



HITLER'S POLITICAL ACTION AS ANTICIPATED BY CHURCHILL

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When one opens the book *Mein Kampf*, published by the Zentralverlag of the NSDAP, München, in the year 1935, one discovers that the publishing rights date from 1925, the first volume, and from 1927, the second volume. This 1935 edition reaches the expressive number of 2.050.000 exemplars issued. Hitler's ideas expressed in this work were public since 1925, and, ten years after, they had already been immensely publicised. A considerable part of the German people had bought the book and had read it. Many other persons all over the world had done the same. No one believes that foreign Governments, mainly Foreign Affairs Ministries and foreign Intelligence Services, did not do the same.

At the end of the thirties, all those who had the obligation to know what the political thoughts of the rising dictator were did indeed have all the instruments adequate to possessing such knowledge. Short of the utmost political stupidity or negligent incompetence, all the world Chancelleries knew what the German Führer had written and what he had affirmed he was going to do. No one of the fore mentioned can honestly claim surprise when Hitler resolved to put his show on the road and start to make real the actions he had devised as necessary to obtain the triumph for his cause, the cause of the New Reich, the "Thousand Years Reich", master of the world, ruler of its destiny, the godlike new cosmic power to which all had to be submitted.



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Immediately after reaching power in the form of Germany's new Chancellor, at the end of January 1933, Hitler started to remodel, to literally re-form not only the German world but the world as a whole. The program designed as the fundamental axis for that reform was the one conceived at the time of Hitler's imprisonment at Landsberg, program that constitutes the political juice of the work.

Available for the world to read, few did *read* it, at least with the political attention it deserved. Among these, and fortunately for the humankind, one finds the ever attentive and ever politically rogue Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill. Within the period of his life where nothing of political relevance seemed to have gone his way, generally forgotten and drowned in controversial matters such as the possible independence of India and the succession of sovereignty due to the personal problems and options of the British Monarch, the old and battered cavalry officer never stopped watching attentively the activities of the "German Corporal" now at the head of the German State.

It was based on this attentive observation that Churchill began to alert both the people in high office and the general public in relation to the ominous peril Hitler and his ideas and ever increasing action represented. With the help of very well informed friends with access to classified trustworthy data – mainly Ralph Wigram¹ – on which his speeches to the House of Commons were built, slowly forming a

¹ At the end of a brief but very important reference in his WWII Memoirs, Churchill affirms regarding Ralph Wigram: «His untimely death in December 1936 was an irreparable loss to the Foreign Office, and played its part in the miserable decline of our fortunes.» (CHURCHILL Winston Spencer, *The Second World War*. Volume I. *The Gathering Storm*, New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1985, p. 178).



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foothold on which to begin changing the general attitude of indifference and compromise towards the dictator.

Churchill perceived that in *Mein Kampf* resided the 'field manual' for Hitler's future actions, that the then want-to-be dictator meant everything that he had put in the book, that, therefore, what it contained was to be taken seriously: Hitler was no jester, he was a well-determined political leader, with new and very dangerous political ideas, that were of a fanatical kind, of a kind that mixed twisted psychology, strong political ideology and commitment, and a perverse anthropological and religious-theological stance. Churchill understood that Hitler's future action was going to be "by the book".

Well understood, this avalanche of actual thought and promised action announced a forthcoming new general war. The event was nearly certain, just the date was subject for conjecture. From this consciousness sprang Churchill's crusade for the rapid preparation of the British Empire and the Western Powers, mainly France and her satellites. When he was finally heard with the attention he deserved it was already too late. When Hitler advanced for the final onslaught the West was, but for Great Britain where Churchill's voice had finally promoted some minimal actions, swiftly and humiliatingly crushed.

Churchill was a man who believed in Providence, especially in his relation to Providence and the destiny that the latter reserved for him. Ironically or providentially, on the day of Hitler's attack on Western Europe, May the 10th 1940,



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Churchill received from King George the nomination as the new Prime Minister of England. This ironical or providential coincidence was the birth of Hitler's Nemesis.²

How did, then, Churchill understand Hitler's thought and his intentions, better said, Hitler's goals?

In his history of World War II, Churchill very precisely summarizes what he calls "the granite pillars" of the Nazi Chancellor policy, the principles for his action:

"The main thesis of *Mein Kampf* is simple. Man is a fighting animal; therefore the nation, being a community of fighters, is a fighting unit. Any living organism, which ceases to fight for its existence is doomed to extinction. A country or race, which ceases to fight is equally doomed. The fighting capacity of a race depends on its purity. Hence the need for ridding it of foreign defilements. The Jewish race, owing

² Nothing can express better the situation and what the now British Prime Minister felt than his own words: "Thus, then, on the night of the 10th of May, at the outset of this mighty battle, I acquired the chief power in the State, which henceforth I wielded in ever-growing measure for five years and three months of world war, at the end of which time, all our enemies having surrendered unconditionally or being about to do so, I was immediately dismissed by the British electorate from all further conduct of their affairs. During these last crowded days of the political crisis my pulse had not quickened at any moment. I took it all as it came. But I cannot conceal from the reader of this truthful account that as I went to bed at about 3 a. m. I was conscious of a profound sense of relief. At last I had the authority to give directions over the whole scene. I felt as if I were walking with destiny, and that all my past life had been but a preparation for this our and for this trial. Ten years in the political wilderness had freed me from ordinary party antagonisms. My warnings over the last six years had been so numerous, so detailed, and were now so terribly vindicated, that no one could gainsay me. I could not be reproached either for making the war or with want of preparation for it. I thought I knew a good deal about it all, and I was sure I should not fail. Therefore, although impatient for the morning, I slept soundly and had no need for cheering dreams. Facts are better than dreams." (CHURCHILL Winston Spencer, *The Second World War*. Volume I. *The Gathering Storm*, New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1985, p. 601)



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to its universality, is of necessity pacifist and internationalist. Pacifism is the deadliest sin, for it means the surrender of the race in the fight for existence. The first duty of every country is therefore to nationalise the masses. Intelligence in the case of the individual is not of first importance; will and determination are the prime qualities. The individual who is born to command is more valuable than the countless thousands of subordinate natures. Only brute force can ensure the survival of the race; hence the necessity for military forms. The race must fight; a race that rests must rust and perish. Had the German race been united in good time it would have been already master of the globe. The new Reich must gather within its fold all the scattered German elements in Europe. A race, which has suffered defeat can be rescued by restoring its self-confidence. Above all things the Army must be taught to believe in its own invincibility. To restore the German nation the people must be convinced that the recovery of freedom by force of arms is possible. The aristocratic principle is fundamentally sound. Intellectualism is undesirable. The ultimate aim of education is to produce a German who can be converted with the minimum training into a soldier. The greatest upheavals in history would have been unthinkable had it not been for the driving force of fanatical and hysterical passions. Nothing could have been effected by the bourgeois virtues of peace and order. The world is now moving towards such an upheaval, and the new German State must see to it that the race is ready for the last and greatest decisions on this earth. Foreign policy may be unscrupulous. It is not the task of diplomacy to allow a nation to founder heroically, but rather to see that it can prosper and survive. England and Italy are the only two possible allies for Germany. No country will enter into an alliance with a cowardly pacifist State run by democrats and Marxists. So long as Germany does not fend for herself, nobody will fend for her. Her lost provinces cannot be regained by solemn appeals to Heaven or by pious hopes in the League of Nations, but only by force of arms. Germany must not repeat



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the mistake of fighting all her enemies at once. She must single out the most dangerous and attack him with all her forces. The world will only cease to be anti-German when Germany recovers equality of rights and resumes her place in the sun. There must be no sentimentality about Germany's foreign policy. To attack France for purely sentimental reasons would be foolish. What Germany needs is increase of territory in Europe. Germany's pre-war colonial policy was a mistake and should be abandoned. Germany must look for expansion to Russia, and especially to the Baltic States. No alliance with Russia can be tolerated. To wage war together with Russia against the West would be criminal, for the aim of the Soviets is the triumph of international Judaism. Such were the 'granite pillars' of his policy".³

This synthesis deserves a close, acute analysis of some of its points. Churchill understands that the main force of Hitler's thought and will resides in its simplicity: it is no sophisticated philosophical system, rather a *unification of all possible human action* through the application of one all binding idea, rather a postulate: *the ontological condition of human beings as fighting animals*. Having understood this, Churchill immediately knew that the leader of such an ensemble of beings would sooner or later put their ontological capacity, which is a matter of potency and power – the item at stake –, to work, put it into action.

Fighting animals are not destined to spend their time and lives in a peaceful state of being. Peace represents the demise of human fighting animals. Therefore, war would be inevitable should Hitler rise to power. As soon as the Old Corporal rose

³ CHURCHILL, Winston Spencer, *The Second World War*. Volume I. *The Gathering Storm*, New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1985, pp. 50-51.



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to power, Churchill knew, had the theoretical intuition that Hitler would provoke a war. Only the concrete details that would fulfil all the crannies of History remained unknown. Thus, theoretically, Churchill was right as History itself practical and pragmatically proved.

Churchill also perceived that what Hitler had in mind was not an iteration of an old conception of mankind re-enacted differently, but a radical new conception of nation, nationality and of the latter as an ontological natural human fact. Thus, "the nation, being a community of fighters, is a fighting unit", *a warlike and war bound thing*, living thing, derived from the innate fighting ontological condition of human beings, always in need of corresponding in act to that condition, under pain of annihilation.

According to the Nazi dictator, *Nations* are naturally born of war, forged in war, thrive only at and through war, excel by war, and consequently perish without war. All fighters who are intimately at heart warriors fade away when deprived of this natural fighting matrix in permanent actualization.

Under a Darwinian like mode, Hitler thinks he knows that all individuals who do not fight are doomed and deserve to be doomed. The same applies to nations: "Any living organism which ceases to fight for its existence is doomed to extinction. A country or race which ceases to fight is equally doomed".

But what is a "nation", how is it defined, and what by is it defined? What imposes the limits that distinguish what is conform to the essence and substance of the nation? And what is the relation between this ontological definition and the ability to fight, both individually and collectively? Hitler's immensely consequential



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answer is: *the purity of the "race"* is that which constitutes the ontological core of the nation and, therefore, the purity of each of its individuals.

These pure individuals, racially pure individuals, are the Nazi version of what a person ought to be, of what a person really is. *Outside the set of characteristics established by this ontological definition, there are no persons*: it is this ontological theoretical thesis that which condemned to annihilation and enslavement many millions of what we consider persons, but Hitler considered "no-persons" or "under-persons".

The consequences of Hitler's ontological redefinition of personhood did not have impact just on Jewish persons, but on all who were de-classified as *Untermensch*: Jews, Gypsies, homosexual, non-Nazi Socialists, Communists, all kinds of people with disabilities, and many other "impure types". All these beings, non-human, are no more than – Churchill understands perfectly what the substantial matter is –, "foreign defilements". All that is not racially pure is «foreign» not just or mainly in a political or geopolitical sense, but in an ontological sense: *they are "foreign" in relation to the human species*. The human species coincides now with the Arian race. There is no proper humanity outside it: this postulate must always be remembered, lack of which it is impossible to understand Nazism.

Thus, whenever these "defiled foreign elements" present themselves among the true human beings one must get rid of them. The contact with such aliens ontologically soils the pure ones – hence the need for something as the "Nuremberg



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Laws",⁴ apex of human legal perversity, public for all the world to see, but having received no adequate response.

The adequate response would have been the international overrun of the ones who dared to produce such outrageous anti-human legal documents. The lack of action in defence of the minimum human and humane decency at the beginning of the radicalization of the Nazi Regime ultimately provoked the world conflict: if it is a fighting unit – as a nation – that which advances such an initiative, one must expect that this move is a step climbed in the preparation of that for which a fighting unit is for: war. Churchill understood it and acted accordingly, first through the use of the word, then through the use of other adequate means.

Who did the anointed race elect as its main enemy, in accordance with the premises beforehand affirmed? "The Jewish race, owing to its universality, is of necessity pacifist and internationalist", therefore they embody all that denies the idea of a nation. Having lived in the form of a diaspora, the Jews, though claiming to be a nation, are everything but, for they represent the mixture of different origins and provenances that Hitler loathes. The way Churchill envisages the relationship between Hitler and the Jewish people does not base itself on psychological grounds, but on a very objective political soil: they are the paragon of what the mortal danger for the nation is as the Old Corporal conceives it. Therefore, they must be destroyed.

⁴ A photographic reproduction of the originals of these Laws is reprinted in PLATT, Anthony M.; O'LEARY, Cecilia E., *Bloodlines. Recovering Hitler's Nuremberg Laws, from Patton's trophy to public memorial*, Boulder, London, Paradigm Publishers, 2005, pp. 6-9. At the end of all the original documents appears Hitler's signature as "Der Führer und Reichskanzler".



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It is no psychology; it is the perverse rational thinking of a cold and ruthless warlord and "folklord": the supreme lord of the *Herrenfolk*, the lord of the people of lords.

The "international", whoever they are, are by definition, the ones outside the nation, therefore its enemies. All enemies must be either killed or reduced to slavery in the benefit of the world lords. The supreme benefit will occur when, no longer needed, the slaves have all perished.

Hitler's actions and the actions he obtained using the German People and other Peoples as his tools were all derived from the strategic guide lines so well understood by Churchill. Even when, as in the case of the most surprising alliance with the Soviet Union that opened the way for the Nazi overrun of Poland without the pending menace of a double battle front, West and East, the aim of the Reich Chancellor was to use the manifest weakness of the Soviet Union at his advantage, during the brief period necessary to stabilize overall military operations, knowing that the Pact with "Soviet Russia" was to be cast away as soon as it was no longer necessary because "Russia" was part of the new domains to be acquired and its inhabitants were part of the ones to be either immediately destroyed or first enslaved and then destroyed.

The theoretical doctrine that guided Hitler's actions was the same that guided Churchill's attentive scrutiny of the Chancellor's to be actions. It was all plain to see within a book many bought, many read, but seemingly not many understood or had wanted to understand. This lack of understanding came at a very high price. As always the price for stupidity is.

What is it that we read nowadays?



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NOTA BIOGRÁFICA DO AUTOR

Américo José Pinheira Pereira licenciou-se em Filosofia pela Universidade Católica Portuguesa (Lisboa), em 1990 com a apresentação de trabalho de Seminário de Licenciatura sobre Nietzsche, orientado pelo Senhor Professor Doutor Manuel Barbosa da Costa Freitas, com 18 valores média final global de 16,13 valores. Obteve o grau de Mestre em Filosofia em 1997, pela mesma Universidade, com a defesa da Dissertação "A Relação entre o Acto e o Ser na obra *De l'Acte de Louis Lavelle*", orientada pelo Senhor Professor Doutor Manuel Barbosa da Costa Freitas, com a classificação de *Summa cum Laude*. Em 2006, obteve o grau de Doutor em Filosofia, também pela Universidade Católica Portuguesa, com a defesa da Dissertação "Fundamentação ontológica da ética na obra de Louis Lavelle", orientada pelo Senhor Professor Doutor Manuel Barbosa da Costa Freitas, com a classificação de *Magna cum Laude*. Actualmente, é Professor Auxiliar da Faculdade de Ciências Humanas da Universidade Católica Portuguesa. Na sua actividade docente tem leccionado nas Faculdades de Teologia e de Ciências Humanas, bem como no Instituto de Ciências da Saúde da Universidade Católica Portuguesa as disciplinas na



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área da História da Filosofia Antiga, Axiologia e Ética, Bioética, Ontologia, Filosofia do Trabalho e da Técnica, Filosofia da Religião, Epistemologia, Filosofia da Linguagem, Filosofia da Arte e da Técnica, Antropologia Filosófica, Antropologia Religiosa, Sócio-antropologia da Saúde para além de vários seminários de especialidade nas mesmas áreas. Organizou e co-organizou mais de duas dezenas de encontros científicos. Proferiu cento e uma conferências e palestras científicas. É autor de dezassete livros, co-autor de três e tem autoria de vinte e oito capítulos bem como dois capítulos em livros de actas. Tem quarenta e cinco artigos científicos publicados em revistas científicas nacionais e estrangeiras. Tem duzentos artigos de diversa índole publicados on-line em publicações nacionais e internacionais. Tem ainda resenhas, artigos em dicionários e enciclopédias e traduções em várias línguas.

ABSTRACT

Having read Hitler's *Mein Kampf*, Churchill understood what he calls "the granite pillars" of the Nazi Leader's policy, thus knowing, step by step, what the Dictator wanted to do, was going to do. This allowed Churchill to start counter acting successfully Hitler's actions even before being the Prime Minister of Great Britain. Thus *Mein Kampf* became both Hitler's and Churchill's guide, leading them in quite opposite directions.

KEY WORDS: Churchill, Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, anticipating Hitler.