and *logic, rationalism,* is the hallmark of that cult.

Only a perverse obscurantism would deny the value of Reason properly regarded, just as it would be fatuous to condemn a slide-rule, with which it has an organic connection, as being in itself reprehensible. But the idea, if it can be so called, that "values" are ultimately physicomathematical (put forward, *e.g.*, by Sir Edmund Whittaker in the 1948 Herbert Spencer Lecture) seems to us to be a compact instance of the delirium of Idolatry not the less fatal because of its appeal to Rationality.

It is highly significant that the worship of logic is characteristic of the immaturity of youth. At the age of eighteen or so, logic presents an indisputable proof for every problem. And it will be noticed that there has been, and is, a conscious "youth movement" carrying with it the implication that wisdom reaches its apex in the early twenties.

Yet it must be plain to anyone that not only is evidence lacking that logic has solved any political problems of consequence in the past, but conversely, that the policies now current in world affairs which pretend to base their appeal on logic, threaten us with final destruction.

There is no saying requiring attention more clamantly than "Unless ye become as little children ye shall in no wise enter the Kingdom." There is nothing logical about a little child.

The Tragedy of the Specialist

"Perhaps it is even more daring to carry out what seems to me to have become a particularly urgent undertaking: namely, to get beyond isolated social sciences and attempt a synthesis. This decision arose from a feeling which for years had impinged itself upon any thoughtful person, that to limit oneself to specialisation and detail was both useful and historically necessary, so long as the soundness of society as a whole could be safely assumed. At that time every research worker could work on his own chosen field and cultivate it with infinite care. *This idyllic period, has, however, vanished, since today that presupposition to a great extent is no longer valid, and now that society has been afflicted by a total crisis of the severest kind, it must be dealt with again as that complex whole which it is in reality.* What is now required is a synthesis on a broad front, which in this connection means nothing less than we should emulate the best tradition of the eighteenth century. But such an undertaking requires courage to face the manifold dangers against which one must be on guard, without regard to a most thankless role which a scholar must assume. He must realise that apart from what fresh material he is able to contribute from his own limited specialist resources, originality will lie not in individual research but in the synthesis as such—originality which may easily be misunderstood and put on one side with un-original elements and very possibly pushed into the background by specialist criticism on single points. "*Il est plus aisé de dire des choses nouvelles que ae concilier celles qui ont été dites*" (Vauvenargues).

"Here I am touching on a further point. Necessary as synthesis may be, it is nevertheless inevitable that with the present vast extension of knowledge, the genuine expert can scarcely be expected to be an expert upon more than one subject. Even with the greatest diligence life is too short to permit the acquisition of that amount of knowledge possessed by every specialist in his sphere. But it is my experience that it is just the very best of these experts who are the most ready to help with emendations and suggestions and thus to render possible genuine scientific co-operation.

"The attempt at spiritual integration which I had undertaken in my former book with the courage of despair while fully conscious of avoidable and unavoidable shortcomings, was due to the realisation which could not longer be postponed, that in the present state of society all deep problems which face the social scientist, lie right across the traditional division of scientific work. Scientific treatment must be adjusted to this cross-section of problems if the gap between science and reality is to be closed. But this of course means cutting straight through layers of earlier opinions and interests within and without the sciences, if the truth is to be fearlessly served. It is inevitable that such a drastic operation must bring about a maximum of injuries. Every conceivable vested interest will feel sore including the vested interests of Science, which if anything are even more sensitive than those of economic and social life.

"A method such as this of synthetic integration goes with a gradually developing process of a fundamentally new orientation in the social sciences, a process in which Radicalism and Conservatism must be combined intelligently as in practical economic policy. Once again we have reached that point in the history of the social sciences where a new mode of thought about fundamentals and a change of problems takes place. And again it happens that a striking polarity of the research temperament enters here since those who have already been gripped by the revolutionary process recognise each other as fellow workers, while the others who do not understand us in necessaries must find us an unwelcome disturbance in their scientific labours."

—Wilhelm Röpke in *Civitas Humana* (William Hodge).

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