

## THE POLITICAL STRUCTURE

### *"The Party"*

HIERARCHY, AUTHORITY, AND DISCIPLINE ARE THE THREE pillars of the Fascist state, justifying Mussolini's pet phrase, "stato armato." Which does not mean "armed state," but rather "militarized state"—a state which in its most peaceful functions shows a warlike spirit, where mailcarriers and dishwashers think of themselves not as postal or hotel employees but as soldiers in a great army, marching to victory on their particular "front" under the command of an invincible leader. People in other countries have often scoffed at the Fascist custom of turning a relief drive into "The First (second, twenty-sixth, ad lib.) Winter Battle" or an employment gain into a "Victory on the Labor Front." Yet this militarization of civil life is more than just a drawing-card for a goose-step-loving public. It is the expression of a state of mind, of the "one-of-my-kind"-feeling in the Fascist community—stato armato.

The backbone of the militarized state, its reservoir of disciplined human and intellectual resources, is "the Party." It is also the only remaining political element

in the state. *Personal political feeling*, the consciousness of the interrelation between the individual and the group, does not of course vanish under a Fascist régime. It is, in fact, immensely intensified. Only personal political *activity* is eliminated—the expression of individual differences of opinion over affairs of the group. Fascism, while bringing political life in the state to an end in one sense, is perpetuating it in another—while extinguishing *individual influence upon* the state, it is stimulating *collective interest in* the state. For the citizen his voluntary participation in public life in an optional direction is replaced by compulsory participation in a prescribed direction—but it remains participation in public life all the same. And machinery for this new form of political activity is provided in “the Party.”

What is “the Party”? Everybody knows that (regardless of the obvious phraseological anomaly of a “single-party-system”) neither the Fascist Party in Italy nor the National Socialist one in Germany would fit the definition of a “political party” as used in other countries. We know, however, that the National Socialists were a real political party before they came into power. It seems, therefore, not that the wrong word was chosen for the matter, but rather that the object changed its character after it had been termed. Accordingly, it is not just the Fascist Party as such but a more narrowly circumscribed phenomenon which we now have to deal with: the Fascist Party in the Fascist one-party state. In the preceding chapter we have seen why the “totalitarian state” cannot tolerate opposition, least of all

political opposition. This involves the necessity of exterminating the existing opposition parties. Simultaneously, however, the political group which by parliamentary or other means has established the Fascist state, undergoes a change of function. It stops being a political fighting machine because there is no more need of political fighting. As soon as the Fascists assume control of the government, they have to give up the belligerent attitude towards the rest of the population *as such*. The very collectivism of their doctrine does not permit recognition of separate groups of citizens—not even for the purpose of attacking them.<sup>1</sup> But, just as the soldiers of a victorious army, occupying annexed lands of the defeated enemy, are not fighting their new fellow-countrymen any more and yet continue to exercise undoubtedly military functions, so the victorious Fascist party remains definitely political and aggressively Fascist. Its new aims are the perpetuation of the victory by peaceful but energetic penetration of the bottom of the national pyramid, as well as a zealous, and jealous, watch over the top.

Thus the Party evolves into, as the official description

<sup>1</sup> The National Socialist rule in Germany does not refute but confirm this: whatever attacking the Party does is directed either—as in the case of the Jews—against a group which under the official dogma does not share in membership of the community, or—as in the case of Marxists or “political Catholics”—against ideas and their exposition; but never against any distinct group of the German people themselves. The line may be hard to discern but is clearly drawn: before seizing power the Fascists fight with the non-Fascists for possession of the state, afterwards they fight against inimical ideas for possession of the non-Fascist souls.

of the Italian "Partito Nazionale Fascista" has it, a "civil militia, at the orders of the Leader, in the service of the Fascist state"—a militant and, to a large part, military body for essentially non-military purposes. This seeming paradox has been the source of much international friction. Every Fascist Party has its strictly military formations; and it is evident that, in case of war, these huge masses of enthusiastic men trained in soldierly discipline and often thoroughly schooled in the technique of warfare would be of tremendous advantage to their country. The Italian conquest of Ethiopia, for which the Italian General Staff employed about twice as many "Blackshirts" as regulars, has proved that amply. Still, the Fascist Parties' bellicose potentialities cannot alter the fact that their basic functions are truthfully peaceful. Of course these large numbers of civilians who have received complete military training might come in handy if an armed conflict should occur. But fundamentally, the Fascist leaders really and truly want their Party soldiers only for home work—and are personally quite outraged at the world's disinclination to believe that. They are absolutely sincere in their protestations that they need the Party as well as its military organizations for domestic politics. They do—and although other countries may be justifiably nervous over the ease with which this tool of national politics could be converted into a weapon for international aggression, the sole reason for the militarization of the Party is the desire for a permanent and reliable *political* instrument

with sufficient strength to crush any possible internal opposition at any given moment.

This logic of political materialism, however, must not lead us to suppose that Fascists, too, see in their Parties primarily means of suppression. In the "religious conception of life," which is Fascism, the Party has definite and immensely important *constructive* functions. It is, as Hitler termed it, the "bearer of the political will of the state." The old liberal "corporation state" had found the natural expression for its underlying theories in a division of government into three separate branches—legislative, executive, and judicial; creating a system of mutual checks expressly designed to prevent excesses of state power, and to keep the community well within the limits of its dogmatic purpose to serve the interests of its members. Obviously, the Fascist state—"unity and synthesis of all values," the basic unit of a religious conception of life—could have no use for a system based on the supremacy of the single individuals. Another structure had to be found for its manifold aspects—and it had to be consistent with the theory of the state as a living organism, as the one organism of supreme importance that relegates every individual to molecular insignificance. Thus evolved what will presently be discussed in detail: the "organic conception of the state." From it arose an entire new political technology—in which such institutions as government, or army, or judicial structure, were no longer thought of as instruments for a purpose but as live organs, visible manifestations of the superior being which is the state.

One of the most important of these manifestations grew to be the Party. It became equal in importance to government itself, though with a totally different purpose and realm of action. Just as the army represents the strength of the Fascist state toward the outside world, so the Party represents its inner strength—its political will, its energy, its determination, its spiritual forcefulness. It is an army not for military but for political, not for foreign but for domestic use; an army which is not independent but at the unconditional disposal of the leadership common to all—and which embodies not a governmental function of the state but its Fascist spirit.

This answers the question—sometimes asked in Europe—of why, having served their original purpose to establish the Fascist states, the various Fascist Parties have not been disbanded. In other words, whether Fascism would not work just as well in a no-party state as in a one-party state. The point, at first, seems well taken. But again the collectivist dogma—of the state, a pure abstraction, as supreme purpose of living for the individual—interferes with a seemingly logical solution. It is the doctrine of the communal organism which more than any other needs a living image to inspire faith and fealty. It is confronted with the very practical danger that, unless backed up by a powerful and immortal influence within the state, the abstraction may lose its spell over the people, and at some given moment—for instance, after the death of a Fascist Leader—leave the Fascist authorities not only in a minority but even without recruiting possibilities for their service. This is a



danger threatening every abstract collectivism, as demonstrated by the only large-scale attempt on the socialist side—Soviet Russia, which also had to resort to perpetuation of the Communist Party in order to perpetuate the fundamental idea of the state. It seems that no system can maintain a supremacy of a community without employing an organized minority—to keep alive, by persuasion, propaganda, or force, the collective feeling of the majority. A royal family inspires the imagination and the loyal instincts of the subjects by its mere existence. A democracy, as long as it is working, will by its system of government alone tend to be constantly revived and confirmed in its democratic character by the people, who rule it in their own interest. The collectivist state, on the other hand, needs both a collectivist nerve-center and a collectivist nerve system: a source from which to draw incessantly new collectivist spirit, and channels to distribute it throughout the community. The Fascist Party in the Fascist state is both: a huge reservoir of absolutely reliable human material, and a living guarantee for constant and sincere Fascist unanimity of the people as a whole.

Neither one could be secured by even the most drastic application of the unlimited powers of a Fascist *government*. The function of the *Party*, therefore, is to make it unnecessary for the government actually to invoke these powers at all. To this end the Party mobilizes two weapons: organization and propaganda. The first is essential—the mass of men and ideas forming the Fascist state cannot remain amorphous: nor could any of the

three basic principles of the system be applied to a community not organized to the nth degree in its every function. The second is supplementary in theory: that is, it is indispensable as long as any part of the community, however small, is not yet in the desired state of completely "natural" and unshakable Fascism—which, of course, may make the use of propaganda necessary for a long time to come. In both fields, at any rate, Fascist activities in recent years opened unthought-of perspectives. The world stood gasping at what was accomplished by those brain-combinations of Machiavelli, Ignatius de Loyola, and Phineas Taylor Barnum. To cement their new conception of community life in the consciousness of the people they employed all the binding and directing devices that, in the past, political, religious, social or economic organizations had worked out in lieu of state power—and which government, so far, had disdained to use because they seemed not only alien to any known function of government but also detrimental to its authority and detached position. The fundamental dualism of Government and Party in the collectivist state allowed its masters to use *every* kind of influence on men and masses—and it was only a combination of power like this that could give real effect to the theoretical omnipotence of the community.<sup>2</sup>

As usual, there is nothing vague or haphazard about the Fascist methods. Their application is governed by predominantly practical considerations of need and efficiency, but they also have a thoroughly sound and logi-

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix A, p. 299 ff.



cal theoretical foundation. The doctrine, according to which the Party in every Fascist state conducts its campaigns, is based upon the "organic conception of the state." Therein the community, the basic unit of the collectivist dogma, is seen as an organism comparable to a human or animal body, with the various public and semi-public institutions taking the place of organs and the individual community members that of minute particles of protoplasm. As a figure of patriotic speech, this has been heard before. It has never amounted to more than that—probably because it was felt somehow to be at variance with the individualist way of thinking. To Fascist thinkers, however, it came naturally and they began to draw conclusions, and to use them to delineate in theory the scope and direction of the hitherto unknown political practices employed by the new system.

One: Just as every cell in a living body is strictly confined to its own function and has no business in any other organ, while the organism as a whole has an interest in everything concerning any one of its cells—so the active interest of the collectivist state in the citizen is infinitely more comprehensive than that of the citizen in the state. The individual's interest in the group—like that of the protoplasmic cell in the human body—is a vital matter for him but cannot be expressed otherwise than through his own limited "organic" function. The group, on the other hand, though not at all dependent upon the single individual, has an interest in as well as power over every least important aspect of his life. In consequence *Fascism*—and this is its decisive reversal

of traditional doctrine—*does away with the old distinction between public and private life*. The individualist state was an association of free men, formed for definite purposes: “that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.” Accordingly, it was held that the institution’s each and every action was the active concern of any one of its sponsors—with the rights to vote, to petition, and to “sue as a taxpayer” providing the means to enforce this concern through all three departments of government. The state, on the other hand, should concern itself with the affairs of its citizens only insofar as they themselves permitted it; only what was expressly designated as subject to community influence or regulation was a matter “clothed with a public interest”—and everything else was “private right,” removed from state action and reserved to the individual’s own judgment, will, and discretion. Fascism, denying Man’s individuality, and demoting him to a mere part of the basic unit Community, had to reverse this process: actions of the state were removed from the influence of the individual except in the realm of his own particular organic function—while the influence of the state was extended to the entire life of the citizen, without any reservation of “individual rights” to interfere with it. Logically all this follows already from the very basis of collectivism, but the introduction of the organic conception of the state makes it inevitable. Any doctrine based upon this concept must require complete elimination of any kind of privacy—of any sphere in which the rights

of the state should not prevail. Its acceptance by a people means that they concede the right of the community to interfere in all of their affairs, barring only those in which the higher unit should specifically declare itself not interested.

Two: There can be little doubt that a protoplasmic cell could not satisfactorily fulfill its biological functions if it were endowed with an independent personality. Kidney cells Nos. 360754 and 789645, suddenly able to consider themselves and act as separate units instead of infinitely small particles of a human body, might well endanger the health of the whole organism. The same applies to the individual members of the collectivist state. And since these are not, like cells, wisely created by nature without the power of independent thought, the state's authority must prevent their use of this power from interfering with their essential collectivism. Its task is plainly and simply the welding of a few millions of separate human minds into one, infinitely complex, composite national mind. This is the meaning of the movement's emblem—the bunch of thin, fragile rods bound together into the "fasces," symbol of strength and power. And therefore it is not sufficient, as the ancient autocratic state would have done, to supervise the individual citizens strictly and to punish misbehavior. The Fascist state, in order to effectuate its organic character, has to rule its members from inside out. They must be so conditioned that a mental process divergent from the proclaimed collective thought not only does not occur, but is *psychologically impossible*.

The individual who does not happen to be born into this "collective state of mind," has only two ways of acquiring it: either he must be brought up to it as a child, or later his whole life, in all its everyday aspects, must be so tied up with the group that he has no chance to develop an independent personality. This alternative determined the two main directions of political activity in the totalitarian state: a) collectivization of youth, and b) collectivization of adult life.

The first was perhaps the most far-reaching of all the Fascist innovations. "Suffer the little children to come unto me." In the past, only the Church suspected the potentialities of that message; now the Fascist states have realized them fully. Again, the Soviets were somewhat ahead of them but, lacking perhaps the stimulus of need, their youth policy was neither as forceful nor as consistent. It was Mussolini who first saw *and* exploited the tremendous advantages of being able to mold generations from the very start, to influence them at a time when the mind is open and the soul thirsty. Ordinary schooling—even though the Fascist orthodoxy of its teachings, of course, will always be guaranteed by strict and constant supervision—is no good for this purpose. It is out of school that a child receives his strongest impressions. To dominate these is the main thing, to catch the children in playtime, to guide them in the desired direction when they think they are just having fun. And so the aim is pursued with the whole resourcefulness of an omnipotent state. Games, competitions, camps, outings, marching with flags and music, youth homes in

every city and all over the country, badges and uniforms to wear, regulation belts and camping knives to carry, solemn oaths to swear—a paradise for children is created, slowly, imperceptibly exterminating individualities, arousing a deep, inbred, collective feeling. Slowly, imperceptibly, the ties between child and family are severed, to be replaced by unquestioning allegiance to the superior organism of the Fascist community. An inscription over the entrance of Hitler Youth headquarters reads: "We were born to die for Germany." The organization is their training camp for the permanent war—spiritual and, if need be, real—they will have to wage for the state. Balilla, Hitler Youth—they sound like accessories, yet they really form one of the cornerstones of the whole system.

"Fascism takes Man from his family at six, and gives him back to it at sixty." (Mussolini.)

As soon as the young Fascists leave the youth organization to take their place among the grown-ups, Fascism immediately takes hold of their new relationships. Work and after-work, both must be organized, so that no one will escape from the collective consciousness of the youth movement into adult individualism. No one may work or play outside of the spiritual framework of the Fascist community. Here, as in the youth policy, a distinction arises between the citizens' working activities—which make up the economic life of the nation and have to be materially regulated—and the rest of their daily doings which must be spiritually controlled. The first field is subject to administration. That, like every



public activity in the Fascist state, it will be administered by Fascists in the Fascist spirit, is a matter of course. But, although in German and Italian practice most of the organizations utilized for the purpose are listed as Party groupings, that regulation is a government and not a Party function. What remains, however—the citizens' leisure—cannot be effectively controlled by the regular means of any government, however powerful. Collectivization of this field, therefore, is up to the Party.

For the bulk of the population, this function is discharged with the help of the device known as "After-Work Organization." The decree founding the "Opera Nazionale Dopolavoro" dedicated it to "promoting, for intellectual and manual workers, the healthy and advantageous employment of the free hours, by means of institutions directed to develop their physical, intellectual and moral capacity." The aims of this organization are manifold: to improve the health, physique, and morale of the members of the working classes by taking them out of saloons or brothels into the fresh air of playgrounds or the countryside, and by providing free medical, hygienic, and vacationing facilities; to improve their minds by offering means for artistic and professional education; to increase their national consciousness by stimulating interest in old culture and folk-lore; to cement their loyalty to the régime with gratitude for what it did for them. All these aims are worthy in themselves and would justify all kinds of measures taken for their realization. To the Fascist After-Work Organiza-



tion, however, they are only agreeable by-products. The essential, fundamental, dogmatic reason, the reason why *any* Fascist régime will have to develop some like organization, is the necessity for spiritual control of the leisure time activities of the working population. To insure complete submersion of the individual, the community must not only dominate his development as a child and what he later does to earn a living, but—even more important—what he does aside from working for a living. If, as in Italy, this offers an opportunity to improve the general level of health and education, so much the better. But even if, as in Germany, the workers have already taken up most popular sports on a large scale, and such non-political organizations as concert and theatergoers' leagues, educational associations, employer-sponsored recreational schemes for employees, are already very much in evidence, the Fascist state will still be obliged to take all those over, to transform them into Fascist institutions, and to see that every man, while spending his leisure time in any way he might reasonably desire, does so not individually but in constant connection with the community.

What the After-Work Organization and its various appendices did for the plain people, was accomplished in the higher social levels by means of another process—for which the German word has now, I believe, been internationally accepted—"Gleichschaltung." In Germany itself the term has lately acquired the rather too narrow meaning of ousting Jews, and has also been misapplied to private business with which, in its correct

sense, it has nothing to do. Originally, it meant simply to give effect to a more or less obvious consequence of the "organic conception of the state": that no grouping of individuals within the state can be run on other principles than those of the "higher organism" itself. Since political groups had lost the right to exist, and economic groups were subjected to comprehensive regulation of a different kind, the natural objects of this activity were non-political and non-business, that is, purely or predominantly social associations. They were the ones that had to be brought in line with the reigning spirit, and to guarantee this co-ordination, their executive positions had to be filled by men of trusted loyalty to the régime. This procedure was called *Gleichschaltung*. Superficially resembling the "spoils system," as practiced in the United States, it differed from it in two important aspects. First, in this country it is generally admitted that—except, perhaps, for cabinet posts—the offices involved could be run just as well by members of the defeated party, and that the general idea of patronage is to reward faithful partisans. In the Fascist state this consideration plays no part at all—at least in theory<sup>3</sup>—and the reason for the universal replacement of non-Fascists with Fascists is really a dogmatic need for unity of spirit. Second, the field affected by *Gleichschaltung* is not only wider than that of patronage, but essentially different. The American spoils system is strictly confined to certain administrative jobs. The Fascist state,

<sup>3</sup> In practice, of course, *Gleichschaltung* became the most gigantic spoils system ever known.

however, can much more safely leave a lukewarm Fascist in an important government position than let a social organization remain unco-ordinated, no matter how innocuous it may seem. This has been proved to be so in many practical instances<sup>4</sup> and is, moreover, thoroughly logical: authoritatively conducted government machinery is rigidly disciplined anyway—so that, as chief qualification for office, technical ability may sometimes be allowed to supersede Fascist spirit. But an unco-ordinated organization, concerned with individual interests which are not subject to other discipline, would constitute a serious threat to collectivism itself. Gleichschaltung, therefore, reached into every field previously considered as “private”—society, sports, arts, professions. And the reason why it affected so many seemingly purely economic bodies (cf. the “Fascist associations” of civil servants, lawyers, physicians, actors, traveling salesmen and so forth) is that these exert, from pre-Fascist times, not so much influence on the conduct and conditions of their members’ work as upon their social and “private” lives—which is just where the state, lacking direct means of control, must depend on the Party to enforce the communal interest and produce the essential collective unity of spirit.

It may be argued that only in Germany did co-ordination go to such extremes—that Italy stopped far short

<sup>4</sup> In Germany, the army, the Foreign Office, the economic departments of the government still abound with capable “hold-overs” whose lack of sympathy for the régime is an open secret—but no bowling club has been allowed to continue under non-Nazi officers.

of the mark. There is a good enough reason for that. Here, as in every field, Fascism proceeds according to the demands of the situation. Superior progress in a country in any field calls for a more thorough organization.<sup>5</sup> Italy, with a great cultural heritage but a comparatively low scale of modern civilization, economically dependent on a rather outmoded agricultural process, with undeveloped industry and a predominantly ignorant and indifferent population, did not, of course, need the same degree of control as Germany—whose highly educated, highly specialized, politically experienced people had, in the short time since their disastrous defeat in the World War, regained a leading place amongst the nations in almost every field of human endeavor. Also, whenever a people is not yet wholly ready to conform, co-ordinating devices must be more stringently applied. Mussolini, once the Fascist state was established, found little opposition or intransigence—and practically no organized one (the difficulties of “Italianizing” the Trentino and the annexed parts east of the Adriatic were caused by national and not political resistance). In the Germany of 1933, on the other hand, the opposition to Hitler not only nominally outnumbered his following, but its strength centered in large and powerful organizations which no government could afford to ignore and which could not be abolished without seriously jeopard-

<sup>5</sup> “We were the first to assert that . . . the more complicated the forms assumed by civilization, the more restricted the freedom of the individual must become.” (Mussolini, *Grand Fascist Report*, 1929.)

izing the welfare of the entire nation. If the collective idea, at that time, was to gain any secure foothold among the German people, it was imperative to co-ordinate those bodies—or, wherever this was impossible, to create organizations to replace them. Again, it cannot be emphasized too strongly that Gleichschaltung is not fun but dire necessity. Fascism never organizes just for the sake of organizing. It organizes only because and insofar as it is necessary for arousing and preserving the Fascist spirit in the populace. To formulate a general rule: Fascism must co-ordinate every field of human activities which might breed opposing, or even only deviating ideas—either individualism or collectivism of a different stamp than the Fascist formula. It is obvious at a glance that there are few such fields which need not be included in the list.

How completely the Fascist practical methods are ruled by principles of efficiency, becomes even more apparent in the Party's second means of fulfilling its function: propaganda. There—viewed from the outside—the Germans left their Italian predecessors standing at the start. In his early days Mussolini, though he knew their value, had no high regard for purely advertising activities. His objective, at that time, was the coup d'état, not conversion of the majority. He seized control of the government, supported only by a relatively small but determined and reliable minority, in a rather short campaign carried on with a good deal of violence and very little systematic ballyhoo. For the next two years he headed a majority coalition, and had to fight a minority

against whose attacks, under the parliamentary system, even a further increase in his following would have been of no avail. And when, at last, the establishment of the totalitarian state gave him complete power, he organized it thoroughly—and felt no actual need for propaganda then either; for he soon gained the genuine confidence of most Italians and those who were still antagonistic were either too intelligent to be convinced, or too stupid to be influenced, by propaganda. So it was not until he noticed the astonishing exploits of his German facsimile that he even thought of taking press censorship out of the police department and putting it with other forms of propaganda under a special Ministry. Internally, even after that, this agency concerned itself with little but the control of newspapers and radio, directing the general line of the news supply of the country—while all other propaganda was left to the Fascist Party, the proper agency, to be administered at the discretion of its national or local functionaries when and wherever necessary or advisable.

In Germany the situation had been entirely different. The Nazis came to power not in a rush but after a long fight that had been bloody and not without severe setbacks before the final victory. In this victory the ingenious application of every campaign trick in the bag had played a very large part. When the new rulers seized the reins, they knew themselves still opposed by about half of the population—and they knew that of their own followers many were merely opportunists, and many only under the spell of a deluge of previous



propaganda. If the necessary co-ordination was to be accomplished without further struggles, the nation had to be put into a state of trance, until the structural changes had gone into effect.

Evidently, propaganda was needed here not as a corrective, to be applied in judicial doses wherever Party authorities noticed a slackening of collective spirit, but as a concentrated assault upon the mentality of a nation, as a high-pressure treatment relentlessly hammering upon all the conscious and subconscious reactions of the multitude. For such a purpose, the loose and disconnected ordinary propagandistic activities of a Fascist Party were clearly insufficient. So, immediately after Hitler's ascent to power, the direction of National Socialist propaganda was taken from the Party and handed to a specially created department of the Reich's government, with virtually a free hand to delimit its own competence and to draw upon all the resources of the state. And now Dr. Goebbels, who up till then had hardly been known outside of the Fatherland, showed his real mettle. He drugged the Germans in a way that had never even been attempted in history. He hypnotized a whole people, one of the most civilized, intellectual, and discriminating ones of the world, right in Central Europe and surrounded by democracies, into a frenzy of blind, dumb and reckless obedience. Day and night, his office poured forth "popular enlightenment" through newspapers, magazines, radio, movies, theater, opera, vaudeville, and parades. He was the first politician to find out that people do not get tired of parades. He set up a

schedule of compulsory parading holidays that made workers in other countries pale with envy. He administered to Germany the medicine of the late Roman emperors—with the one difference that, bread being outside his jurisdiction, he gave only circuses. His success was complete; his instinctive showmanship triumphed over every obstacle of time, space, or fatigue.

In between Hitler's high-voltage propaganda engine and Mussolini's low-voltage one lies normalcy—the principle being always not to spend more effort on any one activity than is required by the circumstances. One thing is certain: that to the Fascist state propaganda is not an instrument for a particular purpose—as, for instance, a government bond sale or a re-employment campaign—but a normal and permanent feature. It becomes one of the regular all-time activities—of the government, if necessary, but always of the Party in its function as “essence of the state.” Of course, one cannot set up the same kind of a pattern for its propagandist activities as for its organizational campaign. Political propaganda, to be successful, has to take into account so many intangibles of popular psychology that no theoretical scheme will ever cover all of its practical possibilities. Propaganda is an art—and, as in any art, an ounce of genius is worth a pound of rules. Still, there are certain general principles which may be assumed to apply in a majority of cases—and which yield important leads for a further investigation of the Party phenomenon as such.

In the first place, Party propaganda is always carried

on by spectacles. Even without the paradomania of Dr. Goebbels it is one of the major objects of the Party *to be seen*. To impress the rest of the people with its strength, its unity, its patriotic devotion. So the Party stages events. A review of the militia, a review of the youth organization, the opening of a waterway, of an automobile road, of a factory, the christening of a ship or the distribution of prizes to prolific mothers—everything serves as an occasion to turn out the black, brown, blue, or purple shirts, to have them march in seemingly endless columns, and to have the population look on in awe. The effect is twofold. First: though there are differences in degree in the susceptibility of people in various countries to flags, martial music and the like, there are few individuals in any country totally immune to a quickening of the pulse at the sight of a sufficiently impressive goose-stepping display. Second, and more important: there is nothing that will so convince an individual of his insignificance, of his essential “molecularity,” as to let him face—either alone, or as one of an amorphous crowd—the controlled force and precision of a disciplined body of enthusiasts. The dread of absolute helplessness as an individual as well as the instinctive desire to share in the power represented by the pageant will exert tremendous influence on any man of not more than average individuality. The ground thus prepared, a skillful management of the intellectual diet of the population—including not only what people read daily in the newspapers but also what they read in books, see in the movies, hear over the radio—serves to

wipe out slowly any still extant individualist convictions, by starving them. A conviction needs nourishment to stay alive, and not many humans are capable of producing it all by themselves. That is one of the main reasons why Fascist publicity never, not even when it might do so successfully, engages in argument with divergent doctrines beyond assertions of generalities and a rather crude type of vituperation. Argument, no matter what its outcome, will give food for independent thought—which is the very thing Fascism strives to extinguish. Only isolation from *discussion* of undesirable trends as well as from these trends themselves will force any not extraordinarily intelligent individual to succumb.

Then, after the two basic forms of propaganda—impression and information—have taken care of the majority of average character and intellect, those who are neither stupid enough nor weak enough to give in to them are subjected to the third, more subtle and more insidious method of inducement. Ceaselessly the Party and all its members work on individuals who may not yet be wholly converted. The available weapons range from conversational hints to the most terrific moral and economic pressure. There is an unlimited number of threats and promises to use, of fears and hopes to arouse, of interests and sentiments to play on. Whether the obdurate is to be ostracized by his acquaintances or to be dropped from his job, whether the convert shall be advanced socially or aided economically—there is practically no harm which the Party cannot inflict on those it frowns upon, and nothing it cannot do for those

in its good graces. In fact, it is almost never necessary actually to resort to strict measures. In nearly every individual the slightest hint, coupled with the dread of the Party's imminent action and with the consciousness of its inescapable presence, will suffice to cause any change of color desired. And—which seems to contradict every known experience—the practical psychologists of Fascism did as good as prove that, in their case, pressure did not produce resistance. That on the contrary a man, who at first might have given lip service to a hated creed only under duress, did eventually, in most such instances, under continued influence turn into a sincere and believing Fascist. That there is only one explanation for this—that the Fascists are right in their contention, that for the people of their countries their system is “natural” and therefore inherently right—is an inference that will have to be taken up in detail later. In any case, supposing this basis of Fascist thought to be correct, the scheme is flawless in theory—and in German and Italian practice it has shown itself capable of producing a one hundred per cent conformity in human material that no neutral observer would ever have considered auspicious for experiments of that kind. What did the trick is the combination of organizing campaign and propaganda—and its application by an impersonal, immortal, and omnipresent force, unhampered by the formalities restricting the government of even a Fascist state, yet backed by its entire power.

The internal set-up of a Fascist Party is quite simple. Its structure and operation must of course be as consist-



ently hierarchic and authoritative as those of the state to which it is supposed to impart its morale. That leaves only two fundamental problems to be solved in one way or another: the question of ultimate responsibility, and the question of succession.

The first is a most lucid example of a cleavage between Fascist theory and Fascist practice. To begin with, it requires a re-definition of our conception of public responsibility. The Germans combined the three principles of hierarchy, authority, and discipline, and called the compound the principle of "responsible leadership." The term will confuse the observer accustomed to the language of democracy—until he realizes that what is meant here is not the responsibility of a leader to his followers, but his responsibility to *his* leader. Otherwise, being responsible means the same in both cases: that the leader can be removed from his leadership by whomever he is responsible to. What this could be said to mean for the top of the hierarchic pyramid, has puzzled everyone, including the Fascists themselves. Ecclesiastical hierarchies have an easy way out: they make their heads responsible to a deity whose absence from this concrete world of affairs is a guarantee against practical complications. In Fascism the "superior organism" of the state takes the place of this abstract supernatural—but its popular conception is so tied up with concrete things, like "crown," or "people," that even in a country very much inclined toward collectivism it will be hard to dematerialize it completely. So in Italy, Mussolini, as Head of the Government, has



kept himself legally responsible to the King—and Fascist doctrine, which could never allow that responsibility to become practical, has at no time attacked it in theory. Hitler, on the other hand, has repeatedly proclaimed himself responsible, not to the shadowy abstraction of the “German nation” which is otherwise being extolled as the all-important superior unit, but to the “men and women of the German people.” And this responsibility is what he attempted to express by having the people pass on his policies in a series of plebiscites. Of course, had these “elections” been uninfluenced, they would have presented the strange spectacle of a Fascist state resurrecting the previously carefully extinguished individual judgment of its members, in order to have them pass on its own (according to the dogma essentially superior) collective judgment—a procedure that would have been not only full of potential dynamite but also completely anomalous. It was avoided by a careful preparation of the plebiscites, guaranteeing, in fact, that the collective will, as proclaimed by authority, would be confirmed by a heavy vote. This made for the double anomaly of a compulsory “vote without choice” as basis for an authoritative, anti-vote system—but at least it was not immediately dangerous to the régime. Both the German and Italian treatment of the question prove that Fascism has not, as yet, reached the point where, in consistency with the dogma, the abstraction of the state could be set up as the sole recipient of the Leader’s responsibility—as, for instance, the heads of ecclesiastical hierarchies are responsible only to the deity itself. Both

Fascist states, so far, have found it necessary to interpose, between their Leaders and the superior organism, some concrete medium hallowed by tradition—like a “monarch by the grace of God,” or “The People” in the sense of the sum of the individual citizens. However, while this is a very interesting phenomenon, and might lead to startling conclusions about the psychological bases of collectivism, its practical importance is nil. The fact of Fascist discipline will always prevent any show of ultimate responsibility from becoming more than a phrase—for all practical purposes the supreme leader of a Fascist state is irresponsible.

The second problem, that of regulating the succession to the leadership, is practically much more difficult but theoretically simpler. It is clear that perpetuation of the Fascist idea, the principal reason for the continued existence of the Party, will also have to be the starting point for any approach to the question. In Italy, Mussolini worked out a fairly airtight scheme for Fascist control over the choice of his eventual successor. Following the example of the Catholic Church’s College of Cardinals, he utilized for the purpose a supreme representative body of the Party, membership in which he himself controls absolutely: appointments to the “Grand Council of Fascism” are to be made only by himself or by the Crown at his suggestion. Should he die or resign, his successor will be selected by the Crown out of a list submitted to it by the Grand Council. Of course, if Mussolini himself during his time in office should desire to designate someone as his successor, he would always be

able either to change the law, or to give enough power to the man he favored to enable him to hold his own later against any attack. But if he should step out without having shown any preference, the choice, while limited to a score of men in his complete confidence, is to be *made* as such by a third person in a traditionally exalted position—which will naturally provide less chance for any jealousies to break into an open struggle for power than if the possible rival aspirants were left to fight it out amongst themselves. In Germany, Adolf Hitler has not yet said anything about the succession to his “Leader—and Chancellorship”—whether or not he has done so in a secret testament is not known. He appointed Rudolf Hess as his personal deputy in Party affairs—and, though Hess does not seem to be ambitious, this might well lead to a repetition of the lesson which Stalin, after Lenin’s death, taught the U.S.S.R. on the relative importance of government and Party control in the totalitarian state. On the other hand, Hitler’s administrative and military lieutenants seem to hold stronger positions, as compared to the Party machine, than it was the case in Russia. So in Germany, at least for the present, a vacancy would seem to involve grave risks of a struggle of the diadochs. In Italy, as far as can be said today, that danger is virtually non-existent—quite aside from the fact that Mussolini, from the very start, was either more fortunate or more clever in subduing potential diadochs than his German disciple.

He also had a luckier hand in dealing with the biggest practical problem of “running” a Fascist Party—

that of maintaining it, in terms of the quality of its membership, as the "élite" of the Fascist state. This habit of describing a Fascist Party as an élite, or at least an intended élite, did not actually originate with the Fascists themselves. It started when the first Fascist converts in democratic countries tried to explain the one-party system to their countrymen—and only later was it seized upon in the Fascist countries, as a good slogan and convenient argument. As a matter of fact, it is a great error and responsible for a good deal of confusion. A Fascist Party is emphatically not supposed to be an élite in the sense of a group of individuals of some kind of qualitative excellence. The only quality in which it must be superior to the rest of the population is the quality of Fascism: meaning, chiefly, discipline and collective spirit. The Party is the concrete symbol not of a moral or other superiority of the Fascist state, but of its Fascism. It should be composed of neither the best nor the most able nor the most influential part of a nation but of its *most Fascist* part. It represents not the élite but the *essence* of a Fascist state. In fact, most "born leaders" will not last very long in a Fascist Party, unless they happen to have started it themselves, because they will run afoul of the requirements of discipline and unquestioning obedience. And most of the people who do belong to some social, financial, or intellectual élite, will not stand up either—because the very consciousness of their real superiority in any one field will make them doubtful about a selection that is based on premises which they cannot reasonably admit as valid, and that

summarily dismisses all their claims to be *élite* per se. Of course, a large percentage of the able, influential, and ambitious members of a community will find their way into a Fascist Party as soon as they realize that there is no possibility, outside of it, of utilizing their capacities and gratifying their desire for success. But just as the Church of the Middle Ages, although it attracted most of the men of this type, was not, even then, a body based on personal ambition but on personal humility, so the Fascist Party is based not, as some of its apologists want us to believe, on an individual "will to power" of "*élite* members," but on the qualities of individual obedience, discipline, and unconditional self-sacrifice for the good of the whole. Of course, during its struggle for power, every Fascist Party will try hard to gain as many members as possible among the rich, well-born, and able. But it does so only in order to use the influence they wield for its own purposes, and after it has reached its goal—or even before that—it will quickly get rid of whomsoever does not meet its other requirements. The decisive things for the Party as a whole, as well as for every one of its members, are never position, influence, ability, or any other quality admitting a person to any pre-Fascist type of *élite*—they are always and exclusively the specific qualities of Fascism.

To maintain these at a level sufficient to insure performance of the Party's functions is the task of its leaders. Two kinds of action are necessary for the purpose: limitation of membership, and weeding out of those who do not, or no longer, measure up to standard. Both were



introduced into practice by the Communist Party in Russia, and later taken over by the Fascist powers. The first is an inevitable consequence of the one-party system—no group destined to bear the holy flame, to perpetuate the political spirit of a state, could be composed of more than a comparatively small number of its citizens. Equally obvious was the equitable way to execute the measure: after the Party had reached the appropriate numerical strength, admission to its membership had to be closed to adults in all but exceptional instances, and thereafter its ranks had to be filled only from its own youth organizations. Thus the Party is protected from a further influx of opportunists that would be disastrous to it and to the state; and what new members it needs are guaranteed to have gone through a long and thorough Fascist education. In practice, of course, the fact that these young men and women have been in the Fascist youth organization for a number of years does not guarantee that they have really acquired the degree of discipline and collective spirit which the work of the Party demands. It is also certain that of the men who got into the Party before it closed its doors, a great many are in no way fit to belong to either the élite or the essence of the Fascist state. The remedy has also been developed by the Soviets: the "Party purge." The U.S.S.R. made this a regular procedure to be applied at fixed intervals. Mussolini had a general purge once, soon after the March on Rome, but later preferred to let the threat hang over the Party membership and to have cases necessitating the expulsion of individuals dealt



with by Party courts. Hitler, clearly more by accident than with premeditation stumbled into his unfortunate "blood purge" of June, 1934—but has besides an elaborate permanent judicial apparatus within the Party quietly and continually proceeding with the removal of undesirable Party members. Neither the German nor the Italian method of purging has the confidence-inspiring publicity of the Russian model, but they are scarcely less extensive and strict, and the rules applied to the membership are the same in all three countries: organization discipline and collective spirit, which means not only esprit de corps among Party members but particularly the untranslatable German Volksgemeinschaftsgeist—the realization of an integral, organic solidarity with all other members of the nation—or, in short, loyalty to the collectivist idea of the country.

As a matter of principle, so far as is consistent with the rules about limitation and "purging" of its membership, a Fascist Party will be open to all citizens of the state who give their unqualified support to the Fascist régime. At first, this really fundamental rule of every one-party system will sound most inconsistent to many people—who will probably cite, as refutation of the contention, the sad case of the German Jews. But—recalling that this is not an investigation of particular Fascist actions from the point of view of law or ethics, but of generally Fascist practice from a point of view of political, and specifically of Fascist theory—it will become clear that the skepticism is unfounded, as soon as we make the necessary distinction between exclusion of a

group from admissibility to the Fascist Party and its exclusion from the national community as such. The latter, which is the case with the German Jews, may be an ethical outrage or a violation of national and international law—but when it comes to studying the political system of a nation, who can say whether or not a group “belongs” to it except the people of that nation themselves? Would anyone contend that our Southern commonwealths should not be called democracies before the passage of the Fifteenth Amendment, because the negro slave population was not admitted to citizenship? Two principles must govern the treatment by political science of any such case: first, that the question of where a political community should draw the line of its members, can only be decided by that community itself; second, that this decision will have to be the basis of every investigation of its affairs, regardless of whether it appears right or wrong to the hypothetical “objective” observer. This is the more so because that question is one of state practice but not of state theory. It may be a question of theory in another respect—of economic theory, like the Communist restriction to proletarian workers, of race theory, like the German restriction to “Aryans,” or simply of international law, like the fact that one country acknowledges every person born within its borders as a citizen while another does not. But the theoretical structure of a state can be based only on its own decision as to who is to compose it—and a student of the structure will have to accept the premise without question. In other words, the definition of membership adopted by a

community must not be confused with its political set-up.

Consequently, whenever a Fascist state pronounces a certain group as "outside the nation," or as "inhabitants" as opposed to citizens, the fact that members of this group are barred from the privilege of joining the Fascist Party does not justify the conclusion that the Party is not open to the entire community. It is—emphatically so—and that group does not count because it is no part of the community. On the other hand, every bona fide citizen who is technically admissible and sufficiently Fascist will be welcome to the Party—whether he be poor or rich, obscure or prominent, illiterate or intellectual giant. As a matter of fact, the obliteration of class distinctions in politics is one undeniable accomplishment of the Fascist states. This also may surprise those who are still mistaking Fascism for a movement of reaction—but it will be confirmed by everyone with a first-hand knowledge of German and Italian conditions. It is absolutely essential to Fascism that the single Party should not only be open to everyone but should know of no distinctions between its members except those of Party rank which are only to be earned by conspicuous Fascism and service to the community. Therefore, every Fascist Party takes considerable pride in having made it possible for the lowest-born to rise to the heights of leadership, and in having done the utmost to clean out the traditional vestiges of social and economic snobbery. The former accomplishment is a matter of record. While over here, in the Horatio Alger country, people fell into the habit of scoffing at Hitler as a "former house

painter," the roster of Fascist and National Socialist sub-leaders presents a unique variety of men from all walks of life—from royal princes and reigning dukes to ex-laborers and tenant farmers. Neither can there be any doubt about the Fascists' success in their drive for social re-orientation. Today German Junkers may vent their inherited anti-Semitism in quasi-official Jew-baiting, but they will be very careful before attempting to assert a feudal superiority over any small peasants or lowly farmhands—who may well have a lower "Party number" stamped on their membership cards than the aristocratic lord of the manor. Industrialists, who can often get rid of an individual obstreperous employee on the pretense of his being engaged in Communist activities, will first make quite sure that he holds no Party commission—nor will any of them refuse to stand at attention in line with their five-dollar-a-week workers at plant ceremonies and humbly salute any of their "followers" who might chance to hold a position in the Party hierarchy superior to that of the boss. And no fashionable hotel or night club will ever refuse admittance to even the most unpleasant individuals in Party uniform, or in mufti—because nowadays one cannot tell a man's status in the important part of the community from the way he looks, talks, or behaves. All our ideas to the contrary notwithstanding, this "democratization" of social life under Fascism is real—and it is not even surprising. It is just good Fascism. The community is superior to any one of its parts—and no quality distinguishing any

of the parts can be held superior to the quality of Fascism which distinguishes the Party.

The strange but unmistakable effect of this principle is the disintegration of a community pattern that has always been contrasted with the state: "society." Society—not in the narrow sense of groups listed in Social Registers or frequenting the haunts and resorts of fashion, but in its widest conception as the total of non-political and non-economic human relations—was widely felt to be the real, aboriginal group set-up, over which that of the state was artificially superimposed. Society disregards the state—cutting across state lines as well as splitting the state unit into self-conscious factions. Its challenge to the influence of the state over the individual is the more effective in that it is so wholly vague and indefinite, and its ramifications—if unchecked at the start—are virtually impossible to control. That this is eminently unsatisfactory to a doctrine elevating the state to a superhuman plane, is self-evident. That Fascism directs a tremendous effort toward control and co-ordination of the social life of the individuals, we have seen before. But that—whether with premeditation or not—every such move of Gleichschaltung in behalf of the movement extolling the state aims at disrupting the other structure; that every move for organization within the framework of the state tends to weaken the social framework; that the establishment of the totalitarian state, as the completely political group structure, inevitably spells the doom of the a-political structure of human society—these consequences have often been



sensed but seldom been conceded to be parts of the Fascist pattern. But parts of it they are, without question. Their logic is inescapable: it is a prerequisite to any realization of the superior place which the state holds under the Fascist dogma that there should be no group structure existing beside, and independent of, and therefore incompatible with, the state. Nor does this only apply to clearly defined structures: since the dogma demands that the Fascist consciousness shall prevail exclusively, every other type of group mentality, and especially the hazy kind of social and "class" instinct, is an obstruction which it is imperative to remove. For the making of a Fascist nation, as distinguished from the setting up of a Fascist form of government, it is not enough to issue decrees and create organizations that will fit its ideological frame—it is necessary first to destroy the structure of society that will not fit it. The tearing-down process must precede the Fascist Party's permanent constructive tasks: it must uproot in the people not only individualist trends but also any state-disregarding social consciousness before it can replace it with the uniform collective mentality based on and enclosed in the Fascist state.