

Explorations of Non-American Spaces
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So we've come to a turning point in the road, and really we want to go down a second kind of path in our analysis of contemporary society. Because, you see, we have said that the pretension of American power is global, but, alas, the success of American power was not global. And, consequently, there was a great deal, for example, of ranting by the Dulleses and a great deal of raving by the Rockefellers and a great deal of huffing by the CIA and a great deal of huffing by the Pentagon, but after it was all done, there was a certain kind of objective reality that was intractable. And there was a certain kind of collective will on the part of some peoples that really was unbreakable.

You see what it is that it is that I am saying. What I am saying is that the American empire, as it was conceived after the Second World War, had its limits right from the very beginning. And those limits became increasingly obvious. There were whole countries and whole peoples and whole movements that really avoided that American empire, that escaped it, that resisted it — whole peoples, for example, who insisted upon positing another basis for social relationships in the world than simply the casual meetings of rich and poor, or of owners and workers, or of masters and slaves on that kind of perpetual marketplace. What you are saying is that there is non-American space in the world and we are interested in exploring that non-American space.

We are concerned, then, with what you would call Soviet space, in other words, that zone in Eastern Europe where you have the emergency of Communist regimes in the period after 1945. And we are interested, after that, in examining Chinese space — in other words, that great Asiatic zone where there was a revolutionary movement that really confronted and ultimately stalemated Western capitalist power. And we are interested, after that, in Third World space, in other words, in those efforts — so many of them to be checkmated, as a matter of fact — those efforts, after all, on the part of very humiliated peoples finally to mount movements to manifest their own independence. And we are interested and concerned, finally, in "subversive space": in other words, those movements inside the area of the American capitalist world in which there is challenge, in which there is a perception of contradiction, an attempt to deepen that contradiction, an attempt, finally, to make it onto some kind of social explosion, some kind of a mechanism for change. All of that will concern us for a considerable length of time.

And you talk about Soviet space. And you talk about that zone of influence in Eastern Europe in

which there emerged, finally, those Communist regimes. And you can analyze those Communist regimes in Eastern Europe like the two dimensions. First of all, historically: why and how those regimes emerged in the period after 1945. But, secondly, conceptually. And, conceptually, very importantly, in other words, what was this "socialism" that emerged in Eastern Europe. What do we mean by a bureaucratic model of socialism? And is it really socialism? And, you see, we have to know about that because it really raises so many questions in our minds about what a good society is and what the potentialities for a socialist label really are. Because, you see, it raises all of those questions about the relationship between struggle and revolution, about the relationship between mass participation and mass consciousness, about the relationship between an effective freedom and an essential socialism.

It raises those questions for reasons of which I ask you to read William Hinton's *Fanshen* that deals so essentially, really, with that kind of question: of whether you can have a socialism outside of the practice of people who, finally, made up the mass base of the societies that claim to be socialist. The question that I want to raise, after all, in analyzing those areas, is the question that finally was put in such brilliant form by [Jean-Paul] Sartre — by Sartre in an absolutely searing and magnificent essay that he was to produce — an essay called "*Le socialisme qui vient du froid*" ("Socialism That Comes in from the Cold"), which was his introduction to a book by the Czech writer Antonín Liehm called *Three Generations*, which was a study for three generations of Czech intellectuals who had fought for another kind of a society. And I have translated two seminal pages of that particular essay and excerpted them for you so that you see what the problems that ultimately we want to try to grapple with. "It isn't so important," writes Sartre,

"why a people finally comes to socialism. What is essential is that they struggle for it themselves and build it with their own hands. The truth, writes Hegel, is in the becoming. One becomes a socialist by making socialism. What revolutionaries in Eastern Europe wanted was to benefit from Soviet experience and advice, but to do the work themselves: to start from their own problems, their particular situations, their resources, their history, and their culture. They wanted to find their own way in order to be able, one day, to recognize themselves in their work.

"But they were saved by the job. While the United States used the Marshall Plan and remilitarization to colonize so much of the world, the USSR imposed a prefabricated socialism on its little brothers. And of course, it was the kind of socialism which Russian Communists had derived from their own special conditions — that is, the difficulties of a large agricultural country, barely beginning to industrialize, without a bourgeoisie, and after the civil war and its massacres, almost without a proletariat — which had to concentrate authority in a bureaucracy and sacrifice the peasantry in order to build an

industrial infrastructure. Without a working class, the Party exercised a dictatorship in its place; it became coterminous with the state. The revolution veered into a perilous direction. Lenin was aware of it. Yet it might all have been saved, until the bureaucracy turned itself into a self-perpetuating force."

We all know that history. And it is futile to ask if it might have been different. What we know is that the productive relations, developed there under vital, whiplashed needs — that is, to produce at any price, an imperative imposed on a backward country surrounded by its enemies, became the Soviet style. But that system was then exported, and with tragic consequences for the importing countries: that is, the radical depolitization of peoples whom the occupation and the resistance had politized.

And, you see, that goes directly, really, to question ultimately that we want to walk around and ultimately to examine. And so you deal with this question of Soviet space. And you deal with the question of why and how those Communist regimes emerged in the period of 1945. And let me set out for you three propositions. Let me set first for you the proposition that objectively, over a twenty-five-year period from the end of the First World War to the end of the Second World War, that zone of Eastern Europe — those six countries that became the Soviet zone, in that area — that over that twenty-five-year period, those areas became ripe for revolution. What I am saying, in effect, is that the crisis of development, really, finally, came to a breaking point in those particular areas. And they had to break through the staticity of their own existence and move to some other level of social organization.

The second proposition: that, subjectively, the emergence and development of socialism — or the revolutionary process, if you please — that, subjectively, the revolutionary process was a rather ambiguous transaction. A transaction between the Western Allies, or Western Allied diplomacy, between that and Soviet national needs. And finally, the interior or internal movements in those countries. A transaction between diplomacy, between Russian national interests, and between the movements that had developed inside those particular countries.

And the third proposition: that, dialectically, the development and the substance — what you would call socialism in those particular countries — really is a response. It is a response to internal underdevelopment, in the first place; a response, in the second place, to the Cold War; and a response, in the third place, to the deformatives of Stalinism, and then to the limitations of de-Stalinization.

And all of those propositions, it seems to me, that it is worth to set and it is worth to try to document. And so you talk about the objectivity or the material conditions for revolutions in those particular areas. And I suppose what I am saying is that you have a zone of societies that

encompass six countries. You are talking about Poland, about Yugoslavia, about Czechoslovakia and Romania, Bulgaria and Hungary. And in that zone you are dealing with 110 million people by 1939. And with the one exception of Czechoslovakia — which had something of a substantial bourgeoisie and had a rather stable peasantry and was able then to mount a kind of liberal Western-style democracy — with that one exception of Czechoslovakia, you are dealing with a zone which is economically underdeveloped, and which is socially semi-feudal, and which is politically increasingly autocratic until it develops virtually models of crypto-fascism by the time you come down to 1939.

And in order to give you some insight into the question of the objectivity of a revolutionary condition, let me try to do it in two ways. Let me, first of all, try to sensitize you to something very important, namely, the agricultural system. And, secondly, to sensitize you to something like the political system — and sensitize you sufficiently, I hope, so that you shed no crocodile tears about the disappearance of those horrible regimes which, really, long had outlived any usefulness that they might have had in human terms for the societies that they professed to serve.

And, when I talk about that agrarian system, what I am concerned to show are two things. I am concerned to show something about the ubiquitousness, or the scope, of agriculture in these societies: that is a dimension, after all, of underdevelopment. And, secondly, to show something about the system of land tenure, or the system of property relationships, which really begin to define the semi-feudal relationship that underlie those particular societies. So you are talking — and it tells you about underdevelopment in the middle of the twentieth century — so you are talking about, primarily, overwhelmingly, agricultural countries. You are dealing in Bulgaria, in Yugoslavia, and Romania with an agrarian population of 80% in 1939; in Poland of about 65%; in Hungary of about 55%; and only in Czechoslovakia do you have it under 50%, the agrarian sector composing about 38%. But it isn't only a question of locking so many people into agriculture: it is also that the technology is very low, that you are dealing really with the lowest yields in Europe. If you read a very good book by O. S. Morgan called *Agricultural Systems in Middle Europe*, he points out that by 1939, given differences of crop and area, that the productivity per hectare in West European agriculture was between two to five times as great as the productivity in East European agriculture.

And so you can begin to see a picture. The picture is of peasants locked into an agrarian system in which they can barely produce enough for a market, hardly even enough for their own subsistence. Or consider the third facet of that problem, which is that they do not have, as a result, the industrial alternative. And that begins already to tell you how close those societies were to what we consider Third World societies today. Now, you know that if you have industry, you can up the yields per acre. You can make tractors, you can have fertilizer, and you can up the yields. Or, what is even more important, you have alternative employment patterns: you can

absorb some of those who live, otherwise, desperately on the land. But consider that in 1939, you had in those six countries 70 million people living on the land, of whom it was considered that 15 million were superfluous. In other words, over 20% of that agricultural population had no place on the land. Now, part of that has to do with the "biological reversal," as we call it, around the turn of the twentieth century: that you begin to get a decline in death rates. And consequently, the populations increase rather rapidly. In part it is a result of the very pattern of property relations — in other words, the way the land is distributed. But it is also the result of the failure to have industrialization which will give alternative employment and, consequently, you are dealing really with an underdeveloped society.

The other part of the problem has to do with land tenure or has to do with the basis for these semi-feudal relationships. And when you talk about property relationships on the land in Eastern Europe by the time you come down to the Second World War, you are talking about two very basic problems. You are talking about the big estate: in other words, the huge latifundia which occupy so much of the territory of at least two of those countries. And you are talking, secondly, about parcelization: in other words, about holdings that we are so small that a peasant family couldn't possibly earn a proper living upon them.

Now, you see, after the First World War, in all of those countries there was certain agrarian reform laws which were all more or less defeats. But they were the greatest defeats in two countries. And in those two countries, you have by the Second World War the characteristic home in Europe of the "great estate." One of them is Poland and the other is Hungary. And it is there that you have that *race des seigneurs*, that race of great landowners that really are the great feudatories of Europe — that have, if they ever did anything, a military function in the Middle Ages, but long since ceased to have any function except to marry into American money. But it suffices to say that you're talking about the Esterházy's and the Károlyi's of Hungary, you're talking about the Radziwiłł's and the Kennedy's of Poland. And, consequently, you are talking about, quite obviously, about those names that, after all, impress you when you see them on the society page of *The New York Times*. And so they had five- and six-thousand-hectare estates in those particular countries.

Look, take Poland: by the census of 1921, there were 19,000 holdings of 100 hectare or more that constituted less than 1% of all of the holdings but consumed 45% of the arable land surface of Poland. In other words, less than 1% of the owners dominating almost half of the arable land. At the other end of the stick, if you're dealing with holdings of 5 hectare or less, you have 2.1 million holdings, of which 1.1 million are what are called dwarf holding — less than 2 hectare, on which you can't possibly survive. And those constitute only 15% of the land. Now, in between, you do get about 25% of the holdings between 5 and 100 hectare. And they are what we call the rich or the middle peasants. And they are the backbone in Poland of what is called the

"Piast," or the Peasant Party, which is the Peasant Party of [Wincenty] Witos and especially of [Stanisław] Mikołajczyk. And Mikołajczyk becomes terribly important in this whole story as the leader of a Peasant Party that, ultimately, was very conservative and that, ultimately, really resisted any kind of viable social change in that particular country.

But the point I make about these big estates is that in a country like Poland, 45% of the people who lived on the land were landless and had no access to land at all. In Hungary it was 42%, and those that had land, really, barely made ends meet on those parcelized holdings. In the other countries, if you're dealing with Bulgaria or Romania or Yugoslavia, they did have more effective agrarian reforms, but do still have some big landowners, but especially some rich peasants and some medium peasants. And so the problem is the parcelized farm. It's really awful! You cannot begin to imagine it. You take a country like Romania in 1939, where you have 15 million people living on the land, and you have, after all, 3 million farm families that do not have a horse or a cow — 2 million farm families that have no kind of a plow and have, certainly, no sort of stock animals — a half million farm families that do not even own a chicken! It's desperate and medieval. And it's got to go.

And consequently, the problem, obviously, is one of definition. What kind of a society is there, then, in Eastern Europe? We know it by a name now because we know it from the Third World. What we are dealing with are semi-colonial societies. And when we say semi-colonial societies, we really have a certain kind of measure by which to define that. You take, for example, per capita income in the year 1939, and what you have in Eastern Europe is terribly interesting because it hangs between the Asiatic standard — which is the standard of desperate poverty imposed by colonialism — and the advanced standard of Western Europe on the other hand. But it is closer to the Asiatic standard. In 1939, in India or in China or in Indonesia, the annual per capita income was less than \$30. In that same year, in Western Europe, in Germany or in Great Britain or in France, it ranged between \$450 and \$550 dollars. But if you take the East European bloc, if you take Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary and Poland, any of them except Czechoslovakia, it is between \$90 and \$100; in Czechoslovakia, up to \$130.

So you are talking about a semi-colonial zone. By which we mean: basically agricultural, low productive yields, little industry, and a very weak bourgeoisie and — note it well — outside investment, because they are zones for outside investment in industry and mining, such as it exists in those particular areas. Because, you see, those zones were set up by the Treaty of Versailles as a playground, financially, for France and for Great Britain. And, finally, Germany and the United States got into that East European zone in the period between the wars. So that you get, for example, in Yugoslavia, two mining complexes: one owned by the French, one owned by the British. And the French one — the Compagnie de Bar, which was the biggest mining complex in Yugoslavia — and it was owned by a French combine. And that French

combine, in the period between 1928 and 1936, drew out in dividends more than its initial investment. Or in a country like Romania, by 1916, only one one-sixth of all industrial investment is in Romanian capital; by the Second World War, in oil, which is the key resource of Romania, in oil there is only 20% Romanian capital and 80% is foreign capital.

Poland is perfect because Poland, after 1926, on the 1st of May of 1926, Marshal [Józef] Piłsudski puts the lid down on anything democratic in Poland, and begins to get a very authoritarian regime — what you call a safe regime for investments. And, consequently, the foreign investments begin to come in. And, yes, there he is in 1927, Averell Harriman. And there he is in Poland, and with Piłsudski he negotiates, and he gets virtually a monopoly over the zinc mines in Upper Silesia with very good tax breaks given to him by the Polish government. You go down to the 1931 statistics: 45% of all mineral or industrial investment in Poland is in foreign hands and, in the key resources of coal or of the non-ferrous metals, it is much more than that 45%. And so you get a semi-colonial situation. Recognize it! You trip over it in your own world.

And so there is, quite obviously, a tremendous amount to be said for the objectivity of a revolutionary situation. But turn the coin over and there's something that pushes it even more into that direction. And that is the political process in those particular areas. They are really terrible countries. You know, it takes all of the kind of energy and all of the inner discipline and inner sovereignty that I have to talk about those East European countries at that time. Because their governments and their regimes are really something. They're not out of operettas; they're much too cruel for that. And, consequently, that you get is a kind of growing authoritarianism. Look. You have in these countries, after the First World War, a certain kind of political experimentation. There is almost a façade of democracy. There is an interplay of parties. It's the period when you get peasant parties, like the Peasant Party of Poland or the so-called Peasant Union of [Aleksandar] Stamboliyski in Bulgaria. And these represent, presumably, the peasantry, although mainly the richer and the more substantial peasants.

But more than that: in that early post-World War I period, you get a Communist movement. You get it, of course, in the ambit of the Russian Revolution and without what we would call proper social base — without a working class that really is a sophisticated working class — amazingly strong Communist performances in those East European countries. In Hungary, after all, in 1919, Béla Kun actually established a Communist regime for a short period of time. You get a strong Communist party in Czechoslovakia. You get a strong Communist party in Yugoslavia. And, in Bulgaria, you get even an attempted coup — sort of a ludicrous one, to be sure, but rather interesting. Because, in 1923, you see, there had been in Bulgaria elections in April and the Peasant Union of Stamboliyski, which was a pretty progressive peasant party, had won a great majority of the seats. And the second party were the Communists. And between the Communists and the Peasant Party maybe something interesting would happen in Bulgaria. And there was a

coup in June of '23, and the right-wing faction, which had been ousted in the elections, suddenly took power and created a kind of a military regime in Bulgaria. And the Communists responded by actually trying to overthrow it. It was a coup — nothing happened in September of '23. But the Communists were strong enough so that they actually created disorders, in the month of September, for a period of time — all of that within the first years after the war.

But the point I make is that, progressively, the regimes become more authoritarian. And in the 1930s, they become more and more crypto-fascist. Crypto-fascist in two ways: in terms of their internal institutions and in terms of their identification with Italy and with Germany. Now, you must understand that the framework for that is the Depression. The Depression clobbers Eastern Europe because they are agricultural areas. And what happens to the agricultural markets, what happens to the agricultural prices, is a disaster. In Poland, for example, where Piłsudski had made the first of these authoritarian regimes in May of 1926, it becomes increasingly authoritarian. By 1929, he established his so-called "Ministry of Colonels." By 1935, they scrap the constitution, and it is an outright dictatorship, really, of the military under Colonel [Józef] Beck after the death of Piłsudski. Now, why?

Because, you see, in Poland you have such a drop in the agricultural market that you began to get real peasant upset. And you have such a disastrous collapse of what little there was in industry that the workers began to be agitated. When you cope with figures like this: that given the 1928 index of 100, that agricultural prices are 50 in 1931, and that they are 40 in 1932. Or if you take the figure of 1928 in industry and see that there is half the industrial production only in 1931... well, you see, there's trouble. And in the framework of trouble, what there is an attempt, if you please, to master the crisis — a futile attempt to master the crisis.

And so it's open season, of course, on the Communists. And the Communists, after all, are hunted everywhere all through this particular zone. There we are in the city of Łódź in 1932 — not an enviable place in that year — but there we are in the city of Łódź, and there is a Communist organizer and he has called a meeting of Communists in the trade unions. And his name is Władysław Gomułka. And Gomułka — who had been the son, after all, of peasant turned oil worker; who had himself been a socialist, a longtime young Communist — now organizing the workers in the city of Lutz. The police came in. They don't ask questions; they fire. Gomułka always walks with a limp from the wounds he got from that particular occasion, and sent off to prison. Well, the Communists in Poland are trapped. They are pursued. They are persecuted. And, finally, they leave for a haven. They must have protection, and they leave lock, stock, and barrel — the top and the middle leadership — off to Moscow for protection.

Well, in Moscow, Stalin is going through his trials of Old Bolsheviks. And suddenly these Old Polish Bolsheviks have arrived. And he doesn't like them anyway because they're all disciples of

Rosa Luxemburg. And somehow they bespeak of permanent revolution. He does like any of that Luxemburg heresy. And so, on January 1st of 1938, the whole top leadership of the Polish Communist Party, bad enough attacked in its own reactionary country, is taken out — headed by Adolf Warski, 71 years old, the great friend of Lenin himself — and they're all shot. And in April of 1938, Stalin dissolves the whole party and says it's full of fascists. And so you get it on all sides.

But the point we make is that it was crypto-fascism in that zone. And it went in every one of those countries: in the regime of King Carol in Romania, of King Boris in Bulgaria, of [Admiral Miklós] Horthy in Hungary. And you get further and further toward fascism. Look at Poland. There is Piłsudski, finally dying in 1935, going to the Valhalla of authoritarians, and leaves it all to Colonel Józef Beck, one of his colonels. And Colonel Beck makes a long friendship treaty in 1934 with the Germans. And you see what this is about. The way in which you resolve the crisis, so they say. Well, Weston tells us we're looking for ways. And what Colonel Beck and the Poles say is the way you resolve the crisis is, first of all, really, to beat up on your minorities — and Poland had them — and, consequently, against its 8.5% who were Jews, there really was open season. There were boycotts...

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... invades the Soviet Union, "You will get more of the Ukraine and you will get more of Lithuania. And, finally, when the Germans themselves move into Czechoslovakia and take the Sudetenland after Munich, it is the Poles that rush in and take Cieszyn.

Okay. So we come to the third part of that analysis of the objective reality. And you have said there was an agrarian system and a political system. And you come to the third part of that demonstration, and you say that the war, the occupation, and the resistance pushes the crisis to its limits. And that is important. Every one of those countries had a peculiar relationship to the war. In three of those instances, in the instance of Poland, of Yugoslavia, and of Czechoslovakia, there was a very cruel occupation by the Germans. And a resistance movement of real proportions is mounted against that German occupation. In the other three cases, the case of Romania, of Bulgaria and of Hungary, they are the Nazi satellites and, consequently, they all joined the war on the side of the Axis. And they are in that favored position until suddenly in 1944, when they realize that, "Oh, the Axis will lose the war, and there are the Russian armies." And then it's different.

And so we want to examine those cases. And there is Poland, first of all. And Poland is invaded in September of 1939. And it's invaded by the Germans and by the Russians. And the Russians lop off an eastern zone and occupy it. The Germans take the largest acquisition. By October of

1939, they have added to the German Reich a lot of Polish territory. They have taken Poznań, they have taken part of Pomerania, they have taken part of the province of Łódź, part of the province of Kraków — they have really added a great deal of that western Poland. And what is left to Poland is what is called the territory of General Government, and that really is under German occupation. Now, let's face it squarely. The Poles put up with a worse occupation probably than anybody in Europe. The Germans were absolutely brutal to the Poles. They had no use for them, no regard for them, no respect to them. And for the Germans, after all, Poland was just a big reserve out of which they were to take forced labor. And so it was awful. Ultimately, you know, there were 6 million Poles and Jews combined who were really gassed to death in Auschwitz or other concentration camps. There were literally hundreds of thousands of Poles that were sent into forced labor; there were literally tens of thousands of Poles that were simply shot without any kind of trial. It really was a horror.

And against that the Poles mounted a resistance — but, in typical Polish fashion, a very strange resistance. And there is something I must tell you, you know, that I have a very peculiar relationship to the Poles as I do to the French, and the Italians, and Ohio [*laughter*]. There is just no accounting for my taste for those people. But I have a great affection for the Poles, except that there is something terribly heroic, a great deal of bravado, and yet terribly, terribly frivolous, and without real thought going into a lot of these actions. And I've been told a lot and discovered, that, first, they hate the Russians, which is a very profound factor in any kind of relationship they were going to have to a resistance movement; but, secondly, that that is returned — that the Russians, after all, have very little use for the Poles either. And I just had to wonder in the middle of that particular thing, and came to see the difference, really, and what it was is you're trying to say you're going to have a resistance movement that will really transform Poland when you have to make an accommodation to and adjust yourself to the presence and the existence of the reality of the Soviet Union.

And, if you must know, I was going up to Leningrad on the eleven o'clock night train that goes all night. And I got to the station at night — I had a whole bunch of things to read and I had some food to eat — and I got to the station, and there was a whole bunch of Polish students there, a couple of whom I recognized from certain adventures in Warsaw, and having met some of them in Warsaw. And it was already eleven o'clock, and they had begun drinking vodka at seven, so by the time I got to the platform it was very animated. And they were doing these Polish dances and so forth, and this girl Róża recognized me, and she said, "Ah, this is an American!" And I was introduced, and they said, "Well, what about these new dances you have in America?" Well, I said, "Would you like to talk about Lenin?" They said no, and this was in the era of the so-called twist. And so, you know, I knew there was nobody there that could check me. That's what I did, and that really all went into the train, finally, and it was full. And we got into this compartment, and it was just a magnificent all-night session, you know? But finally

there were complaints from other compartments and so forth, and there was this very loud rap at the door. And the conductor was there. It was an extremely large conductor — it happened to be a woman, a Soviet conductor — and she said something in Russian which I didn't understand, and they all began to laugh. And I said, "Well, what is it she said?" So one of them explained who we were and so forth, and she said, "Oh well, what can you expect — a bunch of Poles and yet with an American!" Well, the whole idea was, you know, that you were dealing with people who are perfectly frivolous. It was the way the Russians looked at them. And there's something to be said in terms of the behavior of that incredible resistance movement in Poland, which was so very serious, and yet in certain ways never came to grips with the basic problem of change.

Now, that resistance movement had two parts. It had an exile movement. Obviously, there was a government that took off from Poland and that settled itself outside the border. And it settled itself first in France. And then, when France made its armistice in June of 1940, it went up to London. And we're talking about the so-called "London Poles." Now, the London Poles were a committee or a government-in-exile. And they were a combination of four parties: the Peasant Party, the so-called Democratic Party, the so-called Christian Party, and the Socialist Party. Basically, the orientation was pretty conservative, and the head of it was General [Władysław] Sikorski and his assistant was Mikołajczyk, the head of the Peasant Party.

Now, this government-in-exile, or these London Poles, had two talking points. On the one hand, they had an army — in other words, about 84,000 Polish soldiers had escaped Poland and gone to the Western Front and fought in France. And after the armistice in June of 1940, a lot of them had escaped and gone to England and would be used on the Western Front. But they had an internal army and a contact with the internal resistance movement, because a great resistance movement really did mount inside Poland. And it was organized again into a national council, an underground council, that had these four parties of the exiled government represented in it. And it had an army, an army called ultimately the Home Army or the A.K. — the Home Army, which ultimately did incredible things. You see certain Polish films of the resistance, and you know what they did. What they did, between 1941 and '44, was literally to blow up thousands of railroad engines, to derail hundreds of trains, to destroy all kinds of military trucks, to assassinate over 5,000 German occupation troops. In other words, it was an extremely heroic resistance.

But the question is: What was this resistance ideologically? What kind of a conception did it have of another Poland, or what conception did it have of another Poland or of the postwar? And here, though it was anti-authoritarian, in other words, it's very much like, let us say, the Greek Center [Union] not liking the Radical Union of [Konstantinos] Karamanlis. They were opposed to that kind of authoritarian regime of Piłsudski or Beck. But, basically, it was not a social ideology. It was an ideology of Polish "greatness." They were really, basically, Polish nationalists. And what they thought about was the maintenance of their eastern frontier against

any kind of Russian encroachment, and the expansion of their western frontier at the expense of Germany. It really was a kind of chauvinistic program. And they were as hostile to the Russians as they went to the Germans. Now, in part, the Russians were responsible for this, because the Russians weren't very congenial in the Polish zone that they occupied in 1939. And, consequently, they departed over a million Poles into the interior of Russia, and they deported about 250,000 of Polish troops. And when they were allies again, after the Germans attacked the Soviet Union, some 200,000 Poles never came back. The assumption being that they were either done in or they simply were imprisoned at that particular time.

All of that was true. But the point is that, after June of 1941, the Germans do attack the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union is fighting against the Nazis' occupation of Poland, which is the major occupation. And so this London Polish government-in-exile has to sign a treaty with the Soviet Union in July of 1941, presumably fighting against the same enemy. But they never, really, were satisfied with that. You know, Sikorski and that government always referred to the Russians as the "ally of our allies." They never referred to them as "our ally" directly.

Well, you can imagine that this will create problems. And this is very different than the occupation and the resistance in Yugoslavia. And note this well, because this really goes to the heart of the matter. In Yugoslavia, it's terrific. I don't know whether you have a soft thing in your heart for Serbs, but love them. Because what they did in the course of the Second World war is really quite incredible. You see, what happened is that in 1941 — in March of 1941, the 27th of March — there was a coup inside Belgrade. And so the ministry that had been a very pro-Nazi, pro-German ministry was overthrown. And an anti-German ministry was erected, so that the Germans immediately made a blitzkrieg into Yugoslavia. It began on the 6th of April of 1941, and within three weeks, by the 20th of April, they had conquered the country.

And what the Germans did in Yugoslavia was pretty terrible. They dismembered the country, first of all. So Slovenia, for example, was divided between Germany and Italy; so Bulgaria and Hungary got little chunks; and so the Germans recognize a "Free" Croatia — a Croatia under a kind of fascistic Croatian Quisling, who really was a horror against both the Serbs and against Jews in that kind of so-called Free Croatia. Now that was dismemberment. Beyond that, there was occupation of a very truncated Serbia that was left under a kind of Serbian Pétain, called Nedić, General [Milan] Nedić, who simply was a sort of a puppet for the Germans. The regime, in other words, was an extraordinarily harsh one.

And so, the Yugoslavs mounted a resistance. And part of that resistance, again, is external. And you are talking about King Peter, young king Peter, who escapes from Belgrade and goes to Athens; and then, when Athens falls to the Nazis, goes to Cairo, and finally makes his way to London by the beginning of 1943. Now, that's the monarchy. That's conservative, King Peter

trying to preserve his old kingdom. And what he does in January of 1942 is to appoint inside Yugoslavia a so-called Minister of Defense — Draža Mihailović, General Mihailović, who is appointed Minister of Defense in January 1942 — to organize an army of Serbian irregulars called the Chetniks in the mountains of central Serbia. And, consequently, to serve as an armed force for the restoration of the Yugoslav monarchy. All that's well and good — except it doesn't bespeak of a new Yugoslavia.

But then there is another kind of resistance, and that is the Communist resistance. And it's different from any other Communist resistance in Europe. And, you see, it centers around a party that had really been quite strong after the First World War. When you stop to think that, in a country that had as little industry as Yugoslavia — in 1920, there were 300,000 workers organized in trade unions, many of them under Communist auspices — when you think that the Yugoslav Communist Party was the third largest party in Yugoslavia in 1921, you see the big thrust that party made. Now, during the 1920s and, especially, in the '30s, the Party strength disintegrated. It disintegrated in part because of all of those old impositions by the Comintern line that didn't fit Yugoslavia because of internal crises and, especially, because of repression.

Then comes the reorganization of the Yugoslav Communist Party. And it comes in 1937. And it is [Bulgarian Communist Party leader Georgi] Dimitrov up in Moscow who sends a Croatian Communist down into Yugoslavia, really, to strengthen it. It's a man who had been a Communist early, who had been a prisoner of war in the First World War fighting in the Austrian army and, in Russia as a prisoner of war, was converted to communism. His name was Josip Broz. And Josip Broz, of course, goes by the name of Tito. And Tito had helped to found the Croatian Communist Party in the very early 1920s, and he suffered a lot of imprisonment in the 20s and 30s. He spent years in Moscow. He is there in Spain in 1936 and '37, organizing Yugoslavian irregulars in the International Brigade. And finally he comes back into Yugoslavia, really, to take over the leadership of the Yugoslavian Communist Party.

Now, that party did three things in the resistance movement that really were unique. In the first place, there was absolutely no hiatus of, say, that because of the Nazi-Soviet pact, you did not fight against the Nazis. As soon as the Germans took over Yugoslavia, these Yugoslavian Communists insisted upon struggling against Germany. And that still at the time that the Nazi-Soviet Pact was on — when other Communist parties, after all, were muting their resistance to the Germans. So much was that the case that when [Nazi foreign minister Joachim von] Ribbentrop made his message to the Russians in June of 1941, detailing the reasons why the Soviet Union was the victim at that time, one of the reasons he gave was the terrible anti-German movement mounted by the Yugoslavian Communists. And so, right from the very beginning, they mounted a movement against this German occupation.

In the second place, there were the only movement, within all of Yugoslavia (that was dismembered at this time) that not only had units everywhere — in Croatia, in Montenegro, in Macedonia, in Slovenia — but that also spoke for the equality of all peoples. You see, this Mihailović, this Serb who hated Croats — who hated Croats, who hated Jews, who hated Macedonians — and here is Tito making a movement in which there is complete egalitarianism of all of the many peoples that make up Yugoslavia. And don't underestimate how important that is. You live in a country in which you still have not accorded equalities to people — and a movement that is saying, in our difficult circumstances, with all of this variation culturally, we insist upon this equality.

And then, from the very beginning you call for a national insurrection, the 27th of June of 1941. And that national insurrection is for the liberation of the national territory and a social revolution at one and the same time. They do not go in stages. It is not that you clear out the enemy first, and then you make their revolution. It is that they go at the same time. It is that Chinese notion of the "revolutionary base.": that, as you clear out territory, you turn that territory over to councils, to soviets, to popular power. It is not that the program specifically said socialism. It was transition to socialism: that the peasants would break up the land and redivide it. They weren't talking about communes. What was revolutionary about it was the devolution of power into the hands of people. It was not the French or the Italian idea that we do this later. First, after all, we mute any kind of idea of social revolution.

And this point, you see, has several incredible consequences. First of all, that in the patriotic front that you establish, you ask everybody into that patriotic front except collaborators and the people who do not agree with a revolution. No Gaullists in this movement. And that is fundamentally important. Now, Tito went to Mihailović three times, and he said, "We make a common front: you, Chetniks, and me." And he said, "All you have to do is give up the king. We don't have him back. And also give up your idea of the status quo, and we make a front." Impossible! But, you see, the Yugoslavs were willing to expose the other part of the resistance movement. This is what the French never did — to unmask it, to show that it really stood for a continuation of the status quo within the framework of that particular society.

And finally, it meant that you make an army. Because if you have a resistance movement that is just paving the way for allied armies, then all you need are local actions — blowing up military dumps and so forth. But if you have in mind to make a revolution, you must have an army. And so it was that, when the king, King Peter, appointed Mihailović as the minister of defense. Then Tito said he'd make an army, and began to organize that army of partisans for the national liberation. This army, after all, was not only to fight against the enemy, but to present the Allies with a *fait accompli*. And that was incredible.

And there's something in Dedijer's book [*The Battle Stalin Lost: Memoirs of Yugoslavia, 1948-1953*] which I must bring to your attention. And [Yugoslav partisan Vladimir] Dedijer, who was in on the whole thing:

"Every revolution is a combination of ideology and spontaneous action by the masses: if the goals toward which the masses aspire are not clearly established, even the fiercest rebellions will fall through. At a consultation of the Yugoslav Central Committee in May 1941 in Zagreb, Tito, speaking of the preparations for armed resistance to the occupation, stressed the need to create a new government from the very first day. There was no other way for the struggle to succeed. How could anyone have appealed to the peoples of Yugoslavia to rise up against the German, Italian, Bulgarian and Hungarian occupiers without telling them clearly that they were fighting for a new kind of government; for a republic and not a monarchy; for equality among all the nationalities of Yugoslavia; for the complete independence of the country from foreign capital; for the industrialization of the economically backward areas; for ending the exploitation of man by man; for equal participation by women in society; for the right of the young to have a say on key problems?

"The decisions adopted at that plenum in May of 1941 were radioed secretly to Moscow, but the reply arrived only on the 4th of July, after war had broken out between Russia and Germany, when the Comintern sent the following message: 'The present stage is one of liberation from the fascist yoke and not of revolution.' Dimitrov signed the message, but actually it had come from Stalin... But the development of the uprising in Yugoslavia followed its own laws. The people had to be told that they would have a new government. Tito informed the Comintern of August 21st that 'probably a kind of central people's government would soon be formed.'"

And "to hell with you" is basically what he said. And so that Yugoslav moment went on.

With the Czechs: a resistance movement in between, in between these two models. And Czechoslovakia again suffered. You know, it is really something in those years. You see, do you get the point — do you get the point that a whole society is dying, that the Nazis are killing it off? That something new has got to come? This is what I mean when I say you push the crisis, really, finally, to the breaking point. And in Czechoslovakia it went this way. After Munich, the 30th of September of 1938, the Germans chopped off the Sudetenland. And then, in March of 1939, they created the independent republic of Slovakia — it was an awful thing, under one Monsignor [Jozef] Tiso, who was a terrible fascist — and then simply occupied Bohemia as a protectorate. And so Czechoslovakia fell under the German heel, and what they did really was quite awful.

Now, with the Czechs, the resistance began almost immediately. And it began to the left. And that's extremely interesting. Because [Edvard] Beneš and the government that had been the bourgeois government in Czechoslovakia suffered a decline in prestige after the "giveaways" at Munich, after the defeat before the Germans — after not being able, really, to maintain the national integrity. And for a period of time, the resistance was a sort of Communist resistance. And the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia picked up a lot of strength which, of course, it lost as soon as the Nazi-Soviet pact came. Because then the Czech Communists didn't do what the Yugoslav Communists did, but they simply pulled in their horns. But, by that time, you see, the Czechs had kind of come out of their trauma. And, consequently, they began to demonstrate.

And, you know, Czechs are very sturdy people. And when they demonstrate, it's with a hellish kind of spunk. And, consequently, on the 28th of October of 1939 — which was the twentieth anniversary of the founding of the Czech Republic — right under these Nazi occupying eyes, they held a demonstration for the freedom of Czechoslovakia. Well, of course, the Nazi occupiers opened fire, killed a Czech. The next day they had an immense demonstration at the funeral. The Nazis opened fire again, arrested hundreds of students, killed nine, and closed down the universities.

But then, once you come to June of 1941 and the Communists were back in the resistance, it gets very big. And in Bohemia you get all of those acts of bumping off Nazi occupiers, of sabotage, until finally, of course, the 26th of May of 1942. Because on that famous date of 26th of May of '42, it was the Reich's commandant — it was the Gauleiter of all of Czechoslovakia, who was Reinhard Heydrich — who was assassinated by a partisan of the Czech resistance movement. And in return for that, the Nazi did what was the most famous act of retribution probably of the war, because a week after that, they walked into the town of Lidice, and in that town took every male occupant of the town and killed him. Now, we, of course, after Vietnam, when you burn villages to save them — so we say, so what? But in those days, there still was a bit of sensitivity about those things, and it seemed a bit shocking that the Nazis had created that kind of barbarism and the resistance went on.

And that resistance, ultimately, centered in London around the provisional government of Edvard Beneš. And here is what I mean when I talk about an intermediary strand. Because the Czechs, unlike the Poles, recognize that the Russians were there. And recognized that they have to deal with them. You also recognized that the internal resistance was radical. It wasn't a revolutionary moment in the way it was in Yugoslavia, but it was much more a bridge between East and West — much more an accommodation with the Russians, which is what kept Beneš and that kind of democratic framework, really, as a viable alternative in Czechoslovakia at that particular time.

For the other three countries — for Hungary, for Romania, for Bulgaria — they are on the Nazi

side. And they are in the war. And by 1944, they want out. They want out before the Russians get there.; the Russians may not take kindly to them if they are fighting against them when they arrive. And, consequently, they try to get out. And in Hungary there are little negotiations behind the scenes, until Hitler won't have it. The 17th of March of 1944, he calls Admiral Horthy to him — it would have been marvelous to be a fly on the wall listening to that conversation — all we know is that, two days later, Budapest was occupied by the SS and Hungary stayed in the war. But it suffices to say that the resistance in those countries was very brief. There were attempts to make underground patriotic fronts. It was very weak. Note that well, because it means that whatever happens by way of liberation, whatever happens by way of the new regime, has got to happen by way of the Russian army.

And so you come to a second proposition: that the whole thing becomes a very ambiguous transaction. And in Poland, an incredible one, an incredible transaction. And the Poles wanted a grand and a powerful Poland after the war. You know, there is an unreality about the London Poles that is maddening. Here they are an occupied, defeated people, here is the Soviet Union plunging against these German armies, and here is Sikorski and Mikołajczyk and those terrible London Poles up there, insisting that they will keep their eastern frontier and they will have a big powerful Poland after the war that will be a kind of fulcrum against the Soviet Union. That's their line to the Allies.

The Russians, note it well, don't give a damn what color Poland is inside; they don't care whether it's red or white as long as the frontiers are right and the regime is friendly. And the very fact that they finally had to impose something rather more radical than those London Poles was because of the London Poles, and that because they wouldn't play ball. And Churchill knew it, and he kept telling them. He said, "You know, you're not in a position, not really in a position. You must understand that the Curzon Line isn't so bad because there, anyway, is the territory the Russians want. They're Russians, they're White Russians, they're Ukrainians. You know, you took that territory in 1920. You weren't supposed to have it, the Curzon Line. So it gives the Russians 79,000 square miles, so it gives them, after all, something like 10 million people. But they're not your people anyway. And we give you compensation in Germany. We give you compensation in the West."

Well, the Poles in London might have accepted that and the Russians might have accepted them, except that the Poles in London had another interlocutor. They weren't only talking to Churchill. They were talking to [Secretary of State Cordell] Hull and Roosevelt and [Representative Clement J.] Zablocki and those other American Poles. They didn't want to give up that eastern frontier. And they liked this idea of a *cordon sanitaire* around the Soviet Union. And so, suddenly, the London Poles are really playing very strange politics.

And there they are in April of 1943, on the 13th of April, there is a radio broadcast. And it's the Nazis broadcasting to the world and saying that they have discovered the graves of Katyń, in the Katyń forest. And that's to the west of Smolensk, and they say that there the Russians had killed off about 10,000 Polish officers and made a high mass grave. And they had discovered that. And the Poles in London are outraged. And Sikorski wanted an international Red Cross investigation. Now, you see, at that very time 50,000 Jews were dying in the Warsaw Uprising, the ghetto uprising. There were literally millions being hauled off to concentration camps and gassed to death. The London Poles never raised a stir about that. They raised one hell of a stir about Katyń because those officers were their kind. They were their relatives, they were their family. And the Russians were outraged that anybody should accuse them of that. And it is true that the Russians weren't into that kind of mass killing for the most part, but I think they did it at Katyń. I think Stalin one day decided that the world could do without 10,000 Polish officers. And I think it went that way.

But there was these graves, and the Poles in London made a big stir about it. Okay, so they made a stir about it. They said they wanted an investigation. They're going to blacken the Russians. And the Russians break off relations, and they suddenly say, "We have a communiqué to announce to you that comes to us from the Union of Polish Patriots." And suddenly, there is a Union of Polish Patriots on Soviet soil. And so you see what is happening. The London Poles will not play ball; the Russians will have their own government and simply impose it. And it's a question of the frontier which is really at stake.

So you begin to see, really, some of the peculiar auspices under which these things begin. The point is, all of those areas needed vast change. And there had been a lot of practice in the course of the Second World War whereby people might have known how to change. There was something wrong with the leadership of the Polish movement, something wrong with the Allied position on what would happen in those places. But a lot of things could have happened if it hadn't been so ambiguous, that transaction. But don't shed any tears.