

## **A Spiritual Typhus by A. K. Chesterton**

One of the tragedies of the democratic drift is that profound truths may become truisms without being incorporated in legislative action, especially those truths that require to be imaginatively perceived. Should forty million people find their white blood corpuscles called forth to fight against the deadly germs of typhus, their need would be sufficiently obvious for the politician to bring the resources of the State to their assistance - the more hurriedly in that to the perverted typhus germ a politician makes as appetizing a meal as anybody else. But should those forty million people be fighting a battle no less desperate against all the nameless armies of decadence and ruin that threaten the spirit, the politician can be trusted to observe nothing and therefore not to be diverted from his major business in life, which is service to his own career. Lack of appreciation of this fact, or else a subconscious acquiescence in its implications on the part of the parasitical overlords, has led many a civilization to disaster and many a nation to its grave.

Evidence of national neurosis today is only too abundant. The almost unbelievable shifts and stratagems and blundering follies of modern democratic governments represent one of its facets. The brazen and suicidal rampages of vested interests represent another. The astounding depravity of the Press represents a third. Evidence even more direct is supplied by the facile and poisonous Utopianism of the post-War period: the meaningless catchwords and slogans, the advocacy of the brave new world by human leeches sticking frantically to the bad old order, the failure of the Conservative to conserve, the inability of the Progressive to progress, the murder of the intellect by the intellectuals, and above all the hanging, drawing and quartering of Peace by pacifists who in the frenzy of their hysteria howl and dance and shriek for war. All these things indicate something more than a mental or spiritual stammer, they indicate a strongly entrenched neurosis which is the spirit's cancer and the trumpeter of death.

The realities ferment none the less surely because on every hand they are driven underground, the result being intensified conflict between the dream-doped mind and the sharp actualities of life, a conflict that has led to wide-spread neurosis quivering on the verge of lunacy. And in the midst of their confusion there came forth the Jew openly to claim his financial masterdom and the Bloomsbury intellectual to assume the spiritual leadership of mankind. The Lords of Decadence enter into their heritage and every vitiating influence is encouraged in order to break down what remains of a healthy, virile nationalism that alone could check and defeat the international rampage of usury and the international crowning of decay.

Societies are formed for 'experimental sex week-ends' and others to press for the revision of the homosexuality laws. No anti-British traitor in Ireland, no anti-British rioter in Egypt, no anti-British agitator in India but is sure of his wounds being licked in Britain. India itself is flung away, while His Majesty's Dominions are neglected and snubbed. At home food is buried or thrown into the sea because the hungry are not given the pieces of paper where with to buy them. Fascism, recognizing the human necessity to serve a social purpose and the fact that in a very real sense man lives only in so far as he is related to others, provides every citizen with the opportunity to take control of the social life to which he belongs in so far as that social life impinges upon his own interests and is amenable to the treatment and discipline that his own specialised knowledge can give.

In the theoretical limitation of the individual's power Fascism in practice extends it illimitably by rescuing it from an impossibly large milieu and concentrating it upon the smaller field where he is able to walk with the sure tread of an expert - the field of his own special study. He is allowed at long last the corporate activity which his soul's health demands, by the simple expedient of being able to work upon the task of bringing order and decency into his own occupation, thereby functioning normally and realistically as a social being in a world where idealism and realism no longer spell antithesis. Herein is both the meaning and the mechanism of the Corporate State of Fascism - normal functioning which is the solvent of neurosis and the conqueror of decay.

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