

## TWO ARCHITECTS OF NEW EUROPE: MASARYK AND BENEŠ

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. . . . The New Man, *homo Europaeus*, will be the result not merely of external politics, but principally of internal.

The political task of the democratic reconstruction of Europe must be attained and actually made possible by a moral re-education of the nations—either democracy or dynastic militarism, either Bismarckism or rational and honest politics, either force or humanity, either matter or Spirit!—T. G. MASARYK: *The New Europe (The Slav Standpoint)* 1918.

Unless an unlooked for catastrophe intervenes, a new Europe should slowly rise from the ruins of the World War. It will in all probability not be a Bolshevik Europe. It will not be a reactionary Europe. It will very likely be a New Europe, rejuvenated from within and without.

Whence will come the ideas and the leadership which should inspire the reconstruction? Who will it be, who will chart in a firm, but practical, manner the as yet untravelled seas of necessary social and economic reforms and of progressive world politics? Who will it be, who will popularize these ideas in a declining Europe caught between destructive radicalism and stagnating reaction? Who will it be who will try to solve the eternal problem of the freedom of individuals, classes, and nations in the chaos left behind in the World War?

These questions occur to numerous observers as they anxiously scan the European horizon. They are questions in which all those who study international relations should be vitally interested. On the answers to these undoubtedly hangs the fate of Europe. If leaders who have a realizable vision and who are resolved to tread the path of sound social reform are found, the task will be accomplished. But can they be found? And having been found, will they have an opportunity to put their policies into practice?

It is the object of this article to examine in what way Thomas G. Masaryk, President of the Czechoslovak Republic, and Edward Beneš, Minister of Foreign Affairs, are qualified to be considered among the new leaders of a New Europe. They hold the fate of Czechoslovakia in their hands. Her foreign policy has been the expression of their ideals and plans.

We shall examine first the origins of their policies and then point out how they have deliberately planned to build up a new Central Europe which would act as a wedge between radicalism and reaction and help to rejuvenate a wasted continent. If space permitted we should also count among these leaders in Central Europe such men as Jaszi, the Magyar statesman; Renner, ex-Premier of the Austrian Republic; Jonescu, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Rumania; Trumbić, formerly Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Davidović, formerly Prime Minister, of Jugoslavia; and Paderewski, formerly Premier of Poland. We shall analyze here only the Czechoslovak roots of a New Europe.

## I

It is a platitude in Czechoslovakia to say that Masaryk is the prophet of the new régime and Beneš his ablest disciple. Nothing truer, however, has ever been said because for years their relationship was that of teacher and pupil.

Thomas Garrigue Masaryk<sup>1</sup> was born in 1850 of Slovak parentage in Moravia (now a province of Czechoslovakia).

<sup>1</sup> An excellent source of information for Masaryk is the volume prepared by his students: *To T. G. Masaryk: In Honor of his Sixtieth Birthday*. Edited by Edward Beneš et al. Prague, n.d. (1910?) in Czech. The reader will also find a short biography: *T. G. Masaryk, a Sketch of his Life and Works* (in Czech), in pamphlet form, by Edward Beneš (under the pseudonym, Edward Bělsky), which appeared originally as two articles in the first official revolutionary organ: *Czechoslovak Independence* (in Czech), Nos. 14, 15, March 23, April 8. Annemasse, Paris, 1916. In addition to that one will find the following useful: Bláha, A., *T. G. Masaryk: From Moral to Political Independence*. Nové Město (Moravia) 1919; Herben, J., *T. G. Masaryk*, Prague, 1918; Stern, E., *Opinions of T. G. Masaryk*, Prague, 1918, 2nd edition (all in Czech). The official Austrian material gotten up to show the treasonable activities of Masaryk during

His father was a coachman employed on one of the numerous estates of the Emperor of Austria and had intended to make his son a blacksmith. The boy's unusual mental gifts aroused the interest of the village teacher, and he was encouraged and assisted to become a teacher. He tutored his way through the University of Vienna and later Leipzig, and began his long teaching career at the University of Prague in the year 1882. He soon rose to prominence through his writings in social philosophy and drew to Prague two generations of enthusiastic scholars. They came from all parts of what is now Czechoslovakia, and from among the Slovenes, Serbo-Croats, Bulgarians, Poles and Ukrainians.<sup>2</sup> He became the founder and inspirer of *The Progressive Party* (sometimes called *Realist*), whose moral influence entirely overshadowed its insignificant membership. He became a member of the Austrian Parliament and dared to defy the powers which controlled the destinies of Austria-Hungary. "Hated by the Church, persecuted by the State, ostracized by the chauvinistic leaders of his own nation"—writes an admirer<sup>3</sup>—he persisted in his course until today he is universally recognized as the father of his country. His students virtually formed around his person a political and social sect and worshipped him as their prophet. The youngest and keenest of these was Edward Beneš, who became his right-hand man in the revolution and who is today not only his Minister of Foreign Affairs, but also his substitute, for he is now Premier and Acting-President, while his old teacher is recovering from a serious illness on the island of Capri.

Masaryk believed he had a mission. And for this mission he prepared himself by long philosophical, historical, and sociological studies.

the war contains some valuable material: *Das Verhalten der Tschechen im Weltkrieg*, II A. Wien, 1918. Masaryk's writings are too numerous to cite here. A recent, illuminating work, particularly important in connection with this article, is Masaryk: *The New Europe (The Slav Standpoint)*, Washington, 1918. (For private circulation at the Peace Conference.)

<sup>2</sup> See particularly, *To T. G. Masaryk. In Honor of his Sixtieth Birthday* 12-43.

<sup>3</sup> Herben, *Masaryk*, p. 4.

His philosophy he founded on Hume, Mill, Spencer, and particularly Comte. In his early years he rejected Kant and Kantism and the whole German school of philosophy. He evolved a system of looking at life from a deeply religious and moral (almost puritanical) point of view.<sup>4</sup> Influenced by these ideas he read widely the history of his nation and believed to have found its philosophy in the religious ideals and motives of the Hussites and the Bohemian Brethren.<sup>5</sup> He became a great admirer of Palacký, the father of Czech historians, and of Charles Havlíček,<sup>6</sup> the first of modern Czech journalists. For that reason, he became a Protestant, a modern Czech Puritan. For that reason, too, he did not become a Pan-Slav or Slavophil.<sup>7</sup> He believed that backward, autocratic Russia should not assume the leadership or obtain the domination of the other Slavic nations. In his own conception—and he agreed here entirely with Havlíček—he believed fervently in the freedom of each Slavic nation, each partaking separately and independently of the life among the nations of Europe. For that reason—and the more so because of his Slovak parentage—he planned the ultimate inclusion of the Slovaks in the future Czechoslovak nation.<sup>8</sup> Before the war he worked for a just and federalized Austro-Hungarian empire made up of a number of “politically independent nations.” Having worked out his programme he declared openly:

If it will work with Austria, very well; the Czech nation is willing to make peace. If it will not, the Czechoslovaks will await a favorable opportunity to pay back to Vienna that which they suffered for centuries at her hands.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>4</sup> See the pamphlet by E. Beneš, *T. G. Masaryk* (1916).

<sup>5</sup> The severest and keenest criticism of Masaryk's Czech historical philosophy is to be found in the brilliant article by Josef Pekař: *Masaryk's Czech Philosophy*. Reprinted and enlarged from an article in the *Český časopis Historický*, Year XVIII, 2nd ed. Prague, 1912. This should be compared with *To T. G. Masaryk: In Honor of his Sixtieth Birthday*, especially 43-49, 141-150, 169-172, 195-202.

<sup>6</sup> See Masaryk: *Karel Havlíček*, 2nd ed. Prague, 1904, and *The Bohemian Question*, Prague, 1895. Both in Czech.

<sup>7</sup> Stern, *Opinions*, 45; *To T. G. Masaryk*, 150-153, 14-16, 163-169, 213-223.

<sup>8</sup> *To T. G. Masaryk*, p. 186-195.

<sup>9</sup> Beneš, *T. G. Masaryk. Czechoslovak Independence* (op. cit.), No. 14, p. 3.

Thus he had developed a conception of a just, sober, non-chauvinistic nationalism which would seek to work freely within the bounds of Austria-Hungary or, if necessary, outside of it. He foresaw that the greatest danger from without to Austria was Pan-Germanism which was pleased to see her become embroiled further and further in quarrels among the Balkan nations whose peaceful existence and relationship with Austria-Hungary he wished to see safeguarded.

In internal politics, he aspired to be the statesman who would put into practice the scientific results of the social sciences. He was more than a social philosopher. He was a statesman without portfolio. Born a commoner, he never lost his contact with the common man.<sup>10</sup> In his philosophical and sociological writings he ranged himself against Marx's historical materialism or economic determinism.<sup>11</sup> If a socialist at all, he was not a Marxist. His strong religious and moral convictions, his great appreciation of spiritual values, his appraisal of scientific research, led him to seek progress by social reform based on the social sciences. He sought social reform by evolution rather than by revolution.

In a speech in the Austrian Parliament in 1907 he was quoted as saying:

From the beginning of my public life I made it my aim so far as possible to bridge the great gulf between social democracy and the remaining elements of the nation and to work for positive social reforms.<sup>12</sup>

This is perhaps the best statement which can be gotten of his aspirations. He saw in the Marxism of Social Democracy the danger of catastrophe; he saw in the gulf between it and the ideals of the other elements of the nation a great menace. He has tried ever since to bridge that

<sup>10</sup> He did a great deal of lecturing under the auspices of the Prague University extension service among working men everywhere.

<sup>11</sup> See especially Masaryk, *The Social Question*, 1898. Štern, *Opinions*, 48-58.

<sup>12</sup> *Parliamentary Speech on the Budget, 1907*, p. 19 cited in Štern, *Opinions*, 48.

gulf—to weld the nation together by “positive social reforms.”

He disagreed with Marxism in many ways and together with the German Bernstein and the Russian Tugna-Baranovskii he helped to point out numerous criticisms. To him economic conditions are in large part dependent on the moral ideals of mankind. Social justice, in his opinion, could come only by parallel reforms of morals and ideals. Economic reforms alone would not suffice. The *Social Question*<sup>13</sup> concerned not the laboring class alone, but all classes, and they would have to experience a regeneration if it were to be solved. The *Social Question*, as he saw it, was an ethical one—it embraced the ethical relations of all individuals, classes and nations.

He did not argue for absolute equality, but rather for a conditioned, relative equality. Whether as individuals, or classes, or nations absolute equality was perhaps unattainable. But equal opportunity, abolition of exploitation of one kind or another, respect of the one for the other as human beings, all these he believed could be obtained. He argued:

All Austria is a bundle of small nations. This problem of the little nations is really only the political and international phase of the *Social Question*. We, Czechs, know well what a serious *Social Question* it is, if one nation is exploited by another; political exploitation means cheap labor to the laboring classes. I emphasize this social significance of nationalism.<sup>14</sup>

With a healthy family and a healthy nation, as a satisfied individual in the great family of nations, he believed he had the lever of Archimedes to lift up humanity.

Since the breakdown of the Old Czech Party of Palacký and Rieger who followed the lead of the provincial nobility, and the rise of the Young Czech Party in the eighties, Masaryk and Kramář became the real political leaders of the Czech nation. At first they belonged to the same party and cooperated, but soon they parted company. We

<sup>13</sup> See his work by that name. Štern, *Opinions*, 51.

<sup>14</sup> Štern, *Opinions*. 55-56.

have the reason in a letter which Masaryk wrote in 1898 to Kramář:

You have gone to the right in fundamentals. I have a single psychological explanation (long have I thought of it): that you trust, in fact you really have acquired love for, the dynasty. I do not share this trust and for that reason appear to you to stand "regularly left."<sup>15</sup>

And again a year later:

The main reason is you have a fear for Austria. I have not. Palacky said: "We existed before and will exist after Austria." Even if this were only a phrase with Palacky I want it to be a matter of fact. (There are also such matters of fact.)<sup>16</sup>

It would take us too deep into local politics to explain how these two sincere men, the ablest men that the Czechoslovak nation had produced in the generation before the war, parted company politically. Kramář became the leader of the Young Czechs and gradually evolved a policy,<sup>17</sup> internally, of dominating Austria-Hungary by Slavs or Slavizing it, and, externally, of divorcing her from the alliance with Germany, and allying her with Russia and France to avoid the Pan-German danger which to every Czech, of whatever political hue, was a reality. He was led to support the dynasty and its plans to such an extent that in 1913 he was forced to resign the leadership of his own party. He necessarily drifted more and more to the right as his plan involved the economic regeneration of the Austrian Slavs within the empire and their participation in obtaining the economic preponderance sometime in the future. He was a Pan-Slavist of the newer more liberal type, called Neo-Slavism, of which he was one of the founders in 1907-1908. But it fell to pieces in several years on the opposition of the reactionary Russian Pan-Slavs who refused to give the Poles the necessary concessions and thus heal the greatest source of friction among

<sup>15</sup> *Das Verhalten der Tschechen im Weltkrieg*, p. 299.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 299.

<sup>17</sup> The best sources for Kramář's policies are to be found in *Czech Politics* (in Czech), Vol. 1; *Anmerkungen zur böhmischen Politik* (also in Czech) 1906; Tobolka, Z. V. ed. *The Trial of Dr. Kramář and his Friends*. 3 vols. (in four parts). Prague, 1918 (in Czech).

Slavs.<sup>18</sup> He himself had married a Russian who was naturally much interested in all these ideas. They saw in Russia, if not a savior, at least a possible protector.

By contrast, Masaryk had married an American. He was not a Pan-Slav and took little interest in Neo-Slavism.<sup>19</sup> He did not want to Slaviceize Austria and Austrianize the Czechs; he wanted each nation to retain its own nationality. If he shifted at all, he shifted to the left and though he started out with his own party insignificant in numbers, he soon influenced the spirit and ideals of all the parties. He was their political Tolstoi. And when the war broke out he was not only the recognized leader of a party, but he had the moral authority to lead the nation. His achievements during the World War made him the "little father" of his nation. It was he who wrote in his recent book: *The New Europe*: "Caesar or Jesus—that is that watchword of democratic Europe."

## II

Edward Beneš<sup>20</sup> was born in Bohemia in 1884. He came from a poor Czech peasant family consisting of five sons and two daughters. Of this family, three of the boys, including Edward, became teachers, one a carpenter, another a mechanic, and the two girls married farmers.

Edward, who was the live-wire of the family, succeeded in working his way through university and acquired the best education. In his early high-school days, he was a star soccer-football player until he suffered an accident in which bones were broken. In harmony with his strenu-

<sup>18</sup> See especially Tobolka, *Trial*, Vol. I, II, 1-320. On pages 320-340 will be found an eloquent defense of his entire political life. We cannot here go into Kramář's policies in detail. Suffice it to say, that history will record that he rendered his nation inestimable services, in spite of much undeserved criticism which has been heaped upon him.

<sup>19</sup> *Das Verhalten der Tschechen im Weltkrieg*, 298.

<sup>20</sup> Little as yet has been written about Edward Beneš. There is a small, but useful biography by Reichmann, J. *Dr. Edward Beneš. His Life and Work* Prague, 1919 (in Czech). The *Year of Work*, Prague, 1919, contains his famous *First Exposé* to Parliament, Sept. 30, 1919. The author of this article supplements what has been written by personal knowledge of Beneš through numerous conversations with him.



osity at this time is the fact that he was a member of the worst, most unruly class which the school ever had. In fact, so much did it earn the wrath of its teachers that the latter broke a time-honored custom when they refused to have themselves photographed with the class on graduation.

But the future diplomat did not exhibit enthusiasm in that direction alone. From his brother, Václav, with whom he lived in a suburb of Prague, he learned to view life both liberally and seriously, for Václav was a socialist. Edward, to the uncomfortable disappointment of many of his wildest companions, was a teetotaler, and he did not smoke.

When he matriculated at the University of Prague he signed up for Romance languages and Germanic philology and became an able linguist. It is no concealed fact that his opponents at the Peace Conference complained that he could deliver speeches and write memoirs in all the major languages used there. But under the spell of Thomas G. Masaryk, then professor of social philosophy at Prague University, he transferred his affections from philology to philosophy and to the social sciences. Here he listened especially to Professor Masaryk's lectures on the Russian revolution of 1905 and on revolutions in general—an expansion of which has been translated from the German into English under the title of *The Spirit of Russia*.

In 1905 he left Prague and its University and journeyed to Paris. Here he became a student at the Sorbonne and at the École Libre des Sciences Politiques. Later he registered also in the law faculty at Dijon and in the "Russian University" at Paris. He had to make his way in France by writing for certain Czech newspapers and magazines. As a result, his whole correspondence is filled with the one desire to get time to study deeper and more thoroughly, which his hack-writing interfered with until he virtually broke in health.

Though these three years he spent in France were filled with poverty and misery, in his own words, he "learned to look on the world in a different light" from what he used to in Prague. Paris became for him "the synthesis of France and France the synthesis of modern Westernism." He

became a Westerner, like Masaryk, as against those in his own nation who were "Easterners" or Pan-Slavists. He became a believer in the West, in France, in the fact that Western Europe and America, not Russia, represented progress. He became filled with the idea that his own nation must learn from the West and not from the East; that like the West it must depend on realism—it must know how to do things, it must learn to observe, to analyze, to contemplate, sanely. It must not remain romantic as the other Slavs.<sup>21</sup>

After receiving his degree in law at Dijon in 1908, Edward Beneš returned to Prague, where the next year he took the degree of doctor of philosophy. He became thereafter a professor of political economy in the Prague Czechoslovak Academy of Business (about the equivalent of a junior college). Continuing his post-graduate studies in the social sciences, especially in sociology, he became in 1912 instructor in sociology at the University of Prague and a year later likewise at the Prague Polytechnic.

During the five years preceding the war Dr. Beneš was deeply immersed in scientific and publicistic writings, apart from which he called no attention to himself.<sup>22</sup> But it was only a few days after the World War broke out that he presented himself at Professor Masaryk's house in Prague with a complete plan for a Czechoslovak policy during the war. It called for a revolution. It called for assistance from France and from the West. It expressed his firm conviction that help to the Czechoslovaks would come from out of the West and not from Russia.

His writings down to the Great War had been premised<sup>23</sup> with the idea that Austria-Hungary could not be broken up, that the forces which held it together from within were

<sup>21</sup> Reichmann, *Beneš*, 15.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 14, 21-35. He was a prolific writer. His doctor's thesis was: *Le Problème Autrichien et la Question Tchèque*. Paris, 1908. He wrote, among others, a history of the labor movement in Austria and among the Czechs (1909-1910); *Political Parties* (Prague, 1912); *Détruisez l'Autriche-Hongrie* (1916); and *Bohemia's Case for Independence*. He was editor of *La Nation Tchèque* (1917-1918).

<sup>23</sup> See especially Beneš, *Le Problème Autrichien*, etc., p. 307.

strong enough to hold it together against any disruptive forces. At that time he believed in the democratization, in the federalization of Austria—"that ramshackle empire." But when the World War broke loose, Edward Beneš was one of the first to see that the great catastrophe could marshal much more formidable forces against the empire from without than the German Alliance or any binding forces from within. And it was this opportunity which Professors Masaryk and Beneš made use of.

Thus Dr. Beneš became the organizer and the director (until his flight from Bohemia in 1915) of the Czech Mafia<sup>24</sup> which so accurately reported to the Entente on the course of events inside the Habsburg Monarchy during the war. It was this organization which later engineered the peaceful underground revolution at Prague in 1918. In the meanwhile, Professor Masaryk, who travelled about Central and Neutral Europe in 1914 and the spring of 1915, did not return to Bohemia after Beneš warned him from Prague that he was suspected by the Austrian government. In August that year, Dr. Beneš, seeing the net draw closer over his own activities, crawled through the thick underbrush of the forests on the Bavarian frontiers under the very noses of the Austrian sentries.<sup>25</sup> Once in Germany, he used a forged passport and arrived safely in Switzerland where Professor Masaryk had already initiated the Czechoslovak revolutionary movement. Beneš became at once his most intimate assistant and has remained so to the present day.

### III

When the Entente began the war it concentrated its wrath on Germany as the archculprit. It was the task of such men as Masaryk, Beneš and Štefaník, the noted Slovak astronomer, from among the Czechoslovaks, and Pašić and Trumbić from among the Jugoslavs, with the assistance among others of Steed, later editor of the London *Times*,

<sup>24</sup> See *Before the National Council*, Prague, 1919; also *To the Assistance of the Entente* (1919). Both are in Czech.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

Seton-Watson, later editor of the *New Europe*, and Tardieu and Berthelot, later right-hand men of Clemenceau, to convince the Entente that in the guilt for bringing on the war Austria-Hungary's share was not at all a modest one—a fact now amply confirmed by the official German and Austrian revelations in 1919.

It was under such circumstances that the journal, the *New Europe* (London), became the organ of a new policy—it helped much to revolutionize the war aims of the Entente. These were transformed from the preservation of Austria-Hungary (even though deprived of certain territories) to that of the break-up of Austria-Hungary and the founding of a new liberal European order.

To this day few publicists have been able to grasp the importance of this movement. The details, justly or unjustly, have obscured the big feature.

In this development Dr. Beneš played an important if not the decisive rôle, achieving lasting diplomatic fame in two events.

Through Colonel Štefaník's friendship<sup>26</sup> with Berthelot of the French Foreign Office, Beneš negotiated the specific mention of the Czechoslovaks in the famous Allied Note of January 10, 1917, in which the Entente replied to President Wilson that, among other war-aims, they counted as one "the liberation of the Italians, *Slavs*, Rumanians, and *Czechoslovaks*, from foreign rule." This was the first great success in diplomacy for the Czechoslovaks. They had obtained international recognition.

Hardly had this victory been won than secret negotiations between France and Austria, begun in March, 1917, threatened to upset it. The Czechoslovaks were assisted in winning ultimate victory by several factors. They organized three armies which for their size rendered extremely valuable services to the cause of the Entente on more than one front. Moreover, the secret Austro-French negotiations, already mentioned, led to no result. They could not lead to a separate peace between the Entente and Austria alone.

<sup>26</sup> Conversation with Beneš.

Count Czernin, the Austro-Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs, in his memoirs, *In the World War*,<sup>27</sup> now frankly tells us that there could be no such separate peace because Austria was not free to act alone. Austria was virtually a vassal of Germany's and would have been invaded by German armies if she attempted a separate peace. While this was long apparent to close observers, the idea of a separate peace bewitched more than one leading statesman in the Entente who should have known better.

It was Beneš' task to point out the illusion under which the "separate-peace" negotiations suffered. Backed by the achievements of the Czechoslovak armies in France and in Russia, and confident of the inevitable failure of the "separate-peace" plans, Dr. Beneš negotiated in the spring and summer of 1918<sup>28</sup> perhaps the most notable diplomatic victory of the whole war. He obtained the final consent of Balfour, British Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Clemenceau, Premier of France, to the complete break-up of Austria by having them recognize the Czechoslovaks as *an allied and belligerent nation*. It was for that reason that the French publicist, Fournol, declared: "Beneš has destroyed Austria-Hungary."

Baron Sonino,<sup>29</sup> Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, did his best at the June (1918) Inter-Allied Conference at Versailles and later on to prevent such a special diplomatic recognition for the Czechoslovaks. This meant not only the break-up of that part of Austria-Hungary, but, so far as Baron Sonino was concerned, it meant that a similar recognition might have to be given eventually to the Jugoslavs. Baron Sonino failed. And it remained for President Masaryk to win from President Wilson and Secretary Lansing the recognition<sup>30</sup> that the Czechoslovak

<sup>27</sup> Page 24.

<sup>28</sup> The story of this remains to be written up. Dr. Beneš has given the writer an account of the conditions under which the Balfour Note of June 3, 1918, the Pichon Note of June 29, 1918, the Balfour dispatch of July 1, 1918, the British Declaration of August 9, 1918, and the Czechoslovak-British Convention of September 3, 1918, were made.

<sup>29</sup> Conversation with Edward Beneš.

<sup>30</sup> American Declaration, Sept. 2, 1918.

National Council was “*a de facto belligerent government.*” This finished the task.

A National Council had been recognized as a *de facto* government although neither its offices nor its armies were situated on the national soil. It was a novel event in international relations—an arrangement which had been thought of originally for the Poles, but, owing to the peculiar status of the Polish question at that time, it was first applied in the case of the Czechoslovaks.

In 1919, Edward Beneš returned to his native land. He had left Bohemia in 1915 a professor, so obscure that the Austrian government hardly knew anything about him. He came back four years later as the master-diplomat of Central Europe, having tried his talents with success against the ablest statesmen in Europe. Together with Dr. Kramář, then Premier of Czechoslovakia, he won further triumphs at the Peace Conference, where he was hailed by the late historian of Anglo-American relations, George Louis Beer, as “the greatest of the younger statesmen of Europe.” But above all he appeared before his nation as the man who, next to President Masaryk, had helped most to raise the almost-forgotten Czech question from a provincial muddle in Austrian internal politics—which was “nobody’s affair,” excepting that of German and Magyar statesmen—to a decisive factor in the international politics of Europe.

#### IV

It is evident from their utterances and their publications,<sup>31</sup> that President Masaryk and Dr. Beneš hope to assist in the construction of a New Europe in at least two ways.

The first of these is to found in Czechoslovakia a democracy in which the people will be “de-Austrianized and re-educated,” in which individuals and classes and nations

<sup>31</sup> See especially *The Utterances of the President of the Czechoslovak Republic, T. G. Masaryk* (Dec. 1918–Dec. 1919). Edited by T. Kratochvíl. Prague, 1920, and *A Year of Work*, Prague, 1919. Both in Czech. These publications were reviewed by the writer in *Literary Review* (*N. Y. Evening Post*, November 6, 1920). Perhaps the best of Masaryk’s more recent endeavors is his *The New Europe (The Slav Standpoint)* (1918).

may freely realize themselves economically and socially, as well as politically, and in which these ends are to be obtained by methods of peace, education, patient social and economic reform, and by sacrifices by both capitalists and working men. They have no illusion in regard to the difficulty of this task, but they abhor reaction as a paralysis and Bolshevism as an attempt to solve perplexing problems by methods of violence and bloody revolution. President Masaryk believes Switzerland<sup>32</sup> has solved the insistent political and nationalistic problems of democracy. And he undoubtedly asks himself the question whether it is not possible to push a similar solution through in its economic and social phases.

These statesmen, therefore, want a progressive democracy in which the sound results of the social sciences are to be translated into legislation. They are not striving for any abstract equality which is unattainable. They hope to strike at exploitation wherever it may show itself; they seek to keep open the path of equal opportunity to all elements in their state, whether these be commoners or capitalists, Czechoslovaks, Germans, Magyars or Poles. They wish to raise the common life to a higher level by education and by training for the life of a democracy. They want to keep to the middle road, shunning extremes and yet progressing. Nobody has better expressed their position than Beneš when he said.

To repeat the history of Old Austria, with its oppressed and disgruntled nations and classes, is for us to abdicate our great opportunity. We shall be done for, if we do it. We must find a new way.<sup>33</sup>

And translating Masaryk's philosophy into practical advice, we find him telling his Parliament:

The only way to solve the problem of Bolshevism is to create an atmosphere of peace and to devote ourselves to pacific efforts, to economic and social reform.

The other way in which Masaryk and Beneš hope to assist in the task of reconstructing the Old Europe is to

<sup>32</sup> See the interview, *Neues Wiener Journal*, April 19, 1919. No. 9146.

<sup>33</sup> Conversation with Edward Beneš.

create a league<sup>34</sup> out of the states of Central and Eastern Europe, which will guarantee them against the present reactionary régime of the Magyars or the Habsburgs and Hohenzollerns, perhaps even against Bolshevik Russia, if necessary—in other words, against outside interference. This would give these new states time to solidify and devote themselves to pressing internal problems which neither Bolshevik Russia nor the apparently-dissolving *Great Entente* are willing or able to face at their full value.

In both, the new republic has met with a very fair measure of success.<sup>35</sup> Not only has a democracy been established which is beginning to answer to these ideals, but it is making progress in reforms and is a good way on the road to solidification. And in foreign policy,<sup>36</sup> Beneš' success in constructing the *Little Entente* has been the beginning of a movement which will have as its object the inclusion not only of the original states, Czechoslovakia, Jugoslavia, and Rumania, but Poland, Bulgaria, Greece and perhaps even the Baltic countries and the Ukraine.

What has already been achieved stands solidly enough to break the forces of reaction led by Habsburg or Hohenzollern, German or Magyar, or the forces of extreme radicalism of the Bolsheviks, if the statesmen who guide these young nations are aware of what the new order signifies. The Habsburg may plead for another chance to show his "democracy" and his "leanings toward federalism" which he was never able to accomplish in the past and will be unable to achieve in the future because of the company he necessarily keeps. The Bolshevik may point out in all truth that experience has mellowed somewhat his most dramatic dreams. But those who know the masses of

<sup>34</sup> The beginnings of this idea may be traced to the Philadelphia Meeting of the Oppressed Nations of Central and Eastern Europe (1918).

<sup>35</sup> *Year of Work* (1919).

<sup>36</sup> See the Beneš *First Exposé* in *Year of Work* (1919), pp. 9-38; *Český Slovo* for December 25, 1919; *Second Exposé*, January 3, 1920; Exposé of March 2, 1921. Beneš has been severely criticized in two pamphlets by C. F. Vrt'atko: *Un Reveil Hideux: Étude Critique sur la Politique Étrangère d' Aujourd'hui et de Demain* (Prague, 1921) and *C'est clair. Remarques sur la Crise d' État*. Kolin, 1921.



Central Europe hardly expect they will follow either to shed blood. These nations will see in France a leader as long as France does not desert the ideals which actuate them.

It has not been my purpose here to treat in detail the diplomacy of the moment in Central Europe, but rather to point out the ideals which actuate two powerful statesmen in that part of the world—ideals, which, it might be said, move in fact the entire nation. Much might be argued both good and bad about the bases on which these ideals must operate—I mean the treaties of St. Germain with Austria and Trianon with Hungary, and of Neuilly with Bulgaria and Riga with Russia. But to treat this phase of the question otherwise than in precise detail would be both unwise and unjust. Barring the unusual again, the chances are good that these treaties, modified here and there and supplemented with economic agreements of one sort or another, will stand.

If, then, I have correctly analyzed the ideals and motives of Masaryk and Beneš, the central question which this study has propounded should, it seems, be answered in the affirmative. They are qualified by ideals, by education, and by experience to rank among those to whom the reconstruction of Old Europe may be entrusted. One may disagree in details, but hardly in the grand perspective, which, after all, should be the safest measuring-rod. Today, Masaryk and Beneš belong not only among the pioneers of the New Europe that must be—if Europe is to remain at all a powerful factor in world politics—but they are, perhaps, its foremost leaders.