THE CONTRIBUTION OF GEORGE ORWELL AND ARTHUR KOESTLER TO THE POLITICAL THEORY OF TOTALITARIANISM

by

Roland James Wensley

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Department of Economics
and Political Science,
McGill University,
Montreal.

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PREFACE

In the following pages an attempt will be made to assess the impact of totalitarianism upon two sensitive observers, George Orwell and Arthur Koestler, and to reconcile the results of this assessment with current political theory. The wisdom of selecting two such writers, whose better-known works take the form of popular fiction, to provide the focus for an M.A. thesis in political science may be questioned. Their names are, however, encountered fairly often in the serious literature devoted to politics.(1) At the same time their works of fiction, rather than the more learned books and periodicals, frequently provide the vehicle by which ideas about totalitarian systems filter through to the young(2) or to the "man in the street". The adjective "Orwellian" has become a household word. At a higher level the Polish refugee, Czeslaw Milosz, points out the attraction of such anti-totalitarian writings to intellectuals behind the Iron Curtain. "A great many of them (the Eastern European intellectuals) have read Koestler's Darkness at Noon. A few have become acquainted with Orwell's 1984; because it is both difficult

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(1) E.g. Martin Kessler: "A Study in Disillusionment as Reflected in Orwell's 'Nineteen Eighty-four' and Huxley's 'Brave New World'." Political Science Quarterly, vol. 72, December, 1957.

(2) Orwell's Animal Farm is recommended for supplementary reading in senior High School grades under the jurisdiction of the Montreal Protestant School Board.

to obtain and dangerous to possess, it is known only to certain members of the Inner Party. Orwell fascinates them through his insight into details they know well, and through his use of Swiftian satire -------- Even those who know Orwell only by hearsay are amazed that a writer who never lived in Russia should have so keen a perception into its life. The fact that there are writers in the West who understand the functioning of the unusually constructed machine of which they themselves are a part astounds them and argues against the 'stupidity' of the West."(1) The works of Orwell and Koestler, then, do appear to play a part in keeping alive under totalitarian conditions something of the critical spirit, at least on the periphery of the Communist empire.

Certain other advantages derive from the use of the fictional medium in dealing with political material. In the gritty realism of 1984 one sees the caricature of a society. What Dickens often did with people, that is, lay bare the essence of their personalities by the over-amplification of their personal characteristics, Orwell has accomplished with a totalitarian system. His technique of pushing political mal-tendencies always one step further, results in a view of totalitarianism "writ large". Just as Plato strove to discover the essence of justice in the

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(1) Czeslaw Milosz: The Captive Mind: Vintage Books, N.Y., 1959.

metaphysical re-construction of the state, so Orwell has striven to point up some of the salient features of totalitarian systems through the fabrication of a kind of ideal totalitarian state. These features, in combination, give rise to the atmosphere of pessimism and despair which determine the tone of Orwell's distopia.

Similarly, Koestler uses the technique of fiction to drive home the conception of what for him is the essence of left[1] totalitarianism - the impersonal operation of the dialectic.[2] The dilemma of Rubashov in Darkness at Noon is the dilemma of a man who wills his own self-destruction by the relentless application of a system of logical categories. But how vivid and clear is the ideological lesson when presented as a human drama seen through a novelist's eyes! Rubashov may be something less than a complete character from the literary point of view, but he is also considerably more than a statistical figure in a text book. The tragedy of Citizen Rubashov's decline and fall is one of the means by which we are led to understand Koestler's unique conception of the meaning of totalitarianism.

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(1) The terms "totalitarianism of the right" and "totalitarianism of the left", used explicitly by J.L. Talmon in the introduction to The Origins of Totalitarian Democracy and strongly implied in Albert Camus' The Rebel, suggest a useful way of looking at totalitarianism for the purpose of this paper.

(2) For Koestler's own interest in thinking in opposing categories, see the titles of his books, e.g. The Yogi and the Commissar.

Fiction, therefore, can convey important insights into the nature of totalitarianism, and often becomes a synthesis of the underlying political thought contained in the formal essays and articles of Koestler and Orwell. At the same time the danger of straying into the area of literary criticism must be recognized, and, indeed, a conscious attempt has been made in this paper to keep the material firmly anchored to political theory. This is for the most part the political theory of left totalitarianism, a necessary emphasis deriving naturally from the backgrounds and experience of Koestler and Orwell. Koestler's seven-year stint as a Communist Party member; Orwell's intermittent and troubled association with British Socialism; the role of international communism in the Spanish civil war, in which both men were deeply involved physically and emotionally; and the clear indication by 1943 that the days of Nazi Germany were numbered, were all factors contributing to the formulation of individual images of the nature of totalitarianism, but along leftist lines. For Koestler, the disillusioned "true believer", the image at the same time repels and attracts; for Orwell, "the Tory anarchist", who suffered from a kind of political claustrophobia, the image suggested the terrors of a slow but certain death by suffocation.

One of my major aims in this paper is to analyze the nature of the two different images of totalitarianism

which are to be found in the works of Orwell and Koestler. This task of delineation is never simple, for the essence of totalitarianism must be inferred from the total works and experience of the writers in question, and there are many evidences of subtle changes in outlook over time. Orwell and Koestler both felt the impact of totalitarianism strongly, and expressed their reactions to it brilliantly, but never crystallized those reactions in definitive terms. This I have attempted to do in the first four chapters of the paper. The fifth, and final, chapter relates the two conceptions of totalitarianism to current political theory.

Finally, I would like to express my deep appreciation to Dr. Saul Frankel, Associate Professor of Political Science, McGill University, for the wise counsel and continued encouragement which have made possible the completion of this work.

CHAPTER I

The Men and the Age

> "He (George Orwell) was one of those writers, like Joesph Conrad, Simone Weil, and Arthur Koestler whose life and work are interconnected in such a way that it is difficult to think of the work without also thinking of the life, and vice versa."
> Richard Rees in George Orwell, Fugitive from the Camp of Victory.

George Orwell, born Eric Blair in Motihari, Bengal, in 1903, and Arthur Koestler, who felt more strongly the "chronicler's urge" and consequently established the place, date and time of his own birth as Budapest, September 5th, 1905, "at approximately half past three in the afternoon", entered this life "when the sun was setting on the Age of Reason."(1) It was shortly to rise again on the Age of Ideology: on the imperialistic squabbles in the Balkans and North Africa culminating in a new concept of total commitment in World War I; on the decline in the belief in liberal parliamentary democracy; on the Russian Revolution and the rise of Communism; on the German inflation, the Great Depression and the ascendancy of Hitler; on the Popular Front and that cockpit of warring

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(1) Koestler, A.: Arrow in the Blue, Macmillan, N.Y., 1961, p.9.

ideologies that was the Spanish civil war. The political tensions and distortions characteristic of such an ideological hothouse, in conjunction with circumstances of a more personal and subjective nature, provided the mould within which the patterns of thought and action of our two twentieth-century intellectuals were cast.

As the terminal years of the 1930's approached, European intellectuals found themselves gravitating either to the political Left or to the political Right. Many serious thinkers, unable to stomach Nazi dogma, and certain that the Great Depression had sounded the death-knell of liberalism, became convinced that the Communist Party represented the only acceptable alternative. Koestler summarizes the rationale of his own "move to the Left" in terms of the objective events of the time: "After the elections of September 1930, I had seen the Liberal middle class betray its convictions and throw all its principles overboard. Active resistance against the Nazis seemed only possible by throwing in one's lot either with the Socialists or the Communists. A comparison of their past records, their vigour and determination eliminated the first, and favoured the second."(1) Thus for Koestler the "road to Marx" was in part paved by the political situation "per se"

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(1) Ibid. P. 258.

and in part by the awareness of social and economic suffering felt only vicariously, for in September, 1930, he was a very well-paid journalist acting in a dual editorial capacity for the huge Ullstein trust.(1) In Orwell's case the economic shoe was on the other foot in 1930. His tendency towards radical politics was undoubtedly reinforced by his own grinding poverty and his demoralizing experiences as a teacher in cheap cram schools and as an assistant in a Hampstead bookshop. The bitter resentment of the sensitive individual caught in the net of a corrupt and failing capitalist society is well portrayed in his topical writings: Down and Out in Paris and London (1933), A Clergyman's Daughter (1935), and Keep the Aspidistra Flying (1936). Only later did the dangers of external politics in the form of a rising Fascist threat begin to obsess Orwell. Coming Up For Air (1939) reeks of the apocalypse. Before that, the need to face up squarely to the dangers of Fascism was more moderately stated in The Road to Wigan Pier (1937), the final draft of this work being delivered to his publishers shortly before he embarked for Spain.

But the objective experience of events is only part of the process in the making of a Left-wing intellectual. In one of his essays Koestler speaks of "the intelligentsia and

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(1) Ibid. P. 238.

neurosis,"[1] a favourite theme, and one that has meaning not only for politics in general but for a closer understanding of the motivational influences at work in Orwell and Koestler himself. To appreciate something of the relevance of the phrase to our study, we must examine briefly the personality patterns of our subjects.

Koestler was a rootless cosmopolitan from his youth. He was born in Hungary, studied in Austria, worked in Palestine and Germany, and was imprisoned in Spain, France and England in that order. This cosmopolitanism is illustrated by the succession of languages in which he wrote; Hungarian for the early efforts of childhood, with German on the ascendant between 1919 and 1940, and after that, English. Darkness at Noon (1940) was the last book written in German, henceforth English was the language with which he earned his living.

His family relationships were chaotic. An only child, he was denied friends and companions of his own age and placed in the care of a succession of governesses. The authoritarian Bertha, perpetual housekeeper, seems to have made a career of instilling a sense of guilt in the youngster by the usual techniques of "crime" and "punishment". "Next to guilt and to fear, loneliness played a dominant part in

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(1) Koestler, A.: The Yogi and the Commissar, Collier Books, N.Y., 1961, p. 62.

my childhood", Koestler tells us.[1] A child prodigy, alternately subject to fits of introspection and immature aggression, deprived of real parental understanding, and a member of a household doomed by the father's hair-brained commercial schemes to perpetual economic insecurity, Koestler's formative period can only be described as untypical.

Koestler practised no formal religious faith, nor was much attracted by the Judaism of his forebears, although as a student in Vienna he joined the Zionist Burschenschaft "Unitas"[2] and even became its president or praeses. In 1926, literally burning his student record along with his bridges, he went to Palestine "in search of a spade". This enthusiastic and largely intuitive pursuit of "causes" and new experiences was to become the characteristic action pattern of Koestler's life. A trip to Russia allowed Koestler personally to escape the Nazi terror as Hitler came to power, but a favourite uncle drowned himself in a Berlin lake, and his aged aunt, her daughter, and her daughter's two children were all victims of the gas chamber at Auschwitz. After he joined the Communist Party in 1931, Koestler watched an unending procession of comrades pass into the hands of the Gestapo, the torture chambers of the

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(1) Koestler, A.: Arrow in the Blue, p.41.

(2) One of the few times in his life when he was able to shake off feelings of guilt and insecurity for a considerable period. This was true also of time spent in prison.

O.G.P.U, or the concentration camps of the Vichy regime such as the one at Le Vernet so vividly portrayed in Scum of the Earth (1941). Koestler lived with intimately, and felt poignantly, the horrors spawned in the political turmoil of his time.

Colin Wilson in his brilliant examination of religious and artistic dissent in capitalist society[1] has coined the phrase "the Outsider". There is a strong temptation to label Koestler a political outsider. Like Wilson's existentialist writers, artists and theologians, Koestler combined a gnawing discontent with the status quo,[2] and a strong tendency towards extreme solutions. His was to be the role of the rebel rather than of the revolutionary; he was a pursuer of Utopias for the spiritual peace that might be found in them. "The form of the rash changed", Koestler tells us, "but the disease remained the same; a glandular condition called absolutitis."[3] Although we should be very careful in attributing this "disease" entirely to neuroses induced by personal experiences in early life, there is probably some connection. In any case, Koestler felt that there was: "In short, behind the achievements of reformers, rebels, explorers, and innovators

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(1) Wilson, C.: The Outsider, Victor Gollancz Ltd., London, 1956.

(2) Termed by Koestler "Chronic Indignation". Arrow in the Blue, p. 107.

(3) Ibid. P. 244.

who keep the world moving there is always some intimate motivation - and it mostly contains a strong element of frustration, anxiety or guilt."(1)

It is characteristic of Koestler that his search for the absolute - his "arrow in the blue" - took two directions. The arrow split; one half of the shaft was aimed at external utopia (Commissar principle), the other half was directed inward in an endeavour to find self realization through union with the Eternal (Yogi principle). This duality of self-assertive and self-transcendent principles, and the conflict between them, was to influence markedly all of Koestler's thought, writing and actions. "But if I am to remain truthful, the separate existence of the two souls in my bosom must be emphasized, for the spell has remained with me, and the resulting tug-of-war is one of the recurring 'leit-motifs' of this report. It is reflected in the antithetical titles of my books: The Yogi and the Commissar, Insight and Outlook, Darkness at Noon, Le Zero et l'Infini, Arrival and Departure, and so on."(2)

The Commissar and Yogi principles referred to above are graphically illustrated in Koestler's experiences with

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(1) Ibid. P. 275. See also Arrival and Departure for neuroses as a spur to political action.

(2) Ibid. P. 106.

Communism. Although, as Koestler points out, a faith is not acquired by reasoning,(1) once inside the magic circle of Communist true believers a closed system of logical categories prevails sufficient to provide rational explanation for all action. But action inevitably creates the dilemma of either subordinating the end to the means or the means to the end. The Commissar, faced with the inertia of the masses, chooses the latter course. He becames a human engineer who is inevitably destined to drive the revolutionary engine off the track of social progress because "a polluted civilization pollutes its own revolutionary offspring."(2) Koestler himself, as an intellectual and writer was never really at the controls of the engine. But during his seven-year term as a Communist he morally concurred in a series of betrayals. Given his innate sense of guilt, the result was a festering subconscious. Conditions were ripe for some kind of "break-through".

The trouble with the Commissar is that when he faces the crisis of his life he has no spiritual resources to fall back on. "The Man-Society connection suddenly proves to be not enough to procure psychic metabolism; the Man-Universe connection has to be re-established."(3) If you want to get

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(1) The God That Failed, Crossman, R. ed., Hamish Hamilton London, 1950, p. 25.

(2) Ibid. P. 26.

(3) Koestler, A.: The Yogi and the Commissar, p. 18.

off the Commissar's train, or get the train back on the track, you must have recourse to the Yogi. For Koestler this approach was made through certain mystic and quasi-religious experiences which Freud called "the Oceanic feeling."(1) The repercussions from the most vivid of these, which occurred in a Spanish prison, will be discussed in the next chapter. For the present it is sufficient to detect a strong mystical strain in Koestler's thought and experience - a strain that is very reminiscent of the visionary lapses of some of Colin Wilson's "Outsiders".

This mystical element in Koestler's life and work is closely related to his interest in psycho-analysis and in pure science. His debt to Freud for the concept of Oceanic feeling has already been mentioned, and he gave considerable attention to the writings of Adler and Jung. A deep interest in pure science marked his earliest reading and this interest was reflected in his later career as Science Editor for the German paper, Vossiche Zeitung, and as Science Adviser to the powerful Ullstein trust. By the age of 26, however, Koestler's faith in the ability of science to provide solutions for all human problems had broken down under the demonstrable unreliability of "laws" with regard to curved space, electrons, wave packets, and a universe in permanent explosion. Thus his search

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(1) Koestler describes his first experience with "Oceanic feeling" in Arrow in the Blue, p. 105.

for ultimate reality through mystical experience was to continue, and his later work, The Lotus and the Robot (1960), pushed the search into areas of non-Western civilization. His deep understanding of the limitations of science, although he was not aware of any conflict of belief in 1931, was ultimately to weaken his faith in Marxism as a vehicle of "total explanations."(1)

Koestler has referred to his autobiography as a "case-history of a central-European member of the educated middle classes, born in the first years of our century."(2) Not all of his critics agree with this typology,(3) but it is possible to see in his life and work the basis on which the claim is made.

The problem of classifying George Orwell is indeed a difficult one. Perhaps the point of departure for understanding Orwell is to visualize him as an Outsider-rebel in the Colin Wilson manner, and at the same time the product of a conditioning uniquely English. Like Koestler's, his early life was insecure, lacking the warmth of close family ties. "I do not believe I ever felt love for any mature person except my mother, and even her I did not trust in the sense that

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(1) Koestler, A.: Arrow in the Blue, p. 295.

(2) Koestler, A.: The Invisible Writing, Beacon Press, Boston, 1955, p. 423.

(3) See review of The Invisible Writing (unsigned) New Statesman and Nation, vol.48, July 3, 1954.

shyness made me conceal most of my real feelings from her", he writes.(1) At the age of eight Orwell was sent to a private school in England where he learned to hate blind authority tyranically dispensed, and where a sense of guilt and shame were beaten into him, for as a poor "scholarship-boy" he was despised. This sense of guilt, stemming from the conviction that he was weak, ugly, unpopular, cowardly and smelly, marred his adolescence and young manhood. "Until I was about thirty", he tells us, "I always planned my life on the assumption not only that any major undertaking was bound to fail, but that I could only expect to live a few years longer."(2)

Eton followed "Crossgates", and after Eton a series of "bridge burnings" comparable with Koestler's. At eighteen Orwell went to Burma to serve with the Indian Imperial Police, although the next logical step would have been to win a scholarship to Oxford or Cambridge. His revulsion from British imperialism and his dislike of the authoritarian methods necessary to maintain it are recorded in his first novel, Burmese Days (1934).

Leaving the Service in disgust, Orwell plunged deliberately

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(1) Orwell, G.: Such, Such Were the Joys, Harcourt Brace, N.Y., 1952, p. 60.

(2) Ibid. P. 52.

into a strange half-world of tramps and hoboes, consciously severing all connection with his class which he describes as "lower upper middle". His reasons for this strange action are characteristic: "I was conscious of an immense weight of guilt that I had got to expiate ... I felt that I had got to escape not merely from imperialism but every form of man's dominion over man. I wanted to submerge myself, to get right down among the oppressed, to be one of them and on their side against their tyrants."(1) Here we have a parallel to Koestler's "Chronic Indignation". In both cases resentment was rooted in the personality patterns of the men but was reinforced by the objective fact of mass unemployment and human misery that attended the onslaught of the Great Depression.

We know that from 1931 to 1938 Arthur Koestler was a full-fledged member of the Communist Party; it now remains to appraise Orwell's position as a Left-wing intellectual at this time. At the age of eighteen, when still at Eton, he described himself as "both a snob and a revolutionary. I had read and re-read the entire published works of Shaw, Wells, and Galsworthy (at that time still regarded as dangerously 'advanced' writers), and I loosely described myself as a Socialist."(2) But what an unconventional Socialist he became! There was very little of the doctrinaire Marxist in him, and there is no evidence of the close study of Marx, Engels and

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(1) Orwell, G.: The Road to Wigan Pier, Harcourt Brace, N.Y., 1958, p. 180.

(2) Ibid. P. 172.

Lenin which preceded Koestler's entrance into the Party.(1) On the other hand his attacks on "earnest ladies in sandals, shock-headed Marxists chewing polysyllables, escaped Quakers, birth control fanatics and Labour Party backstair-crawlers"(2) won him the enmity of a good proportion of England's moderate Left.(3)

Orwell's thesis was always that Socialism must be built around the twin imperatives of liberty and justice - must, indeed, be humanised if Fascism was not to prevail. He did not rule out revolution, for entrenched interest groups could hardly be expected to give up power voluntarily, but he had a deep distrust of planned Utopian solutions which might follow revolution. This was a natural consequence of his belief that industrialization tended towards loss of liberty, and he feared that school of thought that equated Socialism

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(1) Koestler refers to "the study of Communist literature in earnest" on p.259 of Arrow in the Blue. Orwell seems to have been more interested in Trotsky than Marx or Lenin. He obviously gained inspiration from Trotsky's Theory of Permanent Revolution and applied it to the Goldstein paper in Nineteen Eighty-four. In Homage to Catalonia he mentions having in his possession "Trotskyist documents" and a pamphlet by Stalin entitled, Liquidating Trotskyists and Other Double Dealers. See Orwell, G.: Homage to Catalonia, Beacon Press, Boston, 1952, p. 224.

(2) Orwell, G.: The Road to Wigan Pier, p. 248.

(3) This may have been the reason why his next book Homage to Catalonia, sold so badly. Out of 1500 copies printed, only 900 had been sold by the time of Orwell's death. Lionel Trilling refers to the poor sales in his introduction to the American edition of Homage to Catalonia, published in 1952.

with an increased rate of industrialization without taking into consideration the problems of human relations this would involve. Socialism must act as the protector of some of the old values in English life against a soulless creeping modernity, unconventional as this view might seem to be. In this light one can understand Orwell's later interest in the works of James Burnham,(1) which seemed to confirm his conclusions regarding the dangers of industrial progress.

In the final analysis Orwell remains a very "unsystematic" Socialist who believed that liberty must be paid for by a measure of inefficiency in social organization and an equal measure of unhappiness in human affairs. Perhaps this is why he could get no closer to a precise definition of a Socialist than "one who wishes - not merely conceives it as desirable, but actively wishes - to see tyranny overthrown."(2) As Orwell points out himself, the majority of orthodox Marxists would hardly accept this definition.

One final question might be raised before attempting some kind of comparison in general terms between the patterns

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(1) an interest shared with Koestler. Orwell's essay on Burnham appears in a collection of essays entitled Shooting an Elephant: Secker and Warburg, London, 1950. Koestler refers to Burnham in the Yogi and the Commissar, particularly in the footnote on p.112 of the Collier Books edition, where Burnham is said to provide the only scientific synthesis of the Marxist and Neo-Machiavellian (Fascist) approaches to history.

(2) Orwell, G.: The Road to Wigan Pier, p. 253.

of thought and action of Orwell and Koestler. Orwell was no doctrinaire Party-lining Marxist, but was he at heart a "Trotskyite"? If by the term "Trotskyite" we mean an actual member of Trotsky's network then the answer must be - no. There is no evidence whatsoever to support this view. But if by "Trotskyite" we mean "influenced by Trotsky's thinking" then the position is less clear. I have already mentioned that Orwell was interested in Trotskyite literature and in the writings of the ex-Trotskyite, James Burnham. In the next chapter there is reference to his inclination towards organizations such as the Independent Labour Party and the Partido Obrero de Unificacion Marxista (P.O.U.M.) which were broadly "Trotskyist" in the sense that they kept their roots in Marx while rejecting Stalin. In Orwell's work, Nineteen Eighty-four incorporates the idea of The Permanent Revolution right down to the point of emulating Trotsky's style in Goldstein's manifesto. The whole idea of the role of the scapegoat is heavily stressed both in Animal Farm (1945) and Nineteen Eighty-four, as is the theme of The Revolution Betrayed, which was the title of one of Trotsky's books published in New York (1937). Finally, throughout Orwell's later work, there is a tendency to over-glorify the actual moment of revolution, and to dwell on the possibilities of spontaneous revolution residual in the proletariat. Examples of this attitude, mostly emergent in Spain, are pointed out in the next chapter.

To label Orwell a "Trotskyite" would, however, be going much too far. The element of Trotsky's thought that was most viable,[1] and which was eventually embraced by Stalinism, was his emphasis during the civil war on the planned industrial drive sparked by coercive militarization and centralization. This, Orwell could hardly have supported. Trotsky's acceptance, until his final years, of Leninist unity in the Communist party would also have been opposed to Orwell's concept of justice and liberty as the basic foundations of Socialism, and to his notion that a Socialist must at all times be ready to take action in defence of the underdog. What Orwell did share with Trotsky was a tendency to harbour obsessions.[2] In any case, one can hardly expect unity of thought from a personality as complex as Orwell. John Mander,[3] the British critic, is pretty close to the mark in describing him as intellectually a socialist, but emotionally a conservative. This schism of thought is bound to lead to contradictions in Orwell's writing.

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(1) Encyclopedia of Russia and the Soviet Union: Michael T. Florinsky, ed., McGraw Hill, N.Y., 1961, p. 578.

(2) See Deutscher, Isaac on Orwell's "persecution mania", particularly "The Mysticism of Cruelty", Heretics and Renegades, Hamish Hamilton Ltd., London, 1955.

(3) Mander, J.: Orwell in the Sixties, The Writer and Commitment, Secker and Warburg, London, 1961. Mander introduces the idea of "Orwell the Trotskyite".

The above analysis has been undertaken at some length because any appreciation of totalitarianism that a man may make is bound to be influenced by his personal experiences and patterns of thought. The essence of totalitarianism for the renegade Communist will not be identical with the essence of totalitarianism as perceived by the Tory anarchist. As the Spaniards say, "everything is the colour of the window from which we look". And it is to Spain that we must now turn for an examination of the effects of the impact of totalitarianism on Koestler and Orwell.

It might be well, however, to conclude this chapter with a brief summary of the relationship that Koestler and Orwell bear to each other. Both were rebels against the status quo, "Casanovas of causes", whose particular experiences, both subjective and objective, prepared and shaped them for the parts they were to play as Left-wing intellectuals in a society in crisis. Koestler's background was continental, cosmopolitan, scientific, and inclined to the "systematic"; Orwell despite short periods spent abroad in Burma, Paris and Spain weighted his radical pragmatism with many of the values of his class, and tended to construe his solutions within the framework of English traditions. Koestler was attracted to Marxism as an unusually tidy system of thought; Orwell had little use for the "sacred sisters, thesis, anti-thesis and

synthesis."[1] Koestler was in part led to Socialism through a keen appreciation of its possibilities as an efficient vehicle of organization and production; Orwell distrusted just these qualities as potential seed beds of tyranny. Koestler was primarily a systematist; Orwell was fundamentally a rational pragmatist in the rather cranky tradition of English non-Marxian socialism.

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(1) Orwell, G.: The Road to Wigan Pier, p. 262.

CHAPTER II

Spain 1937 - The Impact of Totalitarianism on Koestler and Orwell

> "The Spanish war and other events in 1936-7 turned the scale and thereafter I knew where I stood. Every line of serious work that I have written since 1936 has been written, directly or indirectly, against totalitarianism and for democratic socialism, as I understand it."
>
> George Orwell in Such, Such Were the Joys.

> "When in June 1937, thanks to the intervention of the British Government, I was unexpectedly set free, my hair had not greyed and my features had not changed and I had not developed religious mania; but I had made the acquaintance of a different kind of reality, which had altered my outlook and values; and altered them so profoundly and unconsciously that during the first days of freedom I was not even aware of it."
>
> Arthur Koestler in The God That Failed.

When on July 18th, 1936, General Franco staged his coup d'etat, the eyes of the world were focussed on Spain as a cockpit of warring ideologies. The Spanish civil war reflected on a larger scale the polarization of forces that had previously marked the internal politics of many of the individual nations of Europe. On the one hand, the Left-wing intelligentsia, from Communist to progressive liberal, rallied to the defence of the Republican government, which represented the various sectors

of Left opinion in its composition. Such wide-spread support was made possible by the inauguration of the Popular Front policy at the Seventh Congress of the Comintern in 1934. This impressive facade, was, however, shot through with ideological cracks, and unity of purpose became a tenuous proposition as events within Spain itself would soon indicate. On the other hand, the Fascist powers and elements of right-wing Catholic opinion everywhere lent Franco the military and moral support which enabled him to threaten the security of Madrid within five months.

The military campaigns were conducted in an atmosphere of total war, that is amid extremes of atrocity and propaganda. The Left denounced in horror the massacre of Badajoz, the bombardment of Madrid, the razing of Guernica, the depredations of the Moors and Legionnaries; the Right recounted the long tale of despoiled churches and butchered priests and nuns. Tolerance and reasoned inquiry were retired for the duration, both within the country and in the factional press abroad. It was under such conditions that Arthur Koestler and George Orwell both found themselves in Spain by early 1937.

By 1937 Arthur Koestler had been a member of the Communist party for six years. During that time he had experienced moments of doubt, some of them serious. But these doubts had been suppressed, not only by the magic glow associated with the

attraction of pure Utopia, but by the technique of rational argument within a "closed system". "In short the closed system excludes the possibility of objective argument by two related procedings: (a) facts are deprived of their value of evidence by scholastic processing, (b) objections are invalidated by shifting the argument to the psychological motive behind the objection."(1) In the first instance facts are made to fit the required pattern by a variety of techniques, one of which is "arbitrary polarization".(2) As an example of "arbitrary polarization" take the following statement: There are two categories of people: (a) the good ones who travel by train, and (b) the bad ones who travel by air. With a little effort it can then be shown that people who travel by sea are (a) good, because they don't fly and (b) bad, because they don't run on rails. Aided by this technique, Communists were able to perform such feats of mental gymnastics as "rationalizing" the Russo-German pact of 1939: i.e. the peace-loving Russian and German people versus the pluto-democratic imperialistic aggressors, England and France. By 1941 it was necessary to switch this political equation to read: the bestial German fascist aggressors versus the united democratic nations, Russia, England, France and America.

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(1) Koestler, A.: Arrow in the Blue, p. 260.

(2) Ibid. P. 260 for the example of "arbitrary polarization" that follows.

In the second instance, a Communist claiming that Lenin's order to march on Warsaw in 1920 was a mistake would be confronted with the argument that he ought not to trust his own judgement because it is distorted by vestiges of his former petit-bourgeois class consciousness. This, in effect, suggests another facet of the "closed system", the unchallengeable first premise. In the case of Communism the first premise is that the Party cannot be wrong because it embodies the will of history. If the Party cannot be wrong, then the individual critic must be; he has been misled by "subjective" reasoning, possibly inspired by "bourgeois sentimentality" (i.e. pity). In the final analysis, reasoning in a closed system is circular reasoning. Its adherents can prove everything they believe and believe everything they can prove.

The effect of prolonged mental activity of this type is to produce a state of progressive schizophrenia - "a method of thinking which, while in itself coherent and even ingenious, has lost touch with reality, or produces an absurd distortion of it."(1) This condition allowed Koestler to brush aside concrete evidence of the Stalinist tyranny encountered during a trip to Russia in 1932-33 and remain a convinced Communist. But the emphasis is on "brush aside". There came a moment when the groundwork was laid for the re-examination of the

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(1) Ibid. P. 287.

entire structure of a faith - a moment that occurred, symbolically enough, in a prison in Seville.

Koestler's "moment of truth" was essentially a mystical experience and is consequently hard to describe in words. It was, in effect, a return of that "Oceanic feeling" which we have referred to earlier, but this time with greater intensity, because in Spain Koestler was not only under sentence of death himself, but an eyewitness to the torture and execution of cellmates. Thus a troubled spirit, frightened, yet feeling a new pity for others, slipped from the trivial plane of existence into contact with "ultimate reality" conceived of as a kind of spiritual infinity. The subsequent "enchantment" is described by Koestler as follows: "Then I was floating on my back in a river of peace, under bridges of silence. It came from nowhere and flowed nowhere. Then there was no river and no I. The I had ceased to exist."(1)

Koestler was led to philosophize from this experience, and the final result of his philosophy was a total change of outlook which eventually made him break with Communism. Characteristically, he systematized the new knowledge. The existence of a "higher reality" suggested to him the possibility of at least three orders of reality. The first order was the narrow world of sensory impressions; the second order was a conceptual world, not directly perceivable, yet derived from and enveloping

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(1) Koestler, A.: The Invisible Writing, p. 352.

the first, and embracing such phenomena as electro magnetic fields, gravitation, and curved space. The third order enveloped and gave meaning to the second, but its truth could only be apprehended by mystic experience. "Just as the conceptual order showed up the illusions and distortions of the senses, so the 'third order' disclosed that time, space and causality, that the isolation, separateness and spatio - temporal limitations of the self were merely optical illusions on the next higher level --- It was a text written in invisible ink; and though one could not read it, the knowledge that it existed was sufficient to alter the texture of one's existence, and make <u>one's actions</u> conform to the text."(1)

The high point that Koestler was reaching for was a new conception of the human condition. The Party had conceived of social relations in terms of an equation which subordinated the means to the end. But that equation did not work. Man attached by a common spiritual umbilical cord to "ultimate reality" must be more than a means. Man is an end in himself. "In its social equation, the value of a single life is nil; in the cosmic equation it is infinite."(2) And yet this new realization posed a dilemma. Although the path of purely utilitarian ethics - the path of the Commissar - leads inevitably to the cellars of the Lubianka, alternatives based on the growth of

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(1) Ibid. P. 354 (emphasis mine).

(2) Ibid. P. 357.

a general perception of truth through spiritual apprehension - the path of the Yogi - can result in stagnation and lack of social impetus. The examination of this dilemma, and a search for its solution, is a constantly recurring motif in Koestler's works.(1)

For the moment, however, Koestler's spiritual experience in a Spanish prison had short - circuited the "closed system" of thought described above by breaking through the circular chain of reasoning. The results were not immediately apparent, for he was to remain in the Party another year, and it was not until the Stalin-Hitler pact of 1939 that the last emotional links were severed. Looking back in The God That Failed, he summarized the meaning of his spiritual transformation: "The lesson taught by this type of experience, when put into words, always appears under the dowdy guise of perennial commonplaces: that man is a reality, mankind an abstraction; that men cannot be treated as units in operations of political arithmetic because they behave like the symbols for zero and the infinite, which dislocate all mathematical operations; that the end justifies the means only within very narrow limits; that ethics is not a function of social utility, and charity not a petty-bourgeois sentiment but the gravitational force which keeps civilization in its orbit. Nothing can sound more flatfooted than such verbalizations of a knowledge which is

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(1) e.g.: The Yogi and the Commissar, The Lotus and the Robot, etc.

not of a verbal nature; yet every single one of these trivial statements was incompatible with the Communist faith which I held."(1)

In the same month that Koestler left Spain in an exchange of hostages, May 1937, George Orwell came face-to-face with his "moment of truth" in Barcelona. Orwell had first arrived in Spain in December 1936, with the object of observing and writing about the war, but temperamentally he was incapable of remaining on the sidelines. Because he carried letters of introduction from officers of the Independent Labour Party in Britain he joined the P.O.U.M. (Partido Obrero de Unificacion Marxista) militia. The P.O.U.M. was "Trotskyist" in the sense that it was both Marxist and anti-Stalinist. For these, and other reasons, it eventually fell afoul of the Socialist - Communist group that was gradually gaining control of the Republican government.

At first Orwell favoured Communist policy in Spain because it seemed to put the war effort before other considerations, while the P.O.U.M. and Anarchists dissipated their strength in futile political squabbles. In fact, he intended at this time to transfer to the Communist International Brigade. While on leave in Barcelona in May 1937, however, Orwell personally became involved in the clash between the Anarchists

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(1) Koestler, A.: The God That Failed, p. 76.

and the P.O.U.M. on the one hand and the Communist-dominated Republican government on the other. A good deal of his book Homage to Catalonia (1938) is devoted to the analysis of this incident and to the proscription of the P.O.U.M. (now labelled "Trotsky-Fascist") that followed. Orwell returned to Barcelona in the midst of this proscription after being severely wounded. He saw his old commandant, Major Kopp, and a good friend, Bob Smillie, swept up in the political witch-hunt. As far as is known, both perished in Spanish prisons, as did, Nin, the head of the P.O.U.M. Orwell himself had to take desperate measures to avoid arrest and to secure, with his wife, unimpeded passage from Spain.

It is widely recognized that Orwell's Spanish experience, and particularly his experience of the events taking place in Barcelona in May and June of 1937, largely determined his attitude towards totalitarianism. At least one reviewer of the reprint edition of Homage to Catalonia has described the book as "--- the forerunner of George Orwell's devastating novel 1984 .... A classic in its interpretation of totalitarianism, left or right."(1) This assessment is probably correct, but on what basis does it rest?

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(1) See back jacket of Homage to Catalonia, Beacon Press, Boston, 1955, where the quote is attributed to The Library Journal.

Firstly, there was a re-evaluation of Communism, for in Orwell's view the Communist Party had become a party of the Right, at least within the context of the Spanish situation. One of the things Orwell had realized early in Spain was that a working class revolution and a civil war were proceeding simultaneously. He was tremendously impressed by the evidence of revolutionary spirit expressed in the egalitarian atmosphere of Barcelona in December, 1936.(1) Six months later, in the same city, things had changed a great deal. One conclusion Orwell drew was that ".... the thing for which the Communists were working was not to postpone the Spanish revolution till a more suitable time, but to make sure it never happened."(2) The idealism of the proletarian revolution had been betrayed to the cynical manoeuvering of the Soviet Union in the field of power politics. Hence the recurring theme of "revolution betrayed" in Animal Farm and Nineteen Eighty-four.

Closely related to this discovery was Orwell's new appreciation of the working class as a repository of political virtue. Orwell had written a great deal about the class problem before coming to Spain in The Road to Wigan Pier. While investigating the conditions of the English working class

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(1) Orwell, G.: Homage to Catalonia, p. 4-5.

(2) Ibid. The point is dealt with exhaustively in Chapter 5.

in 1936, and in his "down and out" period prior to that date, he had struggled to make an identification - to "cross over" class lines and immerse himself in proletarian values, hopes, and aspirations. This attempt had never been entirely successful. But when an Italian militiaman clasped his hand across a guard room table in Spain, Orwell seems to have glimpsed, beyond the illiterate facade, the real meaning (at least for him) of the spirit of the masses. He preserved the moment in poetry:

> "But the thing that I saw in your face
> No power can disinherit:
> No bomb that ever burst
> Shatters the crystal spirit."(1)

Perhaps this is why he writes towards the end of Homage to Catalonia that the whole experience of Spain "has left me with not less but more belief in the decency of human beings."(2) Perhaps too, if there is any hope at all in Nineteen Eighty-four, it seems to rest with the proles.

But the major impact on Orwell of his Spanish experience was the gradual realization that the whole affair had been a gigantic assault on objective truth. Orwell had been in Spain; he knew at first hand some of the facts. Invariably these facts were distorted out of all recognition in the Spanish party press, and in the foreign papers he read at the time or studied later. The Russian army that the Franco faction described so vividly existed only in its imagination.

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(1) Orwell, G.: "Looking Back on the Spanish War" (an essay), Such, Such Were the Joys, p. 153.
(2) Orwell, G.: Homage to Catalonia, p. 230.

The accounts of the Barcelona "risings" carried by The Daily Worker[1] were not only erroneous and conflicting but deliberately misleading. Orwell believed that in the light of the scale of the lying there could be no reliable history of the Spanish war ever written. "I remember saying once to Arthur Koestler", he reminisces, "'History stopped in 1936', at which he nodded in immediate understanding. We were both thinking of totalitarianism in general, but more particularly of the Spanish civil war."[2]

From the gross distortion of truth that Orwell perceived in Spain, from the impossibility of writing history objectively, it is just "one more step" to the fabrication of history. And then we are in the arms of Big Brother; the future is controlled by those who control the past.[3] At this point the social process is arrested. "If you want a picture of the future, imagine a boot stamping on a human face - forever."[4]

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(1) Orwell gives examples in Homage to Catalonia, pp. 163-4.

(2) "Looking Back on the Spanish War", in Such, Such Were the Joys, p. 139.

(3) The notion that the future is controlled by those who control the past is characteristic of Orwell because he believed that history embodied the generally accepted ethical imperatives without which decency and justice become impossible. The link with Burke is obvious, and it is this aspect of his thought that helped earn Orwell the soubriquets "The Tory Anarchist", "The patriot of the Left" etc.

(4) Orwell, G.: Nineteen Eighty-four, Signet Classics, The New American Library of World Literature, N.Y., 1961, p. 220.

It is interesting at this point to reflect on the meaning of the experiences outlined in this chapter for the two men involved. Arthur Koestler, the political Commissar, had suffered a spectral displacement from the infra red of social engineering and severed subconscious to the ultra violet Yogi-world of contemplation and renewed contact with the Infinite. This occurred at a moment of crisis in Spain, and it is at moments of crisis that a spiritual umbilical cord re-establishing the Man-Universe connection becomes an essential organ for human beings. "At this point one of two things might happen. Either the cut connection is re-established and as an act of atonement the Man-Society connection broken off; this is the classical case of the Revolutionary turning into a Mystic, the total jump from Commissar to Yogi. Or the connection is not re-established - then the dead cord coils up and strangles its owner."(1)

Arthur Koestler appears in his life and work to refute the passage quoted above. He did, in a moment of crisis, succeed in re-establishing the Man-Universe connection, but he failed to make the total jump from Commissar to Yogi. Perhaps he was never a good enough Commissar to achieve the extreme transfer.(2) He certainly became more interested in Yogi -

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(1) Koestler, A.: The Yogi and the Commissar, p. 18.

(2) He was much more of a literary Commissar than a political Commissar - a distinction that Koestler himself makes in The Yogi and the Commissar, p. 17.

thought, as certain passages in The Yogi and the Commissar and almost all of the Lotus and the Robot indicate. But in all of this searching he appears to have wanted most, not to lose himself in the Infinite, but to seek there for a set of ethical guides, transcendant and unassailable, which would help establish the world of peace and justice that Communist dialectics had so notably failed to produce. Thus Koestler returns to the political struggle and from the vantage point of new spiritual insight begins to assail the ramparts of the old fortress which once was his home. In storming the walls, however, Koestler is forced to study the enemy position carefully, and thus begins to develop a conception of what he means by the term "totalitarianism". It is my contention that a concentration on specific aspects of the problem, particularly the question of politics and ethics, and the failure to abandon certain basic tenets of his Commissar past, have led Koestler to a certain view of totalitarianism that I have labelled "limited totalitarianism". I further contend that this view is discernible in Koestler's works in the form of a lingering approbation of Communism, which, like a touch of garlic in an omelet, adds a minute but subtle flavour to the whole.

Whatever George Orwell may have been before his experiences in Spain he was certainly no Commissar, literary or otherwise. Unlike Koestler, he took his ethical values as he found them - in the customary decencies of English rural

life. Except for his identification with the Left, he might almost have replaced the officer who occupied the cell next to Rubashov (Koestler) in Darkness at Noon and tapped on the wall the message: "Honour is to live and die for one's belief." ... and later ... "Honour is decency - not usefulness."(1) Spain was, above all, a shock to this sense of decency. This, plus a well-developed conviction of impending doom, and a tendency towards persecution fantasies, made Orwell conceive of totalitarianism, not in the intellectualisms of Koestler, but almost in visceral terms. To this view I have given the name "luxuriant totalitarianism", and in Orwell's later work at least, its chief characteristic is the way in which it captures the ominous and all-pervading "tone" of totalitarianism as expressed in the hopelessness of life spun out in the gritty environment of a police state.

This chapter has been written in an attempt to explain how two Left-wing intellectuals sharing certain basic attributes, but of widely different backgrounds and experience, first became aware, in purely personal ways, of the meaning of totalitarianism. That they reacted differently to the shocks felt in Spain, and that this reaction took the form of the gradual development of conceptions of totalitarianism fundamentally, if not obviously, different in type, is the major theme of this thesis. Perhaps it is worthwhile pausing

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(1) Koestler, A.: Darkness at Noon, p. 127.

for a moment to draw attention to the phase "gradual development". Approximately the same short span of half a decade separates Animal Farm from Nineteen Eighty-four on the one hand, and Darkness at Noon from the Yogi and the Commissar on the other. In both cases, however, the author's views on totalitarianism have been given a major shift of emphasis which tends to bring them somewhat closer together without destroying the central theoretical principles on which the uniqueness of each conception rests.

It now remains to spell out at some length Koestler's view of "limited totalitarianism" and Orwell's view of "luxuriant totalitarianism", measuring one against the other and both against what has been written by representative theorists in the field. At the same time this kind of comparative analysis should make it possible to reveal some of the deficiencies of the all-embracing term "totalitarianism" as a precise instrument of definition in political theory.

CHAPTER III

Arthur Koestler and Limited Totalitarianism

> "And what if, after all, No.1 were in the right? If here, in dirt and blood and lies, after all and in spite of everything, the grandiose foundations of the future were being laid? Had not history always been an inhumane, unscrupulous builder, mixing its mortar of lies, blood and mud?"
>
> Rubashov in Darkness at Noon.

> "Soviet Russia is a State-capitalistic totalitarian autocracy. It is progressive in its economic structure and regressive in every other respect."
>
> Arthur Koestler in The Yogi and the Commissar.

As I have attempted to indicate in the opening chapters of this work, Koestler's thought was much influenced by the writings of Freud, Jung and Adler and by his investigations into the uncertainties of twentieth-century science when formulated as "law". As a consequence he sees man as being potentially capable of sustained rational thought, but in fact much subjected to the pressures of archaic beliefs and guilt feelings, all deeply rooted in his subconscious.(1) These, together with the more fundamental drives and urges of human nature,

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(1) Another modern writer holding this general view of human nature is Eric Fromm, whose background as a psychoanalyst does much to determine his attitude to political and social problems.

constitute, on the one hand, the basis for insecure longings for a sense of order and explanation in life, and, on the other, provide the springs for action. Here we can pause for a moment to stress again the characteristic duality of Koestler's thought. Worked out in larger than individual terms the great task of human endeavour has always been, and must continue to be, to reconcile the opposing concepts of destiny (viewed as a pattern order) and free will (viewed as volition expressed in freedom of choice).(1)

As long as God reigned supreme the reconciliation of these two conflicting ideas was possible. Religious ethics became the bridge between destiny and free will, and the theological and philosophical acceptance of a hierarchy of levels of reality (divine law, natural law, human law) each operating on its own distinct premises, buttressed the ethical structure from undermining action by corrosive humanity. When in the Age of Enlightenment "destiny from above" was replaced by "destiny from below" (i.e. scientific determinism) this ordered structure began to crumble for two reasons. Firstly, eighteenth century science "explained" the universe but did not provide the security of paternal care as God had done.

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(1) For this, and much of the following material see Koestler's explanation in The Yogi and the Commissar pp. 198-223. Koestler's view of human nature also plays an important part in his novels. The theme of Arrival and Departure is that political opinions are mere reflections of childhood accidents. The Age of Longing, as the title suggests, describes the futility and despair of man when he cuts himself adrift from an ordered system of belief, and cannot accept another to replace it.

Secondly, ethics ceased to be transcendant and "outside" society and became purely relativistic and "inside" society.

Now, ethical systems have always been based on the assumption of a free choice of behaviour on the part of the individual. Under God, the stress was on voluntary submission to the Divine Will. In extreme cases the mystical search for union with God carried submissions to a Yogi-position of nirvana ("I will not to will"). But science is bound up with the twin ideas of domination and mathematical expression. Soon ethical statements began to be formulated in mathematical terms - e.g. "the greatest happiness for the greatest number". To achieve such a radiant end, any means might be justified, while the emphasis on dominance suggested harshness to "shape" a society just as man had bent the forces of nature to his will. The Age of the Yogi gave way to the Age of the Commissar.

But as the Yogi-age of medieval mysticism crumbled under the hammer of advancing science, the modern Commissar-age which succeeded it fared little better. Part of the explanation lies in Koestler's concept of the antipathy between pure revolt and impure society - a concept which he had projected back into history as far as Roman times.(1) Commissars are inevitably born in advance of their age while society remains ignorant of its own best interests. Rapid progress infers coercion. Hence

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(1) Koestler, A.: The Gladiators, Graphic Publishing Co., N.Y., 1954.

the equation that begins with the surgeon's knife, ends with the butcher's axe. And in the process the rebel is corrupted individually, as is the Party, which was once the social expression of pure revolt. As Means are subordinated to a utopian End, the utilization of inferior Means corrodes the human spirit. Rubashov the ardent revolutionary becomes Rubashov the cynical bureaucrat. And Rubashov the cynical bureaucrat is reborn in baser form in the Neanderthaler, Gletkin.

The soulless nature of the Party bureaucracy reflects, in Koestler's view, more than Lord Acton's well-known dictum concerning the tendency of power to corrupt. For the pure revolt of Communism, unlike earlier movements of social protest, was confined within the straitjacket of dialectical materialism. Taken to its logical limits this could only mean that the course of history was pre-determined, and that the individual was of necessity propelled along a path marked out for him by social forces. And yet the Party makes incredible demands upon the individual, treating him in this respect as a free agent. "The Party denied the free will of the individual - and at the same time it enacted his willing self-sacrifice. It denied his capacity to choose between two alternatives - and at the same time it demanded that he should constantly choose the right one. It denied his power to distinguish good and evil - and at the same time it spoke pathetically of guilt and treachery. The individual stood under the sign of

economic fatality, a wheel in a clockwork which had been wound up for all eternity - and the Party demanded that the wheel should revolt against the clockwork and change its course. There was somewhere an error in the calculation; the equation did not work out."(1) Faced with the awful dilemma of always being right or suffering the consequences of treason, the Party bureaucrat buried those vestiges of pity remaining to him deep within his subconscious and responded puppet - like to the pull of the central strings. His personal tragedy was that he had cut the umbilical cord that connected him with the Infinite, and in so doing had abnegated his humanity.

The above discussion has been undertaken in order to shed some light on Koestler's theory of the genesis of limited totalitarianism. In short, the degeneration of pure revolt into its totalitarian form has a single root cause: the failure of the revolutionaries to recognize the decisive importance of the spiritual factor. Man, considered as raw material to be worked upon, is vulnerable to almost any indignity that the masters of a ship of state "sailing without ethical ballast" choose to inflict upon him. In a kind of relationship of opposites, Koestler's theory of the genesis of fascism

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(1) Koestler, A.: Darkness at Noon, p. 186.

points up the importance which he ascribes to the subconscious. Fascism emerged in response to the craving for the fulfilment of the irrational in the human personality; it draws upon and utilizes all of the archetypal images and emotional fetishism that the material rationalism of the Left denies. Hence the manifest inability of the European Left in general, and Communist Party leadership in particular, to come to grips with the Fascist threat until it was too late. The only writer to attempt a synthesis of the two springs of human action was Burnham, and he was "stoned by the Left".(1)

For Koestler, then, limited totalitarianism was characterized by a denial of the spiritual factor without which justice becomes an impossibility, and at the same time a denial of the irrational factor in human psychology as one of the fundamental springs of political action. And yet such characteristics would appear to rob any system of warmth and innate human appeal. How is it possible to explain the tremendous attraction exerted by the experiment in the Soviet Union on Koestler and his contemporaries during the 1930's? Firstly, as Koestler points out, "all true faith involves a revolt against the believer's social environment, and a projection into the future of an ideal derived from the remote past."(2) An analysis, in personal terms, of Koestler the

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(1) Koestler, A.: The Yogi and the Commissar, p. 112.

(2) Koestler, A.: The God That Failed, p. 25.

rebel has already been attempted, and recalling the economic anomalies of the 30's, when huge quantities of surplus food were destroyed while millions starved, it is now possible to summarize those factors which together attracted him into the ranks of the Party. These include ----- "the disappearance of the progressive middle-of-the-road parties in Central Europe, and the spineless opportunism displayed by the Socialists (which) left the Communists as sole apparent champions of anti-Fascism, - the intellectual comfort and belief found in escaping from a tragic predicament into a 'closed system' of beliefs that left no room for hesitation or doubt; the lure of a militant Order of modern saints and martyrs with its ritual of secrecy and its apostolic hierarchy; finally the psychological bond, or transference - situation, which occurs when the proselytizing members of the Order act as the potential convert's spiritual guide."(1)

So much for the initial wooing and winning of the rebel, but what were some of the major factors by which men of high intelligence and normally keen perception remained constant in the faith? The answer to this question involves a brief examination of the Soviet myth as distinct from Soviet reality. At first thought, to speak of a myth at all appears to be in contradiction to that denial of the irrational factor

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(1) Koestler, A.: Arrow in the Blue, p. 260.

which we have already suggested is one of the characteristics of limited totalitarianism. The fact is that the Soviet myth was largely operative outside the country as a psychological reflection in the European Left, and only inside the country in that brief period between 1917 and 1929 when Soviet myth and Russian reality were almost congruent.

The Soviet myth was born, or re-born as an ancient archetype, when the Russian revolution breathed life into a bloodless Utopia and provided a homeland for the formerly arid abstractions of Justice and Socialism. "Progress had recovered its lost religion: Soviet Russia became the new Opium for the People."(1) And yet, beginning with the betrayal of Communist parties outside Russia, rationalized as the doctrine of "Socialism in one country", the regime became increasingly oppressive. How can the adherence of millions outside the Soviet Union be explained in the face of constant purges, deportations, alliances with the enemy, twisted Socialist slogans, and other Byzantinian manoeuverings? The preservation of the faith would indeed be impossible if it were not for a double system of defences which shield the myth-addict from truth. The outer defences are conscious and prohibitive. They consist of the banning of literature, the avoidance of contacts with suspects and heretics, and so on. The inner defences

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(1) Koestler, A.: The Yogi and the Commissar, p. 118.

are unconscious, and consist of a mental wall protecting a cherished belief. Arguments penetrating this wall are not dealt with rationally but by a type of closed-system psuedo-reasoning, examples of which have already been given in Chapter II.

Belief in the Soviet myth involved belief in a self-proclaimed universal method of thought which sought to explain everything and to provide a solution for all human problems. Loss of belief could be devastating, for it left the myth-addict rudderless in the seas of knowledge, and without hope for the future. For these reasons he is very reluctant to give up his cherished beliefs, as was Koestler himself.(1) Much of Koestler's writing comprises a kind of politics of disillusionment, with his characters experiencing a dark night of the soul as their political illusions are inexorably stripped away. Thus Nikolayevich Leontiev, Hero of Culture and Joy of the People, found freedom too heavy a burden to bear in The Age of Longing.

Against the background sketched above we may now consider two fundamental questions: What was Koestler's conception of the Stalinist regime? In what sense could his idea of totalitarianism be said to be "limited"? A somewhat different answer to these related questions is given in

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(1) It took Koestler approximately one year to leave the Party after his initial misgivings.

Darkness at Noon (1940) and The Yogi and the Commissar (1945). A study of this difference will help to make clear certain lines of development in Koestler's political thought.(1)

In Darkness at Noon the regime is admittedly tyrannical, but not senselessly tyrannical. In fact the official Party arguments are sufficiently convincing to force dialectician Rubashov, an intelligent man, to concur in his own destruction. Once it is accepted that the Party is the vanguard of History, then each wrong idea followed is a crime committed against future generations. Because the masses are backward in relation to the level of technical achievement at home,(2) and because of the dangers of "capitalist encirclement" abroad, brutal coercion becomes a necessity if the Workers' Fatherland is to continue to survive. The task of preserving the Bastion "was the task which history had given us, the representatives of the first victorious revolution", as Party bureaucrat Gletkin puts it.(3)

In this kind of analysis the extent to which Koestler is still ensnared by his Communist past becomes evident. Number 1 was firmly in control, of course, and the old guard

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(1) Koestler had scarcely left the Party when he began work on Darkness at Noon.

(2) This idea was systematized by Rubashov in Darkness at Noon as "The Law of Relative Maturity".

(3) Koestler, A.: Darkness at Noon, p. 173.

had been remorselessly exterminated because "the logic of history ordained that the more stable the regime became, the more rigid it had to become, in order to prevent the enormous dynamic forces which the Revolution had released from turning inwards and blowing the Revolution itself into the air."(1) The consequence of such policies, and of the revolutionary experiments with human nature that preceded or accompanied them, was to cover the social body with sores. Rubashov, troubled by feelings of pity rooted in his bourgeois past, and possessed of a guilty conscience stemming from personal betrayals for political reasons, begins to doubt the authenticity of the Party's historical mission. But for all his concern with "equations that did not work out" and the "Grammatical Fiction" or mystical experience which was a kind of pipeline to a state of mind where the individual concept of man took precedence over the social concept of mankind, Rubashov was unable to develop a liberal creed that would stand alone. "The horror which Number 1 emanated above all consisted in the possibility that he was in the right and that all those whom he killed had to admit, even with the bullet in the back of their necks that he conceivably might be right. There was no certainty; only the appeal to that mocking oracle they called History, who gave her sentence only when the jaws of the appealer had long since fallen to dust."(2) In the final

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(1) Ibid. P. 128.

(2) Ibid. Pp. 13-14.

analysis Darkness at Noon gives testimony to the victory of the arguments supporting historical materialism.

Five years later, in The Yogi and the Commissar, Koestler's attitude towards Soviet totalitarianism begins to harden. The key question that he asks is whether or not the Soviet system is socialistic in fact or tendency. It is not, he concludes, and introduces a rather imposing array of evidence(1) to prove that in respect to suppression of truth, the inheritance of privilege, inequality of incomes, conditions of work, social legislation, and forced labour the regime is reactionary as compared to almost all capitalist countries, and for that matter in terms of the original goals of the revolution. These changes, together with the purges that went far beyond the silencing of a dissident opposition to take the form of a counter revolution, had the effect of entrenching in power a new "managerial class", segregated from the masses and approaching in type a hereditary caste similar to the old Russian administrative aristocracy. Koestler still continues to beg the question of End and Means, however. "Our argument is not that we are horrified by the Means employed (which we are) but that their outcome is unpredictable."(2) The argument that the End justifies the Means can only be admitted if it is taken for granted that

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(1) See Koestler, A. The Yogi and the Commissar, "Soviet Myth and Reality" (an essay).

(2) Ibid. P. 136.

the Soviet Union, however obliquely, is moving in the direction of Socialism, and as we have seen, Koestler denied this on the grounds of the many injustices and inequalities characteristic of the regime.

However, if the Russian ship of state sails a true economic course in respect to the nationalization of the means of production, will not everything else come out well in the end? Here Koestler finds "that the economic structure of Russia (termed state capitalism) is historically progressive compared with private capitalistic economy ..... (for) nationalization, though not a sufficient, is a necessary condition of socialism."(1) True, he makes it very clear that socialization of the means of production will not ensure an ethical and cultural superstructure which will guarantee the emergence of a healthier and happier socialist society. And yet, as one dwells on the words "historically progressive" in the quotation above, it is hard to escape the conclusion that Koestler's commitment to a broadly Marxist theory of history tempers his attitude towards Soviet totalitarianism.

Koestler's theory of history is Marxist in the sense that he believes that over long periods of time, centuries rather than decades, historical determinants akin to the physical laws of probability do operate to shape the destinies

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(1) Ibid. Pp. 166-167.

of peoples. In the short run, the sphere of politics rather than history, such things as hazards or exceptional personalities influence events. In his own metaphor ... "History resembles a river and the subjective factor a boulder thrown into its bed. A mile further down the water will flow in its broad bed designed by the general structure of the terrain as if the boulder had never existed. But for a short stretch of say a hundred yards or years, the shape of the boulder does make a considerable difference."(1) It is against this background that Koestler examines the question of whether or not the developments in Russia were inevitable or all "Stalin's fault". In his view at least a half dozen important nodal points in the recent history of Russia - e.g. the agrarian policy of 1929-30 - can in no way be excused by historical inevitability and can only be described as subjective errors of the regime. Such errors, operating side-by-side with the compulsion to develop industrial capacity rapidly in a backward nation, resulted in the progressive entrenchment of Stalinist rule. The ruling group in turn became increasingly reactionary with the breakdown of revolutionary incentives, a factor to which Koestler ascribes primary importance, and with the consequent requirement to mobilize the dumb mass under the whip. "The regime, grown from the roots of nineteenth century materialism, never recognized the decisive importance

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(1) Ibid. P. 169.

of the spiritual factor. Based on the axiom that the end justifies the means, quickly tired of the inertia and dumbness of the peasant masses, they treated the living people as raw material in a laboratory experiment, working on the tender malleable mass with hammers, chisels, acids, and showers of propaganda rays of ever varying wave lengths."(1)

It is obvious that Koestler has taken a fairly large step in political thinking during the five years that separate Darkness at Noon from The Yogi and the Commissar. In the latter work much has been done to mark off Soviet myth from Soviet reality, to throw light upon, without reconciling, the dichotomy of End and Means, and, above all, to reveal the inadequacy of historical determinism as an excuse for political action. His managerial class stands firmly astride the Russian people, and it wields a mean whip. But still his conception of the totalitarian state seems to lack an element of brooding horror which characterizes conditions of life in 1984. Why is this so?

The primary reason is that Koestler ascribes to his idea of totalitarianism a stronger element of rationalism than does Orwell. Horrors and brutalities in plenty he admits, examines, and abhors without making them central to his thought.

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(1) Ibid. P. 175.

He does not think of totalitarianism, as does Hannah Arendt[1] for example, as possessing its own "mystique" of terror - as a movement, once begun, impelled by some internal dynamic of evil. Or if he does think of it in this light, he thinks primarily of Nazism, the irrational and unconscious nature of which he is likely to emphasize.[2] In this respect Orwell is closer to Arendt than is Koestler.[3] Nineteen Eighty-four is saturated with violence and brutality; one absorbs the impact of totalitarianism through the pores. Darkness at Noon, on the other hand, is primarily an intellectual game played around a totalitarian table.

Koestler's concept of totalitarianism was already out-of-date by 1938, the year in which he began Darkness at Noon. Gletkin and Ivanov confront Rubashov with batteries of arguments so strong that it is not until the closing pages of the book that Rubashov's position becomes clear; indeed, Rubashov (with whom Koestler identifies) wavers, nostalgically uncertain of his final moral position, until the very end. This sense of "rightness" suggests a totalitarian system whose devotees, even Neanderthalers such as Gletkin, still believe that they will be vindicated by the verdict of history.

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(1) Arendt, H.: The Origins of Totalitarianism, Meridian Books, N.Y., 1958.

(2) "The secret of Fascism is the revival of archaic beliefs in an ultra-modern setting." Koestler, A.: The Yogi and the Commissar, p. 116.

(3) E.g. Arendt stresses the transvaluation of values inherent in the totalitarian way of life. Compare this with the function of Orwell's Ministry of Truth, etc. etc.

The crimes of the regime are the "necessary detours". This attitude indicates, at a minimum, a well-defined interest on the part of the bureaucracy in a collective effort to reach an attainable goal.

It is certainly true that in The Yogi and the Commissar Koestler faces up to the arguments centred in the theory of historical determinism much more squarely than he does in Darkness at Noon. As we have seen, he accuses the Stalinist regime of taking subjective action on at least a half dozen issues in recent Russian history which were not historically determined, in each case crushing the fractional inner-party opposition advocating the alternative course. But to select these issues as not being historically determined is Koestler's own value judgement; the only real proof of the validity of the Stalinist action is the verdict of history. The totalitarian defence is "that history will absolve" or to put it another way, that the End will always justify the Means.

It is difficult to escape the conclusion that Koestler is entirely out of sympathy with this position. For Koestler the ultimate End is still important. He hungers for Utopia while recognizing that in the Russian experience, the revolutionary train has been shunted off the track into the blind siding of Stalinist oppression. The Gletkins are in control; the evidence indicates that Russia, except in respect

to economic organization, is a reactionary state. But the future is also uncertain. The physical signs of progressive economic development in Russia can hardly be denied. Furthermore, fundamental historical change is achieved slowly, determined in the final analysis by conditions such as the new Soviet industrialization. Perhaps - and it is only perhaps - some day the engine will find its way back on the track to Utopia. Then all of the suffering, which in the short run indicts the Stalinist regime, might be justified.

There is a significant passage at the very end of Koestler's contribution to The God That Failed that does much to reveal his secret hunger for Utopia. Likening himself to Jacob, who for seven years tended Laban's sheep to win his lovely daughter, Rachel, Koestler admits that he too awakened to the ugly (Stalinist) Leah. But in the end, after another seven years of labour, Jacob was given Rachel, and the illusion (the ideal society) became flesh. "And the seven years seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had for her."

Examining Stalinist society in the short run, however, Koestler seems to suggest the existence of a ruthless but rational elite embued with at least some collective purpose in the pursuit of economic goals. "Actually, however, after Stalin's blood purges of the middle 1930's there was no longer in any real sense a ruling party, just as there was no real ruling class; there was at most a privileged stratum of

bureaucratic serving men who lived well and wore medals but who were pure instrumentalities rather than holders or sharers of power."[1] Russian society had become truly totalitarian with Stalin's will operative through the N.K.V.D. - a kind of state within a state - and a personal secretariat drawn from a special sector of the Central Committee apparatus. This system reflected Stalin's craving for total control and command; its conservatism and cruelty combined to produce a variety of Left-fascism. And yet, as V.S. Pritchett points out, Koestler does not detect the personal face of the Tyrant.[2]

A flavour of approbation of the Soviet pattern lingers in the work of Koestler even as he denounces the concrete parts. The pattern is an abstract, and Koestler the systematist and scientist is most at home with abstracts. He remained within the Party for seven years, and his full weaning has been slow. The Party met his emotional needs and provided him with a "closed system" thought process that for the most part must have been congenial to him. While discarding the rigid operation of the dialectic, he still continues to think primarily in a system of opposing categories and strive for universality in theory.

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(1) Tucker, R.C.: "The Politics of Soviet De-Stalinization", World Politics, Vol.9, 1956/57.

(2) Pritchett, V.S.: "Absolutitis", The New Statesman and Nation, Vol.52, Aug.18, 1956.

What continued to attract Koestler to the Soviet experiment after all else had turned to ashes in his mouth was the clean sweep of the planning and the centralized aspects of a form of economic organization that he describes as being "historically progressive". He did not follow the Marxists in ascribing a cultural and ethical superstructure to this economic base, but there is no doubt that he was impressed by the purely economic factors of the experiment, and it is significant that he sees the failure of the regime in domestic policy in terms of a failure to maintain incentives. Koestler was undoubtedly aware that the question of incentives ultimately transcends purely economic factors, but a great deal of the material he uses critically stresses the inability of the Stalinists to maximize production in terms of socialist goals.(1)

We must be careful not to force Koestler into the position of ascribing too much purity of motive to the Communist leaders as the source of his "lingering approbation". On the contrary, his final conclusion was that power had rotted the leadership. After attaining power, the main aim comes to be its retention, although this is hidden from others, even from many of the power holders themselves, by deception and hypocricy. But (and there is a sharp difference of emphasis

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(1) See Koestler, A.: The Yogi and the Commissar, pp. 137-151, for evidence of this.

on this question between Koestler and Orwell) power is still not being exercised for its own sake alone, in a kind of irrational orgy of sadism. It is directed partly to the entrenchment of a "new class" and partly to industrialization and other necessary milestones on the road to pure Communism. Power may be used stupidly, capriciously and cruelly, but its use, at least to a recognizable degree, is still purposeful by conventional standards of measurement. In this view, Communist totalitarianism is based on the manipulation of techniques, and the fact that this is purposeful manipulation suggests greater strength than can be found in the blind obscurantism of Fascism.

Something of this difference can be sensed in Koestler's attitude towards the treatment of subject populations by the Stalinist and Hitlerite regimes. Between February 1940 and June 1941 huge forced deportations from Eastern Poland and Lithuania were ordered by the Soviet authorities according to a fixed schedule of priorities embracing most of the politically conscious and active elements of each region. These deportations were undertaken under "appalling conditions" but "without voluntary sadism and cruelty."(1) The reasons for the Soviet forced migrations were similar to those of the Nazis in so far as the aim was to reduce the conquered nation to a terrorized herd, but there is a stronger element of Soviet

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(1) Ibid. P. 182.

purpose in considering the uses to which the displaced population was to be put. "Russia ..... with her enormous underpopulated spaces and constant shortage of man power pursues quite different aims. She needs mobile labour for the gigantic task of industrial reconstruction, road building, public works; and she needs colonists for the unexploited remote regions of Siberia and Central Asia."(1) This relatively mild account can be compared with Koestler's attitude towards the Nazi policy of mass extermination as revealed in his sketch "The Mixed Transport" which forms a portion of the novel Arrival and Departure.(2) His violent reaction to Nazi atrocities is further revealed in the last volume of his autobiography(3) where he stresses the personal family losses he endured as a powerful contributing factor in shaping his attitude. Still, the subtle difference in approach displayed by Koestler in dealing with material of this kind suggests a tendency to employ the concept of limits in respect to Soviet terror, where the element of rational planning and purpose is strongest.

And now to sum up. Koestler continues to view totalitarianism primarily in rational terms because his points of emphasis are dictated by his own experience. Retaining many

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(1) Ibid. P. 183.

(2) Koestler, A.: Arrival and Departure, pp. 78-88.

(3) Koestler, A.: The Invisible Writing, pp. 428-429.

of the characteristics of the True Believer committed to a Cause, he sees totalitarianism as a mechanism for ordering society - ordering society in the interest of a select group, perhaps, but also in the name of an ideal and for a purpose. The core of this view of totalitarianism is the emphasis on social utility as the ultimate good. This emphasis may violate the human condition, indeed must violate the human condition. But the process is at least within our grasp. Koestler's conception of totalitarianism involves the idea of limits.

The idea of limits is contained within the idea of purpose. Any group that accepts social utility as the ultimate good must at some point along the road of historical progress do violence to the integrity of individuals in those specific cases where the aspirations of individuals and the needs of society do not correspond. Such incidents provided Koestler with the materials for his indictment of Communism. But Koestler had never really freed himself from the notion of the Party representing "the logic of history", and so he instils it with the rational purpose implicit in the phrase. Rubashov in Darkness at Noon was torn between his sense of the rightness of the Party in embodying "the logic of history" and the deep sense of guilt he felt subjectively for the crimes and betrayals he perpetrated while "representing history" objectively. His confession at the trial was an attempt to expiate that personal guilt and at the same time do one last

service for the party in order that it might survive and continue its historic mission. This argument now enables us to delineate more precisely the nature of Koestler's "lingering approbation" of Communism. In effect, he is inclined to accept with Rubashov the political and historical claims of the Communists while rejecting their moral ones.(1)

The rejection of the moral claims of Communism follows from Koestler's recognition that the idea of limits does not imply any ethical restraint on action. There is no moral brink which the Soviet regime might approach as a limit of excess, and from which it must then withdraw in obedience to some external "law". The End justifies the Means, and the selection of Means is unhampered by ethical sanctions - so much so, in fact, that "bourgeois pity" is equated with treason. In respect to this particular aspect of totalitarianism, there is little to choose between the limited and luxuriant forms. What does make the difference is the tacit assumption, in the case of limited totalitarianism, of the presence of ideological goals which continue to have some meaning for the regime. Koestler identified easily with the goal-oriented aspects of Communist ideology, for as I have shown earlier in this chapter, he had never been able to rid

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(1) For this general view see: Howe, I.: Politics and the Novel, Meridian Books, Horizon Press, N.Y., 1957, pp. 229-230.

himself of his own deep-rooted utopian longings.

The ultimate goal of Communist ideology is the achievement of pure communism, which will only be possible when levels of production are sufficiently high to fulfil the slogan "from each according to his ability; to each according to his need". At this point the state will wither away. What is of particular importance here is the coupling together of the idea of industrial progress with that of the attainment of the ideal society. For the path to utopia is marked out by a series of sub-goals, almost all of which are related to industrial production. The most important of these sub-goals, socialism, was supposed to have been reached in the mid-1930's. Defined in economic terms, this was the point at which private enterprise was eliminated with the abolition of the N.E.P. and the collectivization of agriculture. Today Khrushchev speaks frequently of the transition from socialism to communism, and quotes production statistics to prove his point.

Koestler's view of totalitarianism was limited in two senses, both deriving from the importance he attached to the goal - oriented nature of Communist ideology, and both refinements of the idea of purpose, to which I have already referred. Firstly, he conceived of Soviet totalitarianism as having a sense of direction. The path to utopia was filled

with detours, and Stalinism was the example of a regime languishing in a political backwater, but the goal was never entirely abandoned, even by the Gletkins. Thought of in this way, Koestler's view of totalitarianism contains a quality of optimism which is foreign to Orwell's view. Here, also, the presence of a hierarchy of goals in Soviet ideology is a limiting factor in the sense that it harnesses action to an End. This kind of totalitarianism is distinguishable from pure nihilism which proclaims "action for its own sake" and "everything is permitted".(1)

Secondly, the proposition that the ideal society is to be realized concomitantly with the fullest development of productive forces imposes a need for planning and central direction. Thus the Soviet regime must operate within a framework of rational decision - making if it is to achieve the economic sub-goals which are pre-requisite to the attainment of pure communism. Under such circumstances, totalitarianism is limited to the extent that the End conditions the Means. For example, terror which is entirely unplanned and irrational might destroy the industrial base which is essential to the achievement of the final goal. That Arthur Koestler realized this, and that it formed part of his conception of Left totalitarianism, I have tried to make clear in my earlier dis-

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(1) For the relationship between nihilism and totalitarianism see Camus, A.: The Rebel.

cussion of the different manner in which he reacted to Soviet and Nazi terror.

CHAPTER IV

George Orwell and Luxuriant Totalitarianism

> "The terrifying thing about the modern dictatorships is that they are something entirely unprecedented. Their end cannot be foreseen. In the past every tyranny was sooner or later overthrown, or at least resisted, because of "human nature", which as a matter of course desired liberty. But we cannot be at all certain that "human nature" is constant. It may be just as possible to produce a breed of men who do not wish for liberty as to produce a breed of hornless cows."
>
> George Orwell in the New English Weekly, January 12th, 1939.

George Orwell, as we have seen, lacked almost entirely the doctrinaire quality detectable in Arthur Koestler, and was inclined to strain all experience through the seine of his English background. One reason for the great impact of Animal Farm and 1984 on Western readers was that both succeeded in taking a foreign theme (Russian communism) and transplanting it into a soil peculiarly English. The same process can be observed in respect to Orwell's views on human nature and society, where his observations concerning conditions of class relationships at home provide the data on which many of his more general conclusions are based.

Unlike Koestler, Orwell did not struggle to fit together a structure of ethical imperatives which might serve as a guide

to right human conduct. He did reject, with Koestler, the idea of social expediency as the measure of all things, and with Koestler also, he turned his back on organized religion as an effective brake on human conduct in our modern age. The fundamental values for Orwell are contained in the idea of a sense of decency[1] which pervades his work. This sense of decency, nowhere too sharply defined, rests on the ideas of justice and equality, always assuming that liberty can be made compatible with the latter. Orwell finds in the ordinary, solid traditions of English life, rooted in past experience, a buttress to the sense of decency.[2] The middle class did much to develop these essential values, but the working class is a strong repository of them.[3] However, poverty and inequality often prevent the latter from realizing its inherent possibilites.[4]

Orwell was very disturbed by certain trends apparent in modern civilization. Perhaps the most crucial of these was

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(1) See Atkins, J.: George Orwell, Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., N.Y., 1954, Chapter I.

(2) For example, in 1984 Winston Smith realizes that the past is important and struggles to find meaning in half-forgotten nursery rhymes and antique paperweights. 1984 is the prime example of a world in which the sense of decency has vanished.

(3) Hence Orwell's tendency to ascribe the "true" spontaneity of revolution to the working class in Homage to Catalonia and his thesis that "hope lies with the proles" in 1984.

(4) A detailed discussion of the poverty and class questions may be found in The Road to Wigan Pier.

the tendency for power worship to replace money worship as the main object in the lives of many people.(1) Those who had surrendered most completely to power worship were the intellectuals,(2) not least of all the socialist intellectuals. Their totalitarian thought patterns contained all the embryonic mental traits of the members of the Inner Party in 1984.

A second major development that frightened Orwell was the forward march of the machine civilization. This had the effect of corroding the old sense of decency, and of making the relationship of man with man less personal and so less human. The actual quality of the life that was being lived under these circumstances was evident in a growing callousness towards human suffering, the acceptance of realism or the rule of expediency in politics, and the marked trend towards dishonesty in propaganda. These were the general influences which were to do so much in determining the direction of Orwell's later work.

As we pursue Orwell's ideas of human nature and society it will be well to re-examine them in the light of Koestler's

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(1) Keep the Aspidistra Flying, written in 1936, was a "money worship" book; 1984, published nine years later, was a "power worship" book.

(2) Koestler took much the same view, although his conclusions were arrived at by propounding a "neuroticism of the intellectuals". In this respect it is interesting to compare Koestler's essay entitled "The Intelligentsia" in The Yogi and the Commissar with Orwell's essay "Notes on Nationalism" in Such, Such Were the Joys.

ideas on the same subjects, for it is only in an understanding of these underlying attitudes that the meaning of totalitarianism for each writer can be clarified. Koestler attempted to cast his ideas on man and society within a frame or system. This structure was never entirely rigid because there was a place in it for supra-rational thought and mystic experience. Nevertheless, the firm stanchions of that frame were an elaborate and sophisticated theory of history, a psychosomatic(1) view of man, including an explanation of the neuroses of the intellectuals, and a dialectical method of approach in which the face of the Yogi confronts the face of the Commissar. Orwell disliked systems of any kind. He looked hard at things as they <u>are</u>, and probed for Truth wherever Falsehood seemed to him to be most firmly entrenched. This gives his work a pragmatic quality, and also gives rise to an apparent contradiction in it. For in Orwell we see a man who accepts his ethical values from the past ready-made, who is much concerned with the perversion of history at the hands of the totalitarians, and yet has very little sense of history in the total structure of his work. If Koestler is guilty of "absolutitis";(2) Orwell is equally guilty of "presentitis".

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(1) i.e. a view that takes into account the division of the mind into conscious and unconscious elements, and at the same time suggests that courage might be merely a matter of a touch of iodine more in the thyroid.

(2) See "Absolutitis" - a reference to Koestler's thought in a book review by V.S. Pritchett: <u>The New Statesman and Nation</u>, Vol.52, Aug. 18th, 1956.

Orwell's dislike of the abstract is evident in his frequent attacks on the intelligentsia. With few exceptions he sees them as being betrayed by a sense of order into adopting totalitarian thought patterns. This has unfortunate effects. In the prediction of historical events, for example, they are likely to be far less reliable than the common people because they are more partisan.(1) They are also more "continental" - i.e. devoid of the old-fashioned virtue of English patriotism. It may never have occurred to Orwell, however, that Koestler (with whom he was on good terms)(2) himself exemplified these exact characteristics.

Orwell not only distrusted abstract thought patterns but also the idea of physical utopias with which they were closely associated. He was indeed, as we have stressed throughout this paper, a very unusual type of socialist. While accepting the wider adoption of the machine as a necessity, he wrote always of the importance of humanizing the effects of machine civilization.(3) This attitude even extended to slum clearance, where he worried about the miners' right to keep pigeons, and to frequent the kind of pubs they really enjoyed on the new Corporation estates.(4) Once again the

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(1) See Orwell, G.: Such, Such Were the Joys, "Notes on Nationalism", p. 95.

(2) They wrote generally laudatory essays about each other.

(3) A view shared by Simone Weil: See The Need for Roots, Beacon Press, Boston, 1952, pp. 73-78.

(4) Orwell, G.: The Road to Wigan Pier, pp. 71-73.

contrast with Koestler is evident.

George Orwell's experiences in Spain proved to be the catalyst that drew his ideas together. Coming Up For Air, the novel that he wrote after his return to England foreshadows 1984: "It's all going to happen. All the things you've got at the back of your mind, the things you're terrified of, the things that you tell yourself are just a nightmare or only happen in foreign countries. The bombs, the food queues, the rubber truncheons, the barbed wire, the coloured shirts, the enormous faces, the machine guns squirting out of bedroom windows. It's all going to happen."(1) Beside this picture of impending catastrophe, Animal Farm, published almost six years later and after the war, seems almost light-hearted. John Atkins, giving the artist's point of view, explains the change in mood as follows: "Orwell had reached the point where his emotions were held in check by his reason at a fine point of balance. It is not a position that can be maintained for long. By the time he wrote 1984 his emotions had spilled over and weighed down what he would have called his common sense. He did not retreat into shrillness, but into its opposite, a monotony of the spirit."(2)

From the political standpoint it seems likely that

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(1) Orwell, G.: Coming Up For Air, Penguin, 1962, pp. 223-224.

(2) Atkins, J.: George Orwell, op.cit., pp. 221-222.

Orwell was trying to express one of the lessons learned in Spain. The betrayal of the spontaneous revolution of the common man had stuck in his mind, and this is essentially the main theme of Animal Farm. As Atkins has noted correctly, Animal Farm represents Orwell's most rational stage of thought, and consequently, at this point, Orwell and Koestler are very close in their political thinking. It is from the idea of revolution betrayed - not revolution calculatingly betrayed, but revolution betrayed by circumstances - that Koestler derives his genesis of totalitarianism. Orwell's idea of the genesis of totalitarianism, as brought to perfection in 1984, is only partially concerned with aborted revolution. More basic to his thought is his tendency to isolate certain anomolies in modern life, and by the technique of "one step further", letting them work out to their ultimate consequences. Orwell stresses the possibility, and this may be due to the influence of James Burnham upon his work, of the potentiality for totalitarianism in all industrial states.

In any case it seems quite likely that Animal Farm (1945) owes a great deal to Darkness at Noon (1940), published five years earlier. Koestler speaks of "... the necessity to drill every sentence into the masses by vulgarization and endless repetition", while Orwell's sheep chant "Four legs good, two legs bad." Koestler portrays the party bosses using the peasantry for their own purposes and stamping it out when it

suits them, while the pigs use Boxer and then sell him for glue. Koestler's saboteur "scapegoats" are the mirror of Orwell's Snowball. In both works public trials and confessions following blood purges are presented as a means of consolidation.

But having noted the close affinity in the ideas of Orwell and Koestler at this one point, we must now examine briefly a sample of those anomolies of modern life which Orwell was to extend into a totalitarian system in 1984. Foremost among these were the attacks on intellectual freedom discussed by Orwell in two essays, "Politics and the English Language" and "The Prevention of Literature"(1), both written in 1945-1946. The dates here are significant because they represent a renewal of the trend in Orwell's work discernible in Coming Up For Air (1940) but not emphasized in Animal Farm (1945).

In "Politics and the English Language" Orwell begins with the proposition that the decline of the English language, particularly evident in the political writing of the day, must ultimately have political causes and in turn gives rise to political effects. The basic cause of euphemism, question - begging and sheer cloudy vagueness in writing is insincerity. The English intellectual, who in Orwell's mind had sold himself

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(1) Contained in the collection Shooting an Elephant (1950) and also in Selected Essays, Penguin, 1957, My references are to the latter.

to some kind of power system, resorted to such linguistic distortion because of the gap between his real and his declared aims. In defence of some system, the bombardment of villages becomes pacification; the abuse of the peasantry, transfer of population. Even worse is the platform speaker who spouts away about bestial atrocities, iron heel, bloodstained tyranny, and so on. "A speaker who uses that kind of phraseology has gone some distance towards turning himself into a machine. The appropriate noises are coming out of his larynx, but his brain is not involved as it would be if he were choosing his words for himself."(1) Surely this is the prototype of the Duckspeaker of 1984.

But if thought corrupts language, language can also corrupt thought. Bad usage, and in particular overindulgence in abstractions and Latinisms, stand between the writer and his meaning. Language can become an instrument for concealing or even preventing thought. In 1984, Newspeak was designed for just this latter end, although here Orwell reverses the trend of his day and achieves his effect by paring the language to the bone.

It is in "The Prevention of Literature", however, that Orwell gives us the best summary of his thoughts on totalitarianism, and indicates most clearly the direction that 1984 was to take. The major enemies of intellectual freedom are

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(1) Orwell, G.: Selected Essays, p. 152.

now identified as the apologists for totalitarianism, in particular Communist sympathizers. Their most common method of attack is through the suppression and distortion of facts "to such an extent as to make it doubtful whether a true history of our times can ever be written."(1)

Switching from the totalitarian thinker to the totalitarian state, Orwell develops the idea that deliberate lying becomes an integral necessity, and history something to be created rather than learned, because infallibility of the leadership is a cardinal principle for survival. The constant need for changes in policy infers a continuous alteration of the past, but in the long run this will not be enough. Taking the argument "one step further" Orwell foresees that totalitarian states will impose on their subjects a disbelief in the very existence of objective truth. The objection can be raised that this is impossible in a scientific age where the evidence of the senses must be taken into account in almost every aspect of everyday life. However, --- "a totalitarian society which succeeded in perpetuating itself would probably set up a schizophrenic system of thought, in which the laws of common sense held good in everyday life and in certain exact sciences, but could be disregarded by the politician, the historian, and the sociol-

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(1) Orwell, G.: Ibid, p. 163.

ogist."[1] Here we have the embryonic idea of doublethink, later to occupy such a prominent place in the totalitarian society of 1984.

So crippling would the atmosphere of totalitarianism be to the creative impulse, that prose literature as it is now known must actually come to an end. At the very best, some kind of low-grade fiction might be produced in a mechanical way, and the example of how Disney cartoons are put together, or how "plotguides" are used by unscrupulous hack writers, again foreshadows the "fiction machines" that Julia tended in the Ministry of Truth.

It has been said[2] that 1984 is at the same time a model and a vision - a model of the totalitarian state in its "pure" or essential form and a vision of what this state can do to human life. We have already given examples illustrating the genesis of the model, that is to say the anomolies characteristic of industrial civilization which Orwell in the fully-developed thought of 1984 had allowed to spin forward without the brake of sentiment or humaneness. It now remains to examine briefly the underlying principles on which the model was constructed, and the effects of these on the

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(1) Ibid, p. 165.

(2) Howe, I.: Politics and the Novel, op.cit., p. 239.

human beings who inhabited Orwell's fictional totalitarian world. This we propose to do by discussing, in terms of 1984, totalitarian stability, distortion of reality, and the invasion of the human personality.

Martin Kessler, in an article entitled "Power and the Perfect State"[1] sees the fundamental problem of the modern repressive dictatorship in how to maintain full employment and at the same time retain the scarcities on which that dictatorship depends. The problem is solved in 1984, where Goldstein's "The Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism"[2] provides an answer to the question raised above in some detail. The answer is, of course, perpetual war, which has the merit of not only destroying surplus production, thus maintaining the tensions of economic life for the work force at any required level, but, also, through the possibilities for induced hysteria, to do so in a manner psychologically satisfactory to the regime. As waged by the three super-states in which the world of 1984 is divided[3], the war is perpetual in the sense that it will continue indefinitely because for domestic reasons of control it is necessary to the rulers of

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(1) Kessler, M.: "Power and the Perfect State", Political Science Quarterly, vol. 72, December, 1957.

(2) An imitation, particularly in respect to the details of style, of Trotsky's "The Revolution Betrayed". It is worth noting that Koestler also interjected purely political passages into his novels - e.g. Rubashov's "Law of Relative Maturity" in Darkness at Noon.

(3) Here Orwell is again indebted to James Burnham's The Managerial Revolution.

all three states, and marginal in the sense that its effects can never be felt in a decisive way by any of them.

In the realm of internal affairs the rulers of Oceania used technical devices to maintain stability by "freezing" the existing social structure. One of Orwell's insights into the dynamics of the totalitarian state was that there could be no thoroughly integrated system without the means of making power relationships total. Hence the telescreens, the helicopters of the Thought Police, the novel writing machines, and so on. Once again the horror of repression is increased by simply accentuating existing trends in methods of control familiar to everyone. We know, for example, that television is already used to check on the honesty of employees in the sorting departments of post offices, and that police helicopters have been used to identify and track down traffic violators. Thus, once again Orwell demonstrates the consistency of his general approach to totalitarianism by resisting the temptation to introduce the technics of science fiction into his model state.

The arrangement of class relationships in 1984 is also intended to increase the degree of stability.(1) The proles, comprising 85 % of the population, are virtually ignored except on the rare occasions when some emerging leader must

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(1) Orwell is vulnerable here, however, as we will see later.

be picked off. For the rest, hard work, abominable living conditions, gambling, and a mixture of cheap literature and pornography known scornfully as prolefeed in Newspeak, are guaranteed to ensure passivity. Virtually ignoring 85 % of the population means that the remaining 15 % can be brought under almost unendurable surveillance and the most intense conditioning techniques. Even a momentary flash of spontaneous intelligence, let alone the idea of rebellion, constitutes crimethink.

Unendurable surveillance and intense conditioning techniques are an essential background to the distortion of reality, and the transvaluation of values[1] is an external indication of what is taking place. In many ways the nature of reality is the central philosophic theme of 1984. Thus O'Brien, the inquisitor, during the interrogation of Winston Smith, puts the totalitarian case as follows: "You believe that reality is something objective, external, existing in its own right. You also believe that the nature of reality is self-evident. When you delude yourself into thinking that you see something, you assume that everyone else sees the same thing as you. But I tell you, Winston, that reality is not

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(1) This terms is used by Hannah Arendt, and to my knowledge is original with her, but its meaning is made abundantly clear by George Orwell in the formulation of the three Party slogans: War is Peace; Freedom is Slavery; Ignorance is Strength.

external. Reality exists in the human mind, and nowhere else. Not in the individual mind, which can make mistakes, and in any case soon perishes; only in the mind of the Party, which is collective and immortal. Whatever the Party holds to be truth, is truth."(1)

The Party makes good its claim to be the custodian of truth because it controls records and it controls memories. History is constantly rewritten to conform to the latest Party line. Language has been reconstituted in such a way that each single and exact word has one specific meaning, leaving no room for the individual interpretation which is at the basis of all heretical thought. Crimestop, blackwhite, and doublethink complete the process. The good Party member trains himself to stop short at the mere suggestion of dangerous thought, and is always willing to say that black is white when the Party demands it. Doublethink, the ultimate in reality control, is the ability to simultaneously maintain in one's own mind two opposing beliefs, and to accept both of these beliefs even when they contradict each other. In addition, the constant testing and purging of Party members at the slightest hint of unorthodoxy (e.g. a twitching face) creates an atmosphere in which a truly rational man can imagine himself insane. Ignorance is Strength. And, furthermore, the ultimate in totalitarian

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(1) Orwell, G.: 1984, p. 205.

stability has been achieved;[1] the Party has succeeded in penetrating the last bastion of the human mind. The realization of this prompts Winston Smith to write in his diary one of the statements which comes closest to summing up all of his dimly-felt aspirations to be free: "Freedom is the freedom to say that two plus two make four. If that is granted, all else follows."[2]

The Party does not limit itself to the rape of the mind, however, but is intent on the invasion of the total human personality. The sexual instinct was to be suppressed beyond that necessary for the mere procreation of children. To this end, an Anti-Sex League operated among the young, while promiscuity between Party members was punishable by death. The Party saw in sexual love the danger of loyalty stolen from the state, and so what at first sight appears to be physical, emotional, and intimate, must be transformed into something political and public. Repressed sexual instinct was sublimated in orgies of political hate, when war prisoners were hanged, or the scapegoat, Goldstein, reviled in a daily ritual. Thus as nearly as was possible, all actions, as well as all thought, were to be public in the sense that they belonged only to the

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(1) Hence the Party slogan: "Who controls the past, controls the future; who controls the present controls the past."

(2) Orwell, G.: 1984, p. 69.

Party. To this end the Party played on the emotions of the people of Oceania as one might pluck the strings of a guitar.

Not even the family was beyond the reach of the Party. Youth organizations, such as the Spies, made possible a very efficient system of betrayal to which the parents of the more ardent members were the first to fall victim. Indoctrination and brutalization of youth began early, and served a useful immediate purpose from the point of view of the regime, for it increased that fear and suspicion, which by isolating neighbour from neighbour and father from son, makes possible a total identification with the Party. Parsons, in 1984, was just this type of Party-oriented new man; nevertheless he was handed over to the Thought Police by his seven-year-old daughter for muttering the ultimate in thought-crime - "Down with Big Brother" - in his sleep.

Winston Smith understood the mechanics of control, but not the Party's "raison d'etre".(1) Once again it is O'Brien who enlightens him. "The Party seeks power entirely for its own sake. We are not interested in the good of others; we are interested solely in power. Not wealth or luxury or long life or happiness; only power, pure power. What pure power means you will understand presently. We are different from all the oligarchies in the past in that we know what we

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(1) "I understand How; I do not understand WHY."

are doing. All the others, even those who resembled ourselves, were cowards and hypocrites. The German Nazis and the Russian Communists came very close to us in their methods, but they never had the courage to recognize their own motives. They pretended, perhaps they even believed, that they had seized power unwillingly and for a limited time, and that just around the corner there lay a paradise where human beings would be free and equal. We are not like that. We know that no one ever seizes power with the intention of relinquishing it. Power is not a means; it is an end. One does not establish a dictatorship in order to safeguard a revolution; one makes the revolution in order to establish the dictatorship. The object of persecution is persecution. The object of torture is torture. The object of power is power. Now do you begin to understand me?"(1)

There are two aspects of the above quotation that help make Orwell's view of totalitarianism unique. One is the idea, very different from Koestler's, that the Party has divorced itself completely from all ideas of social purpose. This is equivalent to saying that it has abandoned ideology(2) entirely in exchange for the more abstract principle of "power for its own sake". It is the absence of any real ideology in

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(1) Orwell, G.: 1984, p. 217.

(2) The question of the place of ideology in totalitarian system will be examined in the concluding chapter.

.the Ingsoc tyranny that takes the theory of totalitarianism "one step further" beyond that practised by the Russian Communists and German Nazis into its "pure" form.

The second aspect of the quotation worth noting is that the meaning of "power for its own sake" is construed as power to inflict pain and suffering on human beings. Not only are we divorced from ideology, but from both rationality and restraint in the exercise of power. "If you want a picture of the future, imagine a boot stamping on a human face - forever."(1)

It now remains to bring into clear focus my conception of luxuriant totalitarianism, which I believe to be well represented in the work of George Orwell, and at the same time to contrast it with Koestler's limited totalitarianism. If Koestler's idea of Left totalitarianism may be termed limited totalitarianism because it contains the germ of social purpose operating as a brake on revolutionary dynamism, Orwell's final estimate of the totalitarian essence is indeed luxuriant totalitarianism, or totalitarianism full-blown. By this latter term I mean to infer all that is lush, rank, evil and irrational in the totalitarian state (its "tone"), and also a propensity for the total invasion of the human personality as irresistible as the power of thick jungle plants pushing blindly towards

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(1) Orwell, G.: 1984, p. 220.

the light. It is also submitted that luxuriant totalitarianism is characterized by the absence of any real ideology. In such a "pure" totalitarian state social utility as the ultimate good is replaced by the idea of power for its own sake. But power is no longer linked to social purpose. This is illustrated in 1984 by the almost complete neglect of the proles by the Inner Party. Whereas Koestler's indictment of the regime centres on a feeling of bureaucratic impatience to begin shaping the masses into a cohesive order representative of its ideology, the proles of 1984 are left at the subsistence level to drink and gamble their lives away. The Inner Party prefers to expand its energies on the more intelligent 15 % of the population - the "potentially dangerous" fraction. History has come to a stop because the possibility of social progress has come to a stop. Orwell's final view of totalitarianism is pessimistic compared with Koestler's insight into that motion of the historical dialectic which suggests change and with it an element of hope. He was able to interpret this basic fact in 1984 in personal terms. "Orwell's profoundest insight is that in a totalitarian world man's life is shorn of dynamic possibilities. The end of life is completely predictable in its beginning, the beginning merely a manipulated preparation for the end."(1)

There is another sense in which Orwell has taken

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(1) Howe, I.: Politics and the Novel, op.cit., p. 240.

"one step further" than Koestler, that is, moved from the limited to the luxuriant view of totalitarianism. Koestler would certainly admit that one of the aims of totalitarianism is to make people think "right" or orthodox thoughts. This is what all comrades do when they think "objectively"; they "learn" to tune their minds to the party's position regardless of "subjective" feelings about the question in point. But Orwell brings out strongly that under the luxuriant totalitarian state this would not be nearly enough. There the basic totalitarian aim is to make people less and less conscious, less and less able to make distinctions, to draw conclusions, and to discriminate between truth and falsehood. The implementation of this aim involves the adoption of the two complementary procedures already discussed: the distortion of reality, and the invasion of the human personality.

The significance of these two procedures may be distinguished when the fate of Rubashov in Darkness at Noon is contrasted with that of Winston Smith in 1984. At the same time this contrast reveals most strikingly the essential difference between limited and luxuriant totalitarianism. Rubashov has been induced to confess by the relentless application of logical categories; he has been mis-treated and mentally exhausted but not physically tortured. He dies with some self-respect left, with a growing sense of his right to believe in his own rightness, and a troubled awareness that there is

a serious miscalculation in the Party's social equation. Winston Smith, however, is a very different case. It was not enough that he be tortured until he willed the betrayal of Julia, it was not even enough that he learn to love Big Brother; in the end be awaited vaporization secure in the knowledge that 2+2 = 5.

CHAPTER V

Koestler, Orwell, and Contemporary Theories of Totalitarianism.

> "In any event, the fearful imagination has the great advantage to dissolve the sophistical-dialectic interpretations of politics which are all based on the superstition that something good might result from evil."
>
> Hannah Arendt in The Origins of Totalitarianism.

> "Nothing is more confusing and harmful than the habit of lumping together diverse regimes and social phenomena under one label. Stalinists have often lumped together all their opponents as fascists. The Anti-Stalinist lumps together Nazis, fascists, Stalinists, Leninists, and just Marxists, as totalitarians, and then assures us that totalitarianism, being a completely new phenomenon, - rules out even the possibility of any change and evolution, let alone quasi-liberal reform."
>
> Isaac Deutscher in 'A Reply to Critics' (essay), Heretics and Renegades.

Until now I have attempted to isolate and describe the essence of totalitarianism as perceived by Orwell and Koestler, and in order to crystallize yet differentiate my findings, have made use of the terms "luxuriant totalitarianism" and "limited totalitarianism". In this remaining chapter I will try to find out whether or not these concepts have any applicability to contemporary theories of totalitarianism. In the process of this investigation I hope to add a further dimension to the meaning of the concepts themselves.

The theorist whose work reflects most closely the idea of luxuriant totalitarianism, and who, in mood, is closest to the spirit of Orwell's 1984, is Hannah Arendt. Her most important book on the subject, The Origins of Totalitarianism, seems saturated with the same kind of hopeless horror that pervades Orwell's novel. The reason for this is evident when we examine her major thesis: "If lawfulness is the essence of tyranny, then terror is the essence of totalitarian domination."(1) Furthermore, in a frightening contradiction to common sense, --- "total terror is launched only after --- the regime no longer has anything to fear from the opposition."(2) This element of irrationality becomes, indeed, one of the major characteristics of a totalitarian regime and permeates the multiple relationships between Party-state and people. "The ideal subject of totalitarian rule is not the convinced Nazi or the convinced Communist, but people for whom the distinction between fact and fiction (i.e. the reality of experience) and the distinction between true and false (i.e. the standards of thought) no longer exist."(3) This last sentence could just as easily have been written by George Orwell.

At this point the question of the place of ideology

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(1) Arendt, H.: The Origins of Totalitarianism, Meridian Books, N.Y., 1958, p. 464.

(2) Ibid, p. 440.

(3) Ibid, p. 474.

in totalitarian systems is bound to arise. It has already been pointed out that Orwell's idea of complete totalitarian domination left little room for ideology, defined by Arendt as "--- isms which to the satisfaction of their adherents can explain everything and every occurrence by deducing it from a single premise."(1)

The "love Big Brother - hate Goldstein" equation never went much further than the indoctrination and propaganda which can be expected from any well-organized authoritarian regime. Hannah Arendt's The Origins of Totalitarianism, however, in its 1958 edition, included a new chapter - "Ideology and Terror". Is this not indicative of a "parting of the ways" between Orwell and Arendt on a point of theory?

Arendt's treatment of ideologies, although complex, in the final analysis seems to strengthen rather than weaken the theoretical link with Orwell. Only an over-simplification of that treatment is possible here,(2) but perhaps the key proposition Arendt advances is that totalitarian dictators are much more influenced by the structure and logical movement of ideology than by its actual content. Thus to Stalin it was not so much the struggle of classes that appealed as the "mercilessness of his dialectics". This, of course, infers

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(1) Ibid, p. 468.

(2) Ibid, Chapter 13, for a full treatment.

a kind of logic, and is reminiscent of Koestler rather than Orwell if left at this point. But Arendt takes it much further. The "mercilessness of his dialectics" becomes something more like the ghost of evil which emanates from Orwell's Inner Party. This is so because dialectics tend to become detached from the goal-centred (utopian) content of the ideology and exist as an operating principle in their own right. Ideology is linked to terror when ideological implications are driven into extremes of logical consistency, and a "dying class" comprises people condemned to death.

The real theoretical gap between Orwell and Arendt appears when the question of dynamics is examined. For Arendt, all is movement, particularly <u>after</u> the consolidation of the regime. Ideology is made to serve movement by earmarking successive categories of "objective enemies" for liquidation, and by drawing attention to the world as the broad stage on which the totalitarian drama is to be fully enacted in the years of victory. Isolated individuals become One in propaganda and terror; crowds cheer, armies march.

Within the Party, as well as within the body politic, all is movement. Power replaces law as the cardinal principle of organization, and everything is uncertain and unpredictable. Blind loyalty to the dictator is the "fuehrer-prinzip" which mitigates against the hierarchial, the bureauc-

ratic, the orderly. Duplication of function is rampant, not only as between Party and state, but between the organs of the Party itself. And, finally, the concentration and extermination camps stand as hellish witness to the movement consequent on the "mercilessness of his dialectics".

Orwell's state is stagnant by comparison. The proles are virtually ignored as a political force. Big Brother is rather a pallid dictator; it is doubtful, in fact, if he even exists. No one cares much about the war except the few members of the Inner Party charged with its perpetuation. The problem of maintaining production and distribution levels in a manner psychologically satisfactory to the regime has been solved, and economics stabilized. It is true that the system is intensely repressive, but in an "organized" and individual way.(1) The mass purges, where the secret police were let loose on large segments of the population classed as "objective enemies", seem to have become a thing of the past.

The political theorist who reacts most strongly to the Orwell-Arendt conception of the essence of totalitarianism is Isaac Deutscher. In urging his own interpretation of Orwell's

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(1) This kind of feature led Zbigniew Brzezinski to describe 1984 as "rationalist totalitarianism" - a description totally unacceptable to Isaac Deutscher who stresses quite different aspects, as is evident below. See: Brzezinski, Z.: Ideology and Power in Soviet Politics, Praeger, N.Y., 1962, p. 33.

views, he supports the argument of the important influence upon Orwell of the Spanish civil war, or rather of the Great Purges of 1936-1938 which had their repercussions in Spanish politics. These events left Orwell confused and shaken, Deutscher maintains, because he was essentially a pragmatic rationalist who assumed at this time a certain identity with the Soviet regime. In the Catalonian world of distorted history, witch-hunt, and applied terror he lost his bearings. "He found himself incapable of explaining what was happening in terms which were familiar to him, the terms of empirical common sense. Abandoning rationalism, he increasingly viewed reality through the dark glasses of a quasi-mystical pessimism."(1) Consequently, by the time Orwell had finished 1984 ---- "totalitarian society is ruled by a disembodied sadism ---- The party is not a social body actuated by any interest or purpose. It is a phantom-like emanation of all that is foul in human nature. It is the metaphysical, mad and triumphant, Ghost of Evil."(2)

In rejecting Orwell's conception of the essence of totalitarianism Deutscher reveals a certain identity with Arthur Koestler - an identity he is most reluctant to admit. Deutscher, the self-proclaimed Marxist, (3) has little but

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(1) Deutscher, I.: "1984 - The Mysticism of Cruelty" (essay), Heretics and Renegades, Hamish Hamilton, London, 1955, pp. 45-46.

(2) Deutscher, I.: Heretics and Renegades, p. 49.

(3) "I have, of course, never denied my Marxist convictions". Ibid, p. 194.

contempt for the "left-wing cold war propagandist, who has not yet had time to shed the infantile diseases of ex-communism ---.."[1] An entire essay, "The Ex-Communist's Conscience",[2] points the scornful finger at Koestler and explores the reasons for his "lingering approbation". And Koestler can hit back, as witness the pungent passage in The Yogi and the Commissar concerning "the Trotskyite attitude of the betrayed lover who proclaims to all and sundry that his sweetheart is a whore and yet foams with rage at each new proof of it."[3] As always, the polemics on the Left tend to obscure the common ground.

And yet the common ground is there. Deutscher's view of totalitarianism, based on the same Marxist approach to history which we have already mentioned earlier as being characteristic of Koestler, is summarized in his book, Russia: What Next?[4] Here the genesis of totalitarianism is seen to be Koestler's theme of "revolution betrayed" plus elements drawn from Russia's past and Stalin's personal experience, which in amalgamation, produced that "blend of Marxism, autocracy, Greek Orthodoxy, and primitive magic",[5] that was Stalinism.

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(1) Ibid, p. 202.

(2) Ibid, pp. 9-22.

(3) Koestler, A.: The Yogi and The Commissar, p. 121..

(4) Deutscher, I.: Russia: What Next? Oxford Univ.Pr.,N.Y., 1953.

(5) Ibid, p. 63.

The face of the tyrant is allowed to appear more clearly than it does Koestler's work because of the stress on irrational factors such as "primitive magic" operative over a limited phase. But behind all this the broadly deterministic forces of history are still at work. Stalinism, itself, destroyed the semi-Asiatic primitive society on which it was nurtured. The guilt of its hideous crimes can to some extent be offset by the growth of a strong, modern industrial state. The resultant new industrial society, with its higher level of expectations and inherent rationality, will never tolerate the bloody purges and rigid thought control which marked respectively the apex and decline of the Stalinist system. Thus Stalin's death did not mean the end of one totalitarian epoch and the beginning of another with different characteristics, but inaugurates a genuine transitional period which may, failing the intervention of military Bonapartism sparked by unfavourable developments in foreign affairs, tend towards the establishment of a liberal democracy.

Koestler's view of Soviet totalitarianism is much less optimistic than this. Considering his broadly Marxist approach, why is this so? I have already noted in Koestler's work the tendency to cloak the face of the tyrant.(1) I have also noted, particularly in The Yogi and the Commissar, a tendency to dwell on those features of Stalinism such as dif-

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(1) See above, p. 53.

ferential rewards and inherited wealth which serve as delineating marks indicating a re-structuring of society. In short, Koestler conceives of power being wielded on behalf of a "new class", whose interest can be protected by virtue of its monopoly over the means of coercion. Devotion to its own self-interest, and a fading belief in the tattered remnants of an ideology, will ensure an element of rationality in the exercise of power by this new class and its dictator-leader. At the same time, it will be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to displace it from its entrenched position.

While Koestler and Deutscher assume a degree of rationality as part of their conception of totalitarianism, Deutscher, in particular, incorporates some Orwellian features as well. I have already referred to Deutscher's explanation of the uniqueness of Stalinism,[1] compounded of Koestler's aborted revolution and Orwell's intensification of anomalies in the peculiar spirit of the age. For Deutscher, of course, the anomolies were contained in the Russian past and Russian character rather than in the contradictions of a maturing machine civilization. But more evidently, perhaps, Deutscher also shares with Orwell that Trotskyite faith in the "spontaneity" and "basic worthiness" of the masses. For Orwell this feeling was ultimately overcome, although an abundance

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(1) See above, p. 90.

of symbolism is detectable throughout 1984,[1] by the hopelessness of his conviction that the growing intensification of anomalies would mean first war, and finally the fall of totalitarian darkness. Deutscher's Marxist background, however, causes him to interpret the long-run trend of industrial development as being favourable to the proletarist, which really only needs the correct historical conditions to realize its inherent potentialities. Orwell distrusted and feared the forward march of machine civilization, which carried with it the seeds of totalitarianism; Deutscher welcomed the same movement as a potential liberator of the masses from the grip of totalitarian tyranny.

If we could conceive of a spectral arc of the theory of totalitarianism, laid out in all possible gradations between luxuriant and limited, the ideas of Arendt and Deutscher might constitute the two terminal poles. At the right of the arc is luxuriant totalitarianism as Arendt conceives of it. The main emphasis here is on terror, irrational thought and action, and above all, the internal dynamics which keep all in flux. Totalitarianism is regarded as an all-embracing term, and Stalinism merely a kind of Left-fascism. The unrestrained use of terror, and a complete monopoly over the

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(1) e.g. The robust, middle-aged woman singing at her endless task of washing clothes, observed by Winston Smith through the window of the rented room.

technical means of coercion, seems to rule out any really fundamental change in the basic nature of totalitarian systems unless they can be overthrown by forces outside the country.

Deutscher, at the other end of the spectrum, is extremely suspicious of the all-embracing term totalitarianism, with the emphasis on the primacy of terror and irrationality assigned to it by Arendt. Russian Communism, even under Stalin, revealed enough rational factors to transform the entire economy within a matter of two generations from a position of backwardness to one of near-equality with the United States. Could this tremendous leap forward have been made if the normal state of Party and society was one of irrational flux? It seems unlikely. Rather, Deutscher affirms, one should think of Stalinism as constituting a historical response to a set of historically unique conditions, one of which was the realization within the Party of the necessity of equating socialism and industrialization. As these conditions disappear, as industrialization, for example, becomes a fact, Stalinism will wither away. Change to non-totalitarian forms is possible - indeed, is inevitable.

There is a place between the poles of our hypothetical political spectrum for all of the theorists who devote considerable attention to totalitarianism. Carl Friedrich and Zbigniew Brzezinski might thus be thought of as "modified-

'luxuriant" in their general approach. While down-playing the role of terror and up-playing that of ideology, bureaucratization, and other factors, they nevertheless view totalitarianism as a kind of organic entity describable by a cluster of objective attributes.(1) Totalitarianism is presented as being historically unique and sui generis, with its fascist and Communist forms basically, though not wholly, alike.

The great difficulty facing theorists who incline towards the luxuriant pole of the political spectrum is the virtual impossibility of reconciling their theories completely with both the vast scale of Soviet industrial and scientific achievement evident by the mid-20th century, and with the internal political change taking place in Russia since the death of Stalin. The very irrationality of totalitarianism might be expected to prevent spectacular industrial and scientific advance when terror is pursued to extremes in the name of ideology.(2) Furthermore, regimes truly totalitarian within the meaning of the luxuriant theorists are by nature driven to dominate and coerce in every sphere of human activity. Genuine change of the order suggested by Isaac Deutscher is

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(1) Friedrich, C.J. and Brzezinski, Z.K.: Totalitarian Dictatorship and Democracy, Praeger, N.Y., 1961, pp. 9-10.

(2) Hannah Arendt gives examples and coins the descriptive phrase "open anti-utility", op.cit., p. 445.

almost precluded by definition. The theory does not fit well the facts of Khrushchev's Russia where the forced labour camps seem to have been largely emptied, the role of the secret police reduced, and the general area of individual initiative in social life enlarged.

For the reasons suggested above, the final chapters of the works of the luxuriant and modified-luxuriant theorists are likely to prove the least satisfactory. Hannah Arendt seems to anticipate at least the possibility of the resumption of full-fledged terror like that of the thirties, or, alternately "rather a sudden and dramatic collapse of the whole regime than a gradual normalization."(1) Brzezinski, faced with an obviously more "rational" Soviet Union, tries to adjust theory to facts. In so doing, he begins a migration towards the other pole of the political spectrum. The degree of the shift is indicated in part by his statement that "--- there is no evidence to suggest that this in itself (i.e. increased rationality) is incompatible with totalitarianism which need not be interpreted in terms of irrational terror almost for the sake of terror."(2) Finally, the "new face" of totalitarianism is pictured in greater detail and with more sophistication by such theorists as Adam Ulam. "It becomes clearer how the

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(1) Ibid, p. 510.

(2) Brzezinski, Z.K.: Ideology and Power in Soviet Politics, Praeger, N.Y., 1962, p. 30.

rulers propose to resolve the paradox of the retention of their totalitarian power over an industrialized and literate society. They stake that power on the revival of the doctrine and of the party which is its embodiment; on linking the progress and successes of the Soviet Union with Marxism-Leninism and the Communist Party. The arsenal of totalitarianism, its instruments of suppression, terror, and censorship are to be kept in readiness, but are to be used more sparingly while the regime bases its policies of the moment on its ability to persuade and demonstrate to Soviet citizens that Communism is a viable and vigorous way of life which has nothing to learn from or finds nothing to envy in the obsolete democratic or liberal ideas."(1)

The fact that totalitarianism can wear many "faces", however, suggests that there is a good deal of ambiguity in the meaning of the term - ambiguity which reflects the all-embracing nature of the concept itself. For the term "totalitarianism" has been applied indiscriminately to different phases of particular mass movements and to different types of established authoritarian regimes. Even a glance at the results of collective scholarship on the subject, such as the proceedings of the March, 1953, conference on totalitarianism, held under the auspices of the American Academy of Arts and

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(1) Ulam, A.: The New Face of Soviet Totalitarianism, Harvard Univ.Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1963, p. 115.

Sciences,[1] reveals attempts to relate totalitarianism, in various significant ways, to religion, science, history and economics. Robert Tucker[2] points out the failure of the concept/of totalitarianism to direct attention to the significant differences between the closely resembling political phenomena of communism and fascism. The concept also fails to bring out significant resemblances between both these phenomena and another class of nationalist movement-regime such as the one established in Ghana under Nkrumah. Tucker's plea is for a scientific classification of mass movements and the resultant movement-regimes valid over a considerable area of the world and over a relatively long space of time. Presumably the all-embracing concept of totalitarianism could then be broken down into a variety of sharper concepts which would be of great value in determining the nature of authoritarian political behaviour in any one specific case.

The insights we have gained into the concept of totalitarianism through the study of its impact on Koestler and Orwell has been a tiny step in this direction. For the terms luxuriant totalitarianism and limited totalitarianism, although subject to further refinement in respect to meaning,

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(1) Friedrich, Carl J. ed.: Totalitarianism, Harvard Univ. Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1954.

(2) Tucker, Robert C.: "Towards a Comparative Politics of Movement-Regimes", The American Political Science Review, Vol. LV, no.2, June, 1961.

have some relevance for political theory and might be applied in two different ways. First, if the course of Russian totalitarianism is studied carefully, it can be divided into distinct phases. Ignoring the preparatory Leninist period, the luxuriant phase, roughly the decade between 1929 and 1939, is characterized by such features as excessive terror, adulation of the Leader, and a general inclination to suborn ideology in the interest of the dynamics of pure action. The Second World War and its aftermath to the death of Stalin, constitutes a kind of interregnum in which the regime first reverted to nationalist symbols as a substitute for revolutionary incentives, and later imposed a policy of stale repressionism as a substitute for revolutionary dynamics. The term limited totalitarianism, if theorists such as Adam Ulam are right, might apply to the period from the death of Stalin into the foreseeable future. The new tone of the regime would be indicated by the nature of its major tasks. The most pressing of these would be to re-work ideology on purer Marxist-Leninist lines, and to harness it to the rational elements inherent in an advanced industrial system. Coming to terms with the more sophisticated urban masses also implies restriction in the use of terror, except in cases of intellectual dissent serious enough to undermine the regime.(1) It is in the nature of these tasks that they could be carried out more readily in

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(1) As in the case of Boris Pasternak. Adam Ulam, op.cit., p. 213.

an atmosphere of greater inter-party democracy, at least as it might apply to the upper echelons of the Party. And even if Isaac Deutscher, rather than Adam Ulam, should prove to be right, although from the hindsight of almost a decade progress towards a more deeply-rooted democracy in the Soviet Union seems slow and hesitant, the concept of limited totalitarianism is a useful analytical tool to have on hand in assessing the meaning of the passing phase.

Eric Hoffer's study, The True Believer,(1) appears to confirm the idea of distinct phases in mass movements by concentrating attention on the personal factor. Thus men of words, fanatics, and men of action, all play important roles as the mass movement develops. In the Russian experience, Marx is seen as the man of words, Lenin the fanatic, and Stalin part fanatic and part man of action. The designation of Stalin as part fanatic and part man of action is of interest to us here, for it helps to explain the "mixed" character of the luxuriant phase of Russian totalitarianism, in which the irrationality of excessive terror was offset by the directed rationality of the Five Year Plans. Had Hoffer's book been published after the death of Stalin instead of in 1951, he might have been tempted to see in Khrushchev the man

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(1) Hoffer, Eric: The True Believer, Mentor Books, N.Y., 1958, Part IV.

of action more clearly delineated. It may well be that the meaning of such concepts as limited and luxuriant totalitarianism will have to be refined to the point where they make greater allowances for the personal factors which influence the course of mass movements.

Second, the concepts of limited and luxuriant totalitarianism might prove useful in examining, not only the course of mass movements within a single country, as we have suggested above,(1) but the nature of established totalitarian regimes generally. Thus the Chinese experiment would appear to be of the luxuriant type in respect to the depths to which the totalitarian influences penetrate society, but singularly lacking in regard to excess of irrational terror, except possibly in the initial stages of the movement. In any case, the process of investigation might be begun with the two guide concepts in mind.

Similarly, the question might arise as to the category of totalitarianism into which the current Yugoslavian regime would fall. Milovan Djilas, like Arthur Koestler, sees in the rule of mature Communism the rule of a "new class". The picture so produced is not pleasant, but it is not luxuriant totalitarianism in the sense which we have been using the term.

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(1) See above, p. 99.

A quotation or two from Djilas will help point up the difference. "Having achieved industrialization, the new class can now do nothing more than strengthen its brute force and pillage the people. It ceases to create. Its spiritual heritage is overtaken by darkness."(1) The idea of any kind of "heritage" suggests that some shreds of idealism, some elements of purpose still remain. And later, the typical ambivalence of Koestler towards Communism appears again in the work of Djilas: "While the revolution can be considered an epochal accomplishment of the new class, its methods of rule fill some of the most shameful pages in history. Men will marvel at the grandiose ventures it accomplished and will be ashamed of the means it used."(2) Insofar as Djilas is generalizing correctly from his own experiences at home, it appears possible that the concept of limited totalitarianism imputed from our analysis of Koestler's work might apply to the Yugoslavian case.

At this point the main argument of this paper will be summarized briefly, in order that it may be held in mind while two final conclusions are attempted. Our main thesis is that two Left-wing intellectuals, by reason of their differing backgrounds and personalities, (Chapter I) peculiar experiences in times of crisis, (Chapter II) and divergent modes of thought, felt the impact of totalitarianism in such

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(1) Djilas, Milovan: The New Class, Praeger, N.Y., 1959, p.69.

(2) Ibid.

a way that each developed a unique conception of its essence (Chapters III and IV). The ideas of luxuriant and limited totalitarianism so formulated, when further refined by reference to the works of more specialized scholars in the field, have certain implications for general theory (Chapter V). One such implication concerns the possible inadequacy of the term totalitarianism as it is now used, and the consequent need for further research along the lines of a comparative analysis of movement-regimes. A second possibility involves the application of the refined concepts of luxuriant and limited totalitarianism to both the course of a mass movement in a specific instance, and, in a comparative way, to established authoritative regimes generally.

Two final points which emerge logically from the structure of this paper must be dealt with as it is brought to a conclusion. Both, at first glance, appear to be truisms so obvious that they might well have been omitted. However, in political theory as in all else, it is frequently the obvious that is overlooked, and certainly the literature on totalitarianism that I have been exposed to so far fails to deal with either idea in a satisfactory manner.

First, it is necessary to emphasize again that the conception of the essence of totalitarianism that a writer arrives at may not be due as much to any synthesis achieved in the process of scholarly research as to the impact of more

personal experiences. Such, we have argued, was the case in respect to Orwell and Koestler. Neither of these men, however, would have considered himself primarily a political theorist. But what of Hannah Arendt and Isaac Deutscher? Can Hannah Arendt's main thesis that terror is the essence of totalitarian domination be divorced from her experiences in pre-war Germany, her stint as a social worker in Paris, France, in the period 1939-1940, or her extensive investigations as Research Director into the sufferings of the Jewish people? And did not Deutscher's membership in the Polish Communist Party, and the personal convictions that led to his expulsion as an anti-Stalinist in 1932, condition much of his later thought concerning the nature of the essence of totalitarianism? One cannot deny the right of the scholar to <u>feel</u> as well as to <u>know</u>, nor can one deny the value of intuitive thought as a guide to truth, but surely a danger does exist in an area of study as broad as totalitarianism, where a thesis valid for one type of regime is inclined to be extended to others, and all are "proved" together.(1)

What I have just pointed out, however, does not necessarily destroy the value of intuitive thought as an instrument in the formulation of truths in political theory.

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(1) This criticism would apply to Hannah Arendt rather than to Isaac Deutscher, in fact it may well have been levelled at Arendt <u>by</u> Deutscher. But Deutscher's <u>determinism</u>, in so far as it forms part of his analysis of Stalinism, may also be a dangerous preconception.

If this were so, much of this present paper would be of little worth. However, the intuition of Koestler and Orwell, often crystallized in their fiction, has been of great use to me in drafting working hypotheses, and judging from the occasional references to Darkness at Noon and 1984 in scholarly literature, to established political scientists as well.(1) Unfortunately there is as yet no major work by a political scientist which deals with the relationship between fiction and politics, or describes the value which one may hold for the other. Irving Howe's, Politics and the Novel(2), is a very fine book, but it is written primarily from the point of view of a literary critic.

I hope that in a small way this paper has done something to suggest the value of fiction for political theory. Darkness at Noon and 1984 have done much to help inspire concepts of limited and luxuriant totalitarianism. And if it is objected that we permit to George Orwell what we deny to Hannah Arendt, we can only reply that we have attempted to stress throughout the deficiencies of 1984 as an explanation of totalitarianism as it now exists or has existed in the past. There is a vast difference between an intuitional hypothesis, which, precisely because its roots are in fiction must be

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(1) See my footnotes above, p. i and 16, as examples.

(2) Cited previously, p. 58.

refined and tested, and an intuitional hypothesis derived from personal experience (which is the stuff of fiction) but elevated into the cornerstone of a general theory.

APPENDIX A

The major works of George Orwell arranged according to date of publication:

(1) Down and Out in Paris and London, 1933.
Autobiography. Orwell experiences poverty and slum living at first hand.

(2) Burmese Days, 1934.
Novel. The early stages in a changing society in Imperial Burma.

(3) A Clergyman's Daughter, 1935.
Novel. More poverty and low life, plus loss of faith.

(4) Keep the Aspidistra Flying, 1936.
Novel. A book about the power of money.

(5) The Road to Wigan Pier, 1937.
An examination of poverty, developing into an attack on the intelligentsia. England in the 1930's.

(6) Homage to Catalonia, 1938.
Orwell's experiences in the Spanish Civil War.

(7) Coming Up For Air, 1939.
Novel. An ordinary man makes mental preparations for the coming war.

(8) Inside the Whale, 1940.
Essays. All reprinted later in other collections.

(9) The Lion and the Unicorn, 1941.
Orwell's diagnosis of English society and people written under the impact of World War II.

(10) Animal Farm, 1945.
The famous parody of the Russian Revolution and its developments.

(11) Critical Essays, 1946.
Essays. Mostly literary criticism, but with political implications - e.g. "Charles Dickens".

(12) The English People, 1947.
Orwell again on the sociology of the English (Britain in Pictures edition).

(13) Nineteen Eighty-four, 1949.
Novel. Vision of a totalitarian future.

(14) Shooting an Elephant, 1950.
Essays. Contains the important "political" essays - e.g. "Politics v. Literature", "Politics and the English Language", and "The Prevention of Literature".

(15) Such, Such Were the Joys, 1953.
Essays. Title essay autobiographical. Also includes "Notes on Nationalism".

APPENDIX B

The major works of Arthur Koestler arranged according to date of publication:

(1) Spanish Testament, 1938.
Life in Spanish prisons while under sentence of death in Spanish civil war. Description of Oceanic Feeling, so important in Koestler's break with Communism (later expanded in "The Invisible Writing"). Contains "Dialogue with Death", later published separately.

(2) The Gladiators, 1939.
Novel. An example of revolution going astray at the time of Spartacus and the Slave Revolt.

(3) Darkness at Noon, 1940.
Novel. Revolution betrayed, seen through the eyes of an old revolutionary.

(4) Scum of the Earth, 1941.
Koestler again in prison, this time a French concentration camp during the early stages of the war.

(5) Arrival and Departure, 1943.
Novel. Outlines the psychological origins of revolutionary sentiment and action.

(6) Twilight Bar, 1945.
Play. Plot concerns a Utopia that failed.

(7) The Yogi and the Commissar, 1945.
Essays. Reveals Koestler's idea of essence of Soviet totalitarianism. Also thoughts on introspection v. social action.

(8) Thieves in the Night, 1946.
Novel. The Zionist settlements in Palestine and the drift to terrorism.

(9) Promise and Fulfilment, 1949.
History of Zionism in Palestine, 1917-1949.

(10) The God That Failed, 1950.
A symposium edited by R.H.S. Crossman, in which Koestler, Spender, Richard Wright, Louis Fischer, Gide and Silone, discuss their experience of, and disillusionment with, Communism.

(11) The Age of Longing, 1951.
Novel. The "end of Europe", and the deeply felt need of individuals to identify with something outside of themselves.

(12) Arrow in the Blue, 1952.
Autobiography. Takes reader from childhood of Koestler to the point where he joins the Communist Party.

(13) The Invisible Writing, 1954.
Autobiography. Brought right up to date in a final Epilogue.

(14) The Trail of the Dinosaur, 1955.
Essays. Koestler's final words on political controversies. His farewell to the political arena.

(15) The Lotus and the Robot, 1960.
An investigation of mystical experience in India and Japan.

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